



TRIUMPHANT LOVE

The contextual, creative and strategic missionary work
of *Amy Beatrice Carmichael* in South India



Dohnavur, India



J. (Hans) Kommers

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*Out in the garden little groups of missionaries walked together and talked.
From a room nearby came the sound of a hymn. It was peaceful and
beautiful everywhere, and the gold of sunset filled the air, and made the
garden a glory land of radiant wonderful colour. But for one woman at least
the world turned black. Only the thought of the children nerved her to go on.*

Lotus Buds, 291.

For Aly

On 01 March 1970, God arranged that the main path of my life would cross the path of the one who agreed to be my wife. Walking together, Jesus, our Lord himself, drew near and walked with us, and he gave each to the other. In you I found the crowning gift, a woman with a mind and soul that answered my own and together we started along the way that leads to life.

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■ Research Justification

The book is a treasure trove for scholars in the field of science of religion who focus on comparative religion, spirituality and the reception of Christianity in India and Ireland. The strength of the book is its comprehensive scope, critical and narratological methodology, and the depth of the data analysis. The exposition of the contextual, creative and strategic missionary work of Amy Beatrice Carmichael in south India is innovative and highly informative. The book contains a high level of original research in that it goes beyond the existing research on the Carmichael biographies. The knowledge of the field is comprehensive and the number and quality of sources impressive. The biographic genre and methodology complement the extensive research in the book. This combination constitutes a genuine historical foundation for the scholarship. The main purpose of the book is to open the field of science to and pique the interest of professional theologians with an interest in missiology and in the valuable contribution of Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur. The book includes a comprehensive overview of the existing scholarly work on the topic and then makes a further innovative contribution to and, in the end, provides the most comprehensive picture of the work of Amy Carmichael to date. It will become *the* definitive reference book on the history of Christian missionary work in south India. It is original research and no part of the book was plagiarised from any other publication or has been published elsewhere before.

Dr J. (Hans) Kommers
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Abbreviations appearing in the Text and Notes

| | |
|-------|---|
| AIM | Africa Inland Mission |
| BMS | Baptist Missionary Society |
| BCMS | British Church Missionary Society |
| BCP | Book of Common Prayer |
| CEZMS | Church of England Zenana Mission Society |
| CSI | Church of South India |
| CIM | China Inland Mission |
| CMS | Church Missionary Society |
| CSSM | Children's Special Service Mission |
| DF | Dohnavur Fellowship |
| DOM | Dear Old Man |
| EIC | East India Company |
| EFI | Evangelical Fellowship of India |
| ESV | English Standard Version |
| EUSA | Evangelical Union of South America |
| FES | Female Education Society |
| GATE | Gospel from Africa to Europe |
| GFA | Gospel for Asia |
| IBMR | International Bulletin of Missionary Research |
| IRTI | International Reformed Theological Institute |
| IVF | InterVarsity Fellowship |
| JEB | Japan Evangelistic Band |
| KCM | Keswick Convention Mission |
| KCMC | Keswick Convention Missionary Council |
| KCMMB | Keswick Convention Mission Minute Book |

Abbreviations appearing in the Text and Notes

| | |
|-------|--|
| LMS | London Missionary Society |
| NEB | New English Bible |
| OMF | Overseas Missionary Fellowship |
| PKN | Protestant Church in the Netherlands |
| PRONI | Public Record Office of Northern Ireland |
| SVMU | Student Volunteer Missionary Union |
| TEE | Theological Education by Extension |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| WCC | Women's Christian College |
| WMS | Wesleyan Missionary Society |

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**Oh, lift our soul to higher things,
And lift our thought to Thy desire;
Give us the faith, that mounts on wings,
Give us the love that burns like fire,
The love that leads to Calvary,
Not less than this, we ask of Thee.**

Gold Cord, 284.

**Yes, God's Glory is our plea, highest, strongest, most
impelling and enduring of all pleas. But oh, by the thought
of all the myriads who are passing, by the thought of the
Coming of the Lord, by the infinite realities of life and
death, heaven and hell, by our Saviour's cross and Passion,
we plead with all those who love Him, but who have not
considered these things yet, consider them now!**

Things As They Are, 303.

**For I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to
give drink to My chosen people.**

Isaiah 43:20 (RSV).



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For those longing for the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ this book presents a wonderful period in the history of Christian missions. It is my aim to give a full and rounded picture of Amy Carmichael and to uncover new aspects of her precious life. I will follow her in her childhood and formative years, her missionary training and the Keswick influences, her serving in Japan and the five uninterrupted decades as missionary in India (Figure 1). In thankfulness I see this work go to the press. After having received many blessings in the years of research, I now pass it on, with the goal that Amy's message and character will give glory to God and strengthen the Church in the 21st century. My wish is that our generation will be connected to our heritage of faith and the faith principle that undergirded the life of Amy Carmichael, be singled out.

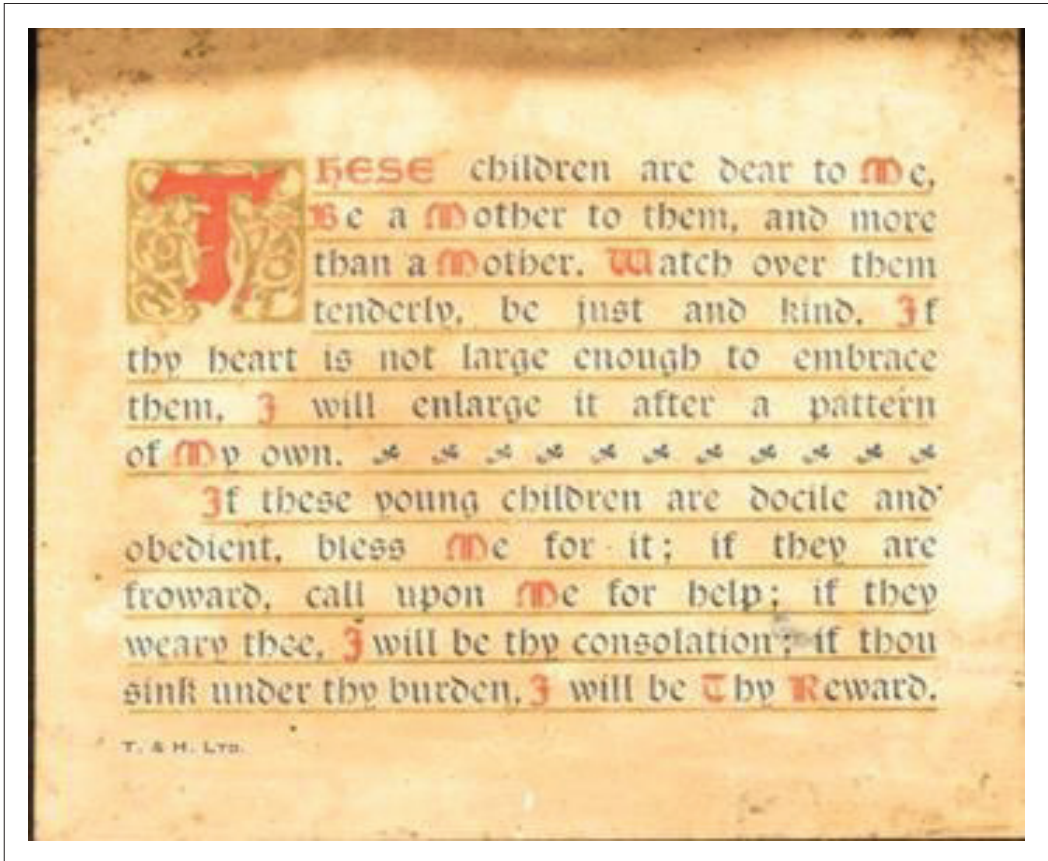
No book is the product of a single individual. I believe that this book can only be published due to the many people who chose to travel with me along this long road. Here I would like to thank all those who have supported me while writing this book. I could not have done all the research and the writing without the encouragement and the advice of many friends and fellow missionaries. An attempt to mention all will certainly fail, but love never fails to remember and I sincerely thank all of them. During the research for this book, my wife and I came in contact with many people in various countries and the unforgettable fellowship with them still affects us today.

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1. On 07 January 2017 Sura Carunia went to be with the Lord.



Source: © Dohnavur Fellowship Corporation. Permission to reproduce was obtained. Photographer unknown.

FIGURE 1: This card was found in Amy's Bible.

I am deeply indebted to Arthur and Eileen Savage in Guildford for their friendship, care and hospitality on our various visits to England. You made your house a real home for my wife and me, and we will always remember the fellowship and the love so present at yours.

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Glossary

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Accāl | Older sister |
| Ammā | Mother; refers to Amy as the 'Mother' of the Dohnavur family |
| Ānnāchie | Older brother. The name given to men workers at Dohnavur |
| Ayer | Teacher, both Indian and foreign. Or: Protector. In this book this name refers to Thomas Walker of Tinnevelly |
| Bandy | A bullock cart on two wheels |
| Compound | An enclosure in which are houses and gardens |
| Dai | Midwife |
| Puja | Hindu religious practice |
| Purdah | Curtain, practice of female seclusion |
| Sittie | Mother's younger sister or aunts who are younger than the person's mother. Also the title for all non-Indian women workers. The word indicates much affection |
| Sonthum/sontha | Own |
| Tungachie | Younger sister |
| Zenana | Inside women's quarter |

■ Note

- The spelling of Indian towns and cities mentioned in the text are those found in the sources. A modern equivalent is given in parentheses after the first mention.
- Verses of poetry not in inverted commas, are from Amy Carmichael's own writings, unless otherwise stated.
- The reader should bear in mind that in this book I deal with persons, situations and practices in the India of the first half of the 20th century.
- Different editions of some books written by Amy have been used; pages mentioned in the footnotes of this book, therefore, may differ.

Foreword

Sura Carunia

President

Dohnavur Fellowship

India

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Served in Dohnavur 1969–1987

I met Dr Kommers in the Dohnavur UK office in 2015, being offered to read the first complete draft of this book for accuracy of factual content. Before the meeting I was a little sceptical. The fact that there are already so many biographies about Amy Carmichael made me wonder what more another book could say about her. So I asked Dr Kommers, 'From what angle are you going tackle the subject?' 'From the factors that made her what she became' was his answer. This aspect sheds new light on Amy and enables us to understand her better.

I read this book enthralled by the detailed and exhaustive research that had gone into the writing. Dr Kommers has used so many sources outside of Amy's own writing that he gives a very rounded picture of her. There is much here for everyone. For those who, like myself, never met Amy, but have been inspired by her life and writings, there are new insights. There is the tremendous challenge of her spirituality and her high standards of Christian living. Both Christians and non-Christians can learn from her manner of life and be inspired. This really is the definitive biography of a most remarkable missionary and a very challenging read.

Her children, who now have the charge of the work Amy began, are so happy to have this new source of information. The current president, Sura Carunia, who came to Amy in 1940, says, 'As one who had never met her, Dr Kommers writes with an amazing depth of understanding of the personality, character and spirituality of "Amma"'. She held nothing back from her Lord and Saviour, desiring always to FOLLOW Him and to live 'the crucified life' with, as she put it, 'my spirit tender of the glory of God'².

He brings her to life in a way that will touch the hearts of all of us, her children, many of whom remember her as the very loving, special person she was. We would hope that all who read this book would be challenged and motivated to live for the glory of God with a renewed commitment.

2. 'Where Thou Hast Trod', *Mountain Breezes*, 220.

Impressions of a photo

Disciples of Christ follow him, the Lamb of God, wherever he goes. They don't imitate him, it is just the opposite; to follow the Lamb is to deny oneself, to give away one's own wants and wishes and like a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die. This is the way to bear much fruit for the glory and honour of God.

Looking at this magnificent image of Amy (Figure 2) convinces us that it shows exactly as it appears at first sight: an image with great persuasive power. It brings the modern viewer to feel so close not just to the history this picture presents, but to Amy herself. This image reminds me of the paintings of the subtle 17th century Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer; it captures a small corner of the visible world in its totality. The serene peace and joy provide a reflection of the fascination it holds for the viewer, avoiding everything that can disturb the inner equilibrium – a picture of poignant and pregnant stillness. The face in this picture is a text, often difficult to read or to explain. A text from which the past speaks; a life lived and a life being lived, for it shows the future in the expectation of a full life and it shows the present too, that is, the one of the picture.

This picture is a dual text: the person we meet in the picture, what it shows us, also in her face and in what she wrote. What do we see? Which spirit do we encounter seeing her in the face? A very self-effacing woman, who almost never allowed her photograph to be taken. Pictures of her are rare, and we are glad to have some. The question now arises: What kind of image do they evoke? Which spirit does



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FIGURE 2: Amy with Lola and Leela.

that face reflect? Is this what she looks like according to what she wrote? Can we discover something from that face? A missionary, asked to give her impression after having seen this picture for the first time, said: 'I see genuine love'.

A face that tells us that her life is hidden with Christ in God (Col 3:3), that she does not yet appear what she shall be (1 Jn 3:2). It is a face telling us that she rested in the presence of a gracious God. The appearance expresses which kind of spiritual child someone is. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks and the eye looks compassionate. She has something special. The Lord had imprinted on her a character of such a great majesty, holding unto the vision and the voice, convinced it was given her from above. A mere look at the picture gives me the feeling that she was spiritually different from the common run of people one meets. I see in her a person of rare spiritual qualities increasing my interest the more I know of her. She personified an inner beauty, which is from the transcendental world. She embodied the nobility and the beauty of a soul in full love and rest in God. By her strength of mind, she possessed an inner power, which outweighed all the evil she discovered and difficulties she faced in the running of the Dohnavur Fellowship. She lived with such an intensity in which she unreservedly gave herself and was open for what the Lord gave her to do.

The longer I studied her life and work, the more I had to look her in the face. Her eyes look at the children from a gently expressive face, and her whole gesture tells us that with her thoughts she dwells at the bosom of the Saviour and with the children she cared for. Looking at her picture I see what is so rarely seen: a saved person, a servant of the Lord looking like him. The closer this person grows to the resemblance of God, the more the image of God lightens her face, a servant of God looking on to God. We look at her face from that perspective. We see a Christian who trusts. Behind this old picture, hidden behind our own horizon, is an experience we have lost, an experience of striking holiness, a revelation of a deeper spirit showing. She kept in perfect peace of mind looking at him to guide her dreams. There is a radiance and glow about her that cannot be captured in any picture. We honour the Holy Spirit when we 'see' the invisible in the visible. He creates the inner shine of the Christian and reveals the inside. In the words of the Psalm: 'Look towards Him and shine with joy' (Ps 34:5 in the NEB). This is what Paul meant when he wrote: 'Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you?' (1 Cor 6:19). This is what other people see. Moses did not know 'that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God' (Ex 34:29), but Aaron and the others did. The echo of this shining Moses (2 Cor 3) is:

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (v. 18)

The glory of Christ is interconnected with the words in the books Amy Carmichael wrote. They meant only to tell about his gracious deeds in her life in the Dohnavur Fellowship. The few photos we have from her tell us a lot. This picture (Figure 2) expresses the human face and, as author, I am dealing with her texts, as one who knows his limits. Amy has already been transferred to higher Glory and from what we see, hear and read, we return to what we see in Dohnavur and read now. Called to a God-given order and with no rest of mind until she could lay the task in other caring hands, and having passed away, far from family and other fellow missionaries, her legacy is still cared for by faithful Indian friends and children.

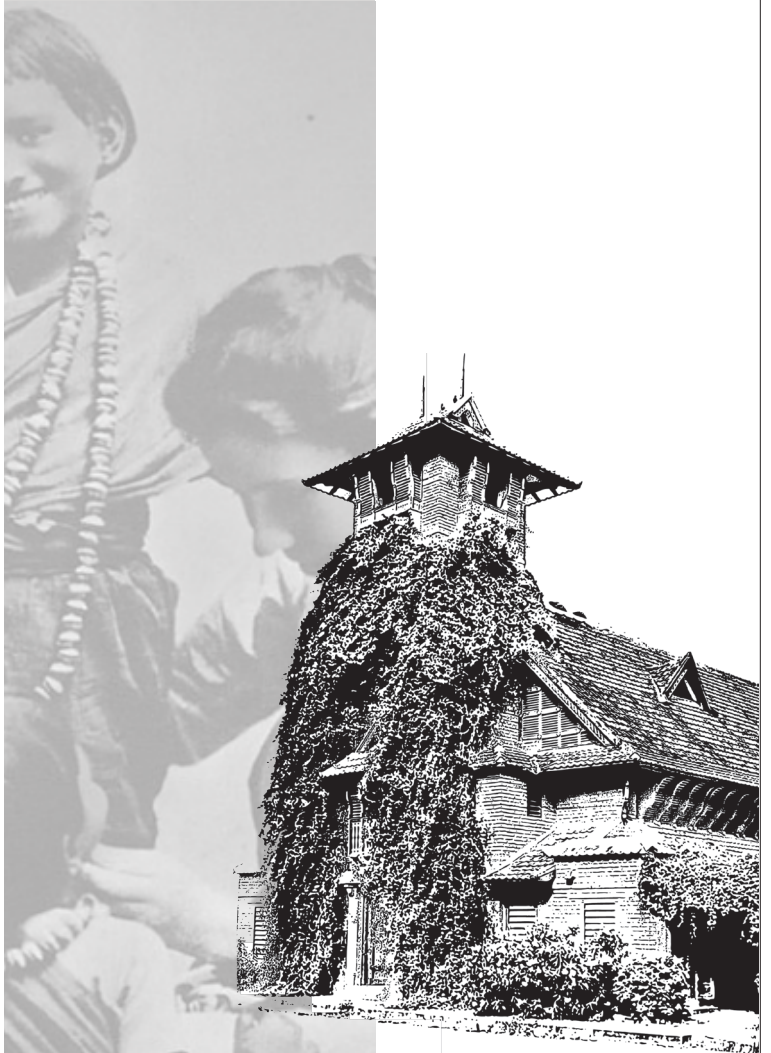
Biography and missionary endeavours – in which way are they to be connected? As we look at some old prints, as we read about lives being lived in respectable mission houses, top-hat men and exceedingly prim ladies, neat local clerics in the background, and read of their work in offices, hospitals and villages, all this feels millenniums remote from our world and our ways of living in the 21st century. It is all

history now, but ‘history is not that of an outward incident, but of a spiritual situation’.³ Amy herself ever had this question in what way biography and missionary endeavours are connected, but, in her own words, ‘we leave the pictures with their disguising exteriors, looking in, we understand each other’.⁴ What happened in the first half of the 20th century in south India to bring the children home is not to be experienced in the one moment we look at a picture, but in the particular details of the very place. Written words are like a picture, an instantaneous exposure. We will leave the exterior and look into the matter, to come to an understanding of what happened in Dohnavur, this vibrant place with hundreds of children’s voices, and at the same time the place of the working stillness. I would like to invite you to join me in the disclosure of the intention of the duologue of the photograph and the texts and in finding a distinctive personality, Amy Carmichael, in the many-coloured tissues of her life.

3. In *Windows*, quotation added to Amy’s dedication to ‘The Friends of the Dohnavur Fellowship’.

4. *Ragland, Spiritual Pioneer*, 28.

Triumphant Love



Women in mission work: Strategic to God's vision for the world

■ Impression 1

The audience of the mission meeting of the 1895 Keswick Convention saw on the platform three outgoing women missionaries presenting themselves to the public. Two of these three were sisters. Each gave a short address and when it was the turn for the last one, she unfolded a scroll on which she had written in huge letters: 'Nothing too precious for Jesus!' Her words were deeply impressive. She was the elder of the two sisters. The younger sister, Eva, would go to South Africa, and she was booked for India. We are talking about *Amy Beatrice Carmichael*,⁵ who had determined in her heart to learn what it means to have 'faith in God'. God, who is the Lord of the universe had created her and would take care of her. Her God is also the God of the sparrows, and he cares for them. Is she not more than the sparrows? She would go in Jesus's steps, but it was his way, a way leading – no escape here – to the Cross. 'He that spared not His own Son' (Rm 8:32) forever satisfied her that God loves the lost. She had heard the cry of the millions across the sea, and they became her personal responsibility. Obstacles on the path? Mountains of them. She was led to climb by him, who went in front. She climbed, and saw the fruit of 'thy will shall be done' and was allowed to see the change in the lives of thousands of children in south India in missionary work that covered the first half of the 20th century. Here we are in touch with one of the most significant role models (from a human perspective) in the history of the modern era missionary movement.

■ Impression 2

On a chilly Sunday morning in December 2012, I got a warm welcome from the pastor and the members of the Welcome Evangelical Church, Cambrai Street, in Belfast. This was the place where in 1887 Amy

5. Hereafter referred to as Amy Carmichael, Amy or Amma.

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Carmichael gathered the mill girls on Sundays for Bible class, and during the week for singing, sewing work and other social activities. It overwhelmed me being in the same place where for so many living in destitution, hope is offered and where lives had been transformed by the love of Christ. The songs we sang in that service were all in Amy's spirit: *Leaning on the everlasting arms* and *Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing, nothing is too difficult for Thee*. Again and again, like Amy had done in the dedication service of the newly opened hall in 1887, I also read the words of Colossians 1:18 written above the platform: 'That in all things he might have the preeminence.'

Amy's wish that those words would be fulfilled had become true in her life. 'God has been and still is faithful,' I thought while I walked back after the church service to the Maranatha Guesthouse where I would stay for some days. Helpful church members had offered me a lift, but I had insisted on walking. I had in mind to go the route she always walked up and down from College Gardens in south Belfast to the Shankill area in the north of the city. It took me at least one hour.

'God is faithful.' This was confirmed by God himself, showing on my left a rainbow, the sign of the Covenant. After passing Ulster Hall I saw the fountain at the kerbside, the silent witness of the dramatic change in Amy's life. It was there that Amy's life's values completely changed. As I walked on, I saw the impressive buildings of Queen's University. The front door was open and after I looked around, the bookshop invited me to come in. One title caught my attention: *Great Irish Lives*. Scanning the index, I did not see the name of Amy Carmichael. 'Do we live in a time in which the secular world does not recognise what Christians have brought about and how some of them changed age-old values?' I thought. The bookshop is near to the place where once one of Ireland's greatest women lived! Continuing my walk I soon turned right having reached College Gardens, where the houses on one side overlooked a spacious park in Amy's days. I imagined seeing a 20-year-old young woman walking to and fro from, at that time, a well-to-do area in the dark streets on the other side of the town, compelled by love for the needy and the lost, to help those who had no helper and who lived there in evil and poverty. Here Amy had learned the major lesson of her life, giving her the foundation for her work in Japan and India, that in all things our gracious Lord, Christ Jesus might have the pre-eminence.

What experience it is for someone to be in a church where it all began 125 years ago? To see her busy in your mind, telling mill girls the saving Gospel words and afterwards in India rescuing many girls and boys from a life of shame and destruction to lead them into the saving arms of Jesus Christ. Really, the boundless and unsearchable riches of the saving and sanctifying grace of God in the Lord Jesus Christ reached from that place to a remote village somewhere in the plains of south India. This overwhelmed me in Belfast that Sunday morning in the Welcome Evangelical Church.

■ Impression 3

The hot south Indian sun forced us to look for a shady place at the airport of Tuticorin. My wife and I were on our way back to Europe. Sitting in the shade, waiting for the plane to Chennai (Madras), my mind was still wandering with the women and children in Dohnavur. We had left them in the morning, prayed off by many of our new friends, and there in Tuticorin I already felt the awe I had to leave them. When the plane took us up into the sky, I felt I had left behind some precious people, because for me the stay there meant I had to redefine myself. Dohnavur in south India had changed my life's values.

Dohnavur: the place throbbed with history and life. My wife and I arrived on 08 November 2013, one day before the commemoration of the day that Amy Carmichael arrived in India in 1895. Our first introduction to India, the endless crowds, cars, motorbikes jostling their way through the streets of Chennai. After a few days, we boarded the plane to Tuticorin, where a kind taxi driver was waiting for us and took us

to Dohnavur. I had longed to see the place where everything had taken place and meet the people, especially the elderly ones who had known Amy personally. The great love of the Dohnavur people overwhelmed us, and left us with so many impressions. Really, this is a sanctuary in the wilderness built by vision and prayer. We looked over the same plains Amy had looked at, and walked through the villages around Dohnavur, and remembered the agony she had had in her heart that so many were living, 'hidden away in little shut-up rooms in little shut-up towns, and of the need of those Christ-less hearts'. In her day, those villages, temples and castes, were all 'Hindu to the core'.⁶

Many days I sat silently working in the room where Amy lived, worked and died. Everything in the room reminded me of her who until today has a word for us. Her thoughts do not remain within the walls of this room and the wall surrounding the Dohnavur compound. In Amy's life story is a sense of quietness in the heart and a sense of a heart in communion with God.

To be honest, everything nowadays in Dohnavur talks of bygone days, except the computer in the office, the mobile phones of many women and the sun collectors to get hot water. Buildings over 100 years old still function and the guesthouses are provided with water by means of buckets for washing. Here history lives, and that more than 60 years after Amy's death. Whomsoever you speak with, everybody talks with tender love about Amma, as she is called, and everything that is done on Sunday and during the week is done in the way Amma would have done it. In answer to questions as to why things are done here in a certain way, you will hear every time, 'because Amma wanted it so'. In Dohnavur she is still 'around'.

I came to Dohnavur with the intention to get more inside information. The room where Amy stayed is still full of bookcases with the many books she read and from which she drew many ideas for her writing. One of the women here who had known her told me, 'Amma was a ferocious reader'.

I was astonished by the many books she had: from Bible studies, history, archaeology, mystics, sermons, mountaineering, flowers and dogs to bird watching. In many of them, her name is inside. She used to make remarks in the margin, which gave me a lot of information. The time I went through many of her books, I felt like Alice in Wonderland. Being involved in life at the Fellowship for three weeks had the lovely feeling of the meeting of Christ's body, the instant sense of at-homeness awaiting all the guests. Several times, I sat for a few moments in the upper room in the Prayer Tower, the place Amy liked to sit to be quite alone with God. From here she saw the whole compound and prayed the Lord would stretch his wings over them all.⁷ Now nearly 100 years later, the Lord still possesses and guards his little Dohnavur flock.

The three weeks at Dohnavur and some time in the holiday house at the sea, 'Joppa', of the Dohnavur Fellowship (DF) at Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin) were a precious gift from God and definitely marked our lives. Now at home – 'at the time of the lighting of the lamps' – we still see in our minds the Fellowship members kneeling and we hear Dohnavur's evening prayer:

Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, O Lord; and by Thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.⁸

And in our ears we every time hear the lovely song *Aathumae en muzhu ullame* by which we were surprised every Sunday morning at early dawn, sung from the tower of the church in the village. It is all about the soul praising God for his beautiful creation and all good things of life.

6. Cf. *Gold Cord*, 279.

7. See *Meal in a Barrel*, 35.

8. See *From the Forest*, 122.

Still, the forces of prayer are lost there for so many women and children living in danger in India. Is Dohnavur evening's prayer God's provision to unlock new powers on their behalf? He or she who reads this book has the answer.

■ Crossing the frontiers

In every generation, there is a fresh need for a faithful exposition of God's work in mission to the contemporary culture and people on this earth. One cannot write about mission history without touching on the lives of those who obeyed the call and carried out the message. The biography of Amy Carmichael is the history of a mission period, but it is also the chronicle of a small south Indian town in the plains. Through her, and her fellow workers, the music of the name of Jesus reached those far off in the hills and valleys in south India and penetrated deep into the old Devadasi system of the Hindu religion.

To do justice to my subject, this book is written in sympathy with her whose life and thoughts I write about. I am fully aware of the temptation to highlight the bright side and hesitate when aspects that are more critical have to be described. However, I can now already say that the second part of the previous sentence will be very difficult to fulfil when you write about Amy Carmichael. However, I agree with Sharrock's argument that, 'a picture without shade, like a harmony without discord', is not only untrue, but is also 'weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable'.⁹ Nevertheless, it remains an adventure to write about someone who was so full of love for God and the people of India, so skilful in writing and who could put down deep thoughts on paper. I tell her story more or less chronologically, touching also on the lives of the men and the women: family, colleagues, pastors, missionaries and, not least, the Indian children who crossed her path. I think this is the best way to bring her life and work into a clear focus, for it is only by chronological narrative that one avoids the temptation of seeing the past through the obsessions of the present. Mission history does not change as opinions on mission do. Writing afresh about Amy's life and mission work is necessary for each new generation. For our self-centred 21st century generation it will be a blessing to put forward the shining example of Amy Carmichael who came into the world and lived a portrait of sacrifice.

Amy's native grandeur of deed and character asks for no pretence. Her vocation called her to live a holy life along the dusty levels of commonplace ways. I follow her from Millisle to Dohnavur and write what I have seen, read and heard. I listened to those who have known her, which is all fragmentary, for the spiritual, her innermost, remains secret. Only God knew her inner life, where she really was with him, and from there the springs rose, which fed the river of her life. God's dealings with his servants do not require our opinion. What Amy wrote about Thomas Walker refers also to herself:

Is it not true that in this clamorous world, in the midst of weariness and strife, there are some who are glad to turn sometimes in byways of quietness, glad to meet in those private ways men from whom it may be they must differ in public, glad to get to know them underneath and above all difference, in that mystic communion of spirit which will surely be one of the joys of heaven?¹⁰

Amy's life has been the subject of several books and essays. I read many of them: narratives of close friends and critical observations of some scholars. The sketches at close quarters, in which those who had the privilege of being associated with her have tried to depict for us the very woman herself in the way she lived and worked. The books Amy wrote, the stories I heard in Dohnavur and some gripping

9. In J.A. Sharrock, *Bishop Caldwell: A Memoir* (Calcutta: Whitaway Press, 1897), 2.

10. *Walker of Tinnevely*, VIII.

biographies¹¹ have given me the desire, and it became my profound conviction, to write this elaborate study to give an intimate picture of Amy Carmichael.

Her own self-effacement attracted me, giving Christ Jesus the honour and the glory in her work and in her literary legacy. She saw visions of duty nobody else looked at. She blazed her trail in India by the spiritual altars she built, so we can trace her work by the 'altars' that she left behind. Earlier biographers could draw on stories told by Amy's contemporaries, many of whom were her friends or met her personally.¹² Even very old villagers of Broughton in Cumbria could reminisce about the Tuesday night meetings in the fifties of the 20th century reminiscences where Amy gave the Bible explanations.¹³ I spoke with some elderly women in Dohnavur who had known Amma (Tamil for mother, as Amy was called) a few years when they had been tiny kids in Dohnavur and without exception all who had known her, talked, with a glitter in their old eyes, of Amy's love for children.

We know about the work she started in Dohnavur, but I think too little attention is given to her spirituality and connected with that her views on mission and missionary principles. That she contributed so much to mission thinking has been overlooked by professional missiologists either because Amy had no academic education and therefore was looked down upon in certain circles or because people were so impressed by her practical work in Dohnavur that they did not wonder from which source she drew. The abundance of biographies of missionaries from Victorian and Edwardian times shows the popularity of men and women like James Hudson Taylor, David Livingstone, Lilia Trotter, Mary Slessor and many others; all these biographies focusing on their ministerial exploits rather than on their missiological or theological significance. These men and women operated with theological assumptions and they often had more enduring influence on the developing church worldwide than the 'professional' theologians who worked out their principles from behind a desk in an office somewhere on the third floor of a university.

Scattered throughout her books, Amy has given us many valuable thoughts and reflections on mission issues, and I intend to pay full attention to the fundamental orientation that guided and sustained this missionary. In this I want to follow Hardy who argues for the study of theological notions underlying the motivations and assurances of mission, 'that the events can be seen within a theological context'.¹⁴ We are impressed by what happened in Dohnavur, but we have to see that the 'how' and the 'why' of this mission enterprise in south India was driven dynamically by theological convictions. We will follow Amy in her spirituality, her dedication and devotion, her contemplation and prayer life. We do not forget her lifestyle and behaviour as a missionary, crossing frontiers drawn by her Victorian-minded colleagues. These were all vital elements in the life of this missionary pioneer; really, this 'Wild-Bird Child'¹⁵ was a unique personality. Putting praxis and reflection together, we hope to meet the real Amy Carmichael. If we want to understand what was Amy's real motive in starting the DF we cannot overlook the issues of her own spiritual growth and formation by her use of the Bible, her missionary outlook and her subsequent activity, even from her sickbed, in mission work.

11. For the books written by Amy, the biographies and other literature, see the Bibliography at the end of this book.

12. Her first biographer Rev. Frank Houghton corresponded with her for 30 years. Three times he and his wife visited Dohnavur in the forties of the last century where they had long times of fellowship with her. In addition, after her death, he could look at all the papers, by that time not collected and secured in the archives in Belfast.

13. In F.L. Houghton, *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur* (London: SPCK, 1998), 37, 38. Hereafter referred to as *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*.

14. D.W. Hardy, 'Upholding Orthodoxy, in Missionary Encounters: A Theological Perspective', in *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, ed. Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001) 199.

15. The title of D. Bingham's book on the life of Amy Carmichael (Belfast: Ambassador, 2003).

When we navigate the waters of the missionary world, we see in this 21st century a shift in the thinking of many who are changing the initial intention of mission. The glory of Christianity is that it is able to save all that come unto God by Jesus Christ. We are living in a time when an inexorable weariness lies at the foundations of the nations and in their inhabitants a terrible feeling of desolation and emptiness arises, which leaves no place for faith in man and hardly any place for faith in God. How dark has been – and is – the history of mankind. Amy Carmichael revealed 'dark deeds in a dark country', but the light brought by her in Japan and India has been an eternal blessing for many. The debate on mission work in the 21st century will go on, but I am convinced that Amy showed and lived the essence of the Gospel and that her vision is an obstacle for many who cannot follow where she put the priority, that 'the Cross is the attraction'.

This work is a synthesis based on wide reading of primary sources in the archives in Belfast and Carlisle, records of mission agencies and missiology, biographies of missionaries, case studies and fieldwork in Dohnavur (India). I am very conscious that all this I wrote from the limited understanding of a European looking back on what was primarily an Indian experience and I dare hope that its lack of sensitivity and understanding is compensated by thorough study.

Since my first encounter with Amy Carmichael through the daily reading of *Thou Givest ..., They Gather* when I was on the mission field myself, I was compelled to go on and felt the inner conviction to know more of her. I want to connect her with the present generation, which would give us all back the primary goal of mission work. Her first little book I read was for me a truly great book and I found I had made a real discovery, and am grateful for the stimulus and spiritual quickening that have come to me from her writings. For me, these are very real spiritual tonic. They come from a great heart and this missionary woman does not shirk the problems in mission life, but looks them straight in the face. Not a day passed without my reading some pages of her books and in the daily talks at home, Amy was often mentioned. Part of the family is not the right phrase, but in her books, she even travelled with us to holiday homes and airports. Always her written legacy has given me the inspiration to keep on doing this work. Digging through her books, I found a remarkable woman, one through whom many lives were changed. For me, Amy Carmichael personifies the spirit of missions and of rescuing helpless children. She was part of a modern mission spirit that swept the world in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This despite, as some may say, a few false starts, which she herself saw as stepping stones for her life work in Dohnavur, work the Lord entrusted her to do for more than half a century.

Nobody vanishes from memory more rapidly than the missionary does and no influence is easier, even for the sympathetic researcher, to underestimate than that of the missionary. However, as an old proverb says, 'some people come into our lives and quickly go, but others stay awhile and leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never the same'. With regard to Amy Carmichael, that old adage has proved itself to be true. Having access to her books, I discovered she has a real say about today's missionary issues, and that she gives a depth and breadth to your faith in Christ; that is what made her so magnetic. This book about her is not a eulogy for an individual or a hagiography,¹⁶ and I am not dealing here with a typical experience of a saint, but with the way in which saintly life has been made possible. I want to picture Amy Carmichael in her web of time, ultimately seeing the hand of the Saviour in the life of this remarkable woman. It is a life abandoned to God at all costs.

16. Cf. Ruth Tucker: 'Unfortunately for Carmichael and her legacy, she has been the victim of missionary hagiography. Although controversy swirled around her often unconventional ministry in India, and the fellow missionaries who questioned her judgement, her biographers have elevated her to super-sainthood. Yet Carmichael herself [at least in the early years] called for honesty in presenting the work of mission outreach, and it is in this area perhaps more than any other that we can look at her life in the light of biography as missiology' (R. Tucker, 'Biography as Missiology: Mining the lives of Missionaries for Cross-Cultural Effectiveness,' *Missiology: An International Review* XXVIII(4) [October 1999]: 434).

Over the lives of God's servants is the rainbow of his promise. Spoiled for the earth, they live, work and speak backed by him. In writing about her work, we write about God's work and will learn about his dealings with his servants and even learn the strangeness of his guidance of them. This is not so much the story of a woman who is so utterly dedicated and self-effacing that her name does not even appear on the letterhead of the Fellowship she formed, as it is the story of what God can do and is ready to do when he finds that kind of person. Though focused upon Amy Carmichael, this book is also intended as a tribute to all the faithful missionaries I worked with, to those who are now in the mission field serving God and to those who have given their lives to the people in need of the saving grace, and whose stories will perhaps never be told.

My research has brought special joys: that of reading wondrous and excellent works of fellow missionaries, that of spending time in Ireland, England and south India, that of even walking through *Broughton Grange*, the stately house near Cokermonth with the splendid view of the Derwent River, where Amy lived several years before going to the mission field. Being befriended and helped with such trust and generosity by several beautiful men and women who share with me the same passion. Amy Carmichael and many others of God's faithful servants completely surrendered their lives to God and were so overwhelmed with gratitude that they gave everything to express their heartfelt love of and thanks to God. I think of the time when I felt so grateful to my Saviour for his grace that I wanted to give him my best and trusted him when he said 'Go Ye', and the answer was 'Yes, Lord'.

■ Walking the 'high road'

Much of the action described in this book took place 100 years ago. It is written with reference to old books, letters and memories concurrent with the happenings in Dohnavur. Since then the world has changed radically, as has India, as has the English language and as has the vision of missionary work. This accounts for the sometimes archaic words and phrases used in this book. Amy Carmichael tried to introduce the atmosphere and thinking of India as she knew it. In several of the ideas of addressing children and adults, and in describing behaviour, we recognise the style and the language of evangelical Christians of the Victorian time in a colonial setting, a way of life that is nowadays foreign to us. Amy Carmichael, as we will see, saw the world around her as full of 'figures of the true' – parables. In persevering reading through her writings we will discover a missionary who demonstrated an unexpected strength in her views, and that the beauty of her life lives on.

For two centuries many Christian women played an active role in overseas missions. Amy Carmichael is one of them, also as a major figure in the evangelical missionary movement of the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century, in which she has become a paradigm for all that is saintly. With her DF she questions today's missionary work. Her evangelical calling to Japan and then to India and her existence there meant a provocation, from which people who are not willing to become acquainted with her can easily withdraw. She was that kind of a courageous missionary who went further than many of her contemporaries and dared to challenge age-long customs and saw the outcome effected by governmental law. The talk with her becomes a confrontation between the church and her mission in the 21st century. She has answered Christ's call, dared to exchange the security of a privileged home and all the comforts and love of her society for an insecure, often lonely foreign environment, with a weak body and facing opposition, even from colleagues. To many of her contemporaries her ideas seemed eccentric and unrealistic. She never wanted to be in the spotlight; she never asked for admiration. I see this missionary for whom the 'Cross was the attraction', as a model of front-line missionary service in Christ's worldwide saving plan. The grace she appropriated in the midst of the turbulent years during the forming of the DF is a beautiful testimony to the love and power of Christ in her life. What we receive from her and learn for missionary work today from all who went before us makes us aware that the questions we face today

cannot be solved without consulting them. High in their banner was 'all to the honour of God and to save people for eternal life'. They were willing to stand for the truth of the Gospel.

This book is written with this in mind. It is a fact that we should neither forget nor shut out. The figure that is before us is a woman with folded hands honouring the living God, taking him at his word, expecting everything from him. He who is ultimately accountable for his own work. The mysteries of a Christ-like existence in God ensure that a book like this will not become a voyeuristic enterprise, even where weaknesses and second-rate issues have to be spoken of. The biographer sees the weaknesses under the protection of grace. Amy Carmichael is not an icon and we do not want to make a legend of her life. I see her as a faithful disciple who followed the footsteps of Jesus Christ, who had come to India before she had. Her biblical realism was the foundation of what she believed and what she did. Once you start to know her, she will draw you into a process of a devaluation of all other values.

However, getting to know her is not made easy for us, because she is surrounded by the then and the now prevailing religious and missionary kitsch. To know Amy Carmichael is also to understand the critical voices about today's mission praxis and we will experience that we can only draw her to us if we are prepared to face her views of our mission work and to be corrected. In confrontation with her, we experience a feeling of having missed an essential issue in our life before God and in our mission work. Yet, an encounter with her holds a promise: experiencing a want in confrontation with her, one sees a richness in her transparent life before God which she shares with us. Her eventful life had many life-changing moments. These moments cannot always be identified as they occur. However, with some it is possible, as can be seen in Amy's life. In our present day, when we hear the crying need for a baptism of holiness, a demonstration of godly living, we focus upon one whose life is so evidently marked with God's intervention. Her words and acts changed both her life and the lives of others. The impact and the influence of those changing moments can still be felt more than 100 years later, in our present time, when our spiritual antenna is brought to bear on God's voice to catch and understand his call. Her example of sacrifice and obedience has inspired countless others, both in missionary service and in motherhood.

As I survey the landscape of men and women in Christian missionary circles today, I have to say that the view is both discouraging and promising. Missionaries in our era are in desperate need of a real primary aim of mission. Daily, missionaries meet with frustration, pain and loneliness, and the stories they tell are often disappointing. They ask themselves if the call was real and have their doubts about their going overseas. They feel victimised by circumstances and think about the many who went before and their gripping biographies they have read. Is God working differently now or is something wrong with them?

Mission agencies experience the same. Nowadays, they send many missionaries into the mission field, but where are the stories of real transformation among the people they work with? Especially after the 50s of the previous century, mission agencies focused on more than one thing, and is not the frustration a result of this not having focused on the 'one thing necessary'? I believe that this sense of confusion and distress among Christians is mostly the result of the disorientation about who God is and who we are. We, representatives of the 21st century, almost *all* have brought in a way of secular thinking about life, work ethics, marriage and missionary work that is culturally accepted and politically correct, but many times fundamentally unbiblical.

However, others tread the 'high road'. In daily life and work, they show the way to reflect the glory of God, and we are greatly encouraged by the zeal and persistence to receive and to work for the Word of God and to act on it. In life, they resonate with the truth and do not fear to make tough, radical choices to re-orientate their lives around the Word of God.

In every age, God raises up men and women who are rooted in the Word of God and understand the essence of Father's will: obedience and love. High-profile individuals, not seeking their own

glory, not searching for the limelight or aspiring high positions of influence. Yet their contribution is beyond earthly limits and they turn the wheels, sometimes age-old customs, into God-fearing life. Of all those raised by the Lord in ages past, the missionary Amy Carmichael in her time was obedient to Christ's last command and equipped to be God's chosen instrument to rescue those who otherwise were doomed to a life of shame and to dishonour the living God. A missionary who was practical, authentic and biblical. Today she triggers us to walk the 'high road' to the honour of God and to save those who still live in spiritual darkness.

The aim with this book is to get this across to the reader Amy Carmichael in her existence before God and men. In our days, she needs an introduction. A missionary so well known in evangelical circles during the first part of the 20th century has been forgotten in academic missionary circles one or two generations after she left this world in 1951. Still, in small circles, her name is remembered and well kept, but soon after she went, the spotlight flashed to names of men and women who were drawn more into publicity. Missionary life today, just as in other circles, conforms more to comets than to stars but stars do remain, as the comets have soon gone. Amy Carmichael is one of the many 'stars' still twinkling in God's firmament. She opened the eyes of the missionary world for things only she saw in her time in south India. She made it impossible for us to turn a blind eye to *Things As They Are* and to see him, who gave his life to save the sins of the world and brought 'freedom to the captives'. The world Amy was born into in 1867 and the world she departed from in 1951 were as different as the invention in 1867 of the first practical mechanical typewriter is from the modern computer:

We are currently living through one of the transforming moments in the history of religion worldwide. Over the last five centuries or so, the story of Christianity has been inextricably bound up with that of the West. [...] Over the last century however, the centre of gravity of the Christian world has shifted inexorably southward, to Africa, Asia and Latin America. [...] Christianity is doing very well indeed in the global South.¹⁷

The first decade of our 21st century has shown us the worldwide fascinating growth and development of the Christian church southward; that of the church in Asia is an integral strand of this remarkable shift in Christianity. To explain this shift we need to analyse the significant transformations in more than one way. When we focus especially on India, we see that Indian Christianity, as a mirror to this global shift, is experiencing a remarkable change, which is noticeable even to the casual observer.

From Indo-centric perspectives, its origins can be traced back to the first century¹⁸ and over time many changes have been effected. However, in the last 150 years one can speak of a 'reconfiguration phase'.¹⁹ Here we are observing an indigenous appropriation of the Gospel, to fit local frames of reference. In the last 30 years, scholars of modern colonialism, European domination and mission work are invigorated and transformed by the influence of historical anthropology and postcolonial theory. Moreover, the focus of the studies shifted from what happened in the past to the 'colonial encounter'. The study of Christian mission work has expanded rapidly in the last decade, with a growing emphasis on constructing more deeply empirical and historically contingent analyses of the cultural encounter between missionaries and indigenous peoples.

Nowadays, mission work is put under the magnifying glass of many phenomenological studies about colonialism, missionaries and conversion, freshened by rapid globalisation. This fuels the thinking that

17. P. Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: OUP, 2002), 1–2.

18. See R.E. Frykenberg, *Christianity in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 91–107.

19. An Andrew Walls expression. Walls enumerates three stages involved in the process of Christianity relating to its host cultures: the missionary stage, the convert stage and the reconfiguration stage (in A. Walls, 'The Expansion of Christianity: An Interview with Andrew Walls,' *Christian Century* [02–09 August 2000]: 792–799).

mission work alienates people not only from their religion and spirituality but also from soil, country and culture. It is true that modern scholars and readers cringe at the 'sweetness and light' of Victorian mission studies and biographies. No one could have been that good. In addition, many have a tendency to spot a conspiracy behind almost every bush, even where neutral observers would perceive only prudence as a typical Victorian way of writing. This kind of approach, usually negative, will ultimately result in the fact that the life and work of Amy Carmichael and her mission as a whole will be depicted negatively, with criticism far outweighing recommendation. Therefore, it may happen that an academic study wants to prove that Amy comes across as a hysteric missionary.²⁰ Amy Carmichael and the DF deserve to be studied in a concise and objective manner of research and description.

We also see a growing scholarly preoccupation with colonial encounters, for instance Eliza Kent in her *Converting Women* and Kumari Jayawardena in *The White Woman's Other Burden*²¹. Both construct a theological context for foreign missions and in this process they miss the theological and ecclesiological distinctions, writing mostly with little sympathy for Christian belief in general and, when they write about Amy Carmichael in particular, her work undergoes the same fate. In considerable detail, Kent examines the underlying structures of belief in Western missionaries and the Indian castes in south India. Her study is unambiguously inspired by feminist postcolonial theory and historical anthropology. As in other postcolonial studies, this one also draws on feminist analysis that has revealed gender as a key constitutive field in the production of colonial knowledge. The work of Western foreign missionaries, described in many books and articles since 1840, often with the tendency to hagiography, now returns as a legitimate and important subject of academic study. With the return of the missionary and missionary encounter as focus of enquiry, the realm of spirituality, faith and religion of the converts is also brought to the fore in the analysis of cultural negotiation and social change. The only conclusion is: the classic missionary has served their turn. This ordeal also fell upon Amy Carmichael. In Kent's ordeal, Amy Carmichael will be remembered as a woman who consecrated herself completely for the people in south India, but her motives and aim to do mission work, and the way she did so, are nowadays seen as a remnant of highly British Victorian mission enterprise, which is something of bygone years.

From the Indian side Amy was put on one line with liberation theology, propagated by Gustavo Gutiérrez (1928), a Peruvian philosopher, theologian and Dominican priest, who is also regarded as the founder of liberation theology:²²

According to Gutiérrez true 'liberation' has three main dimensions: First, it involves political and social liberation, the elimination of the immediate causes of poverty and injustice. Second, liberation involves the emancipation of the poor, the marginalized, the downtrodden and the oppressed from all 'those things that limit their capacity to develop themselves freely and in dignity'. Third, liberation theology involves liberation from selfishness and sin, a re-establishment of a relationship with God and with other people.²³

Matthews articulates Amy's work as a reflection of the pain and suffering and of the search for relevance in relation to Christian mission and spirituality. He also interpreted the Bible with its context. It cannot be interpreted literally, but needs interpretation to the concrete context of the theological

20. Cf. S.J.L. Curtis 'Amy Carmichael: The Hysteric Symptom and Evangelical Millenarian Utopianism' (PhD diss., Monash University, 2007).

21. E. Kent, *Converting Women, Gender and Protestant Christianity in Colonial South India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); K. Jayawardena, *The White Woman's Other Burden. Western Women And South Asia During British Colonial Rule* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995). Both take a feminist perspective of the work of foreign women in South Asia.

22. As done by B. Matthews, 'The Theological Contributions of Amy Carmichael' (thesis, New Theological College, 2007), 37–38.

23. Cf. <http://www.liberationtheology.org/people/gustavo-gutierrez/>, dated 22 August 2014.

activity; in his study Amy is 'a proto-type of liberation theology'.²⁴ Amy's motives to live poor, to work with the poor and to liberate children from prostitution came from the deeply felt need that everyone in south India, rich and poor, needed a Saviour. Amy however never left the evangelistic aim of the DF. She cannot become someone's tool for the liberation theology of the seventies in the 20th century. Those who are doing this re-imagine and reconstruct history, read their own favourite thoughts and predilections, with often anti-Christian roots, into this type of mission and missionary work, rather than letting historical evidence speak for itself.²⁵

This book is a blend of biography, mission history, biblical teaching on mission and the contributions a woman has made to the Christian faith. I have tried to let Amy speak for herself. In writing this book, I listened to important historians who call for biographical dimensions in history books. This mission history is no exemption to this call.²⁶ The results here given will not only be a recital of her life's story, but will give an insight where her ideas for her mission enterprise come from. There is no need to flatter her, because the evidence will speak for itself. Amy has provided us with a gold mine full of her spiritual insights, which is both timely and significant. The book has academic depth but is written in a way that is accessible to all those engaged in mission work and those eager to know about the progress of the work of God in this world. In spite of much that nowadays militates against quietness, there are still people who read books. These are the people who keep the researchers going. This book is written for those who bring to their reading a mind not narrowed by the sensibilities and trivialities of our time, but who are prepared to contemplate the eternally relevant. To be more specific, to trace specifically the truth and the hidden meaning of a single life and to see from within 'something of the most pathetic and noble rescue-work in the world'.²⁷

In my opinion, the work of Amy Carmichael and other women missionaries from the latter half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries needs more attention and we have to dig deep in their intentions to discover an authentic mission enterprise. We have to look behind the outward manifestation at the inward spiritual transformation that took part in the hearts and lives of – in this case – south Indian Christians. Amy's work, especially, was done in a male-dominated CMS low church evangelical mission. In the context of expiring Victorian religion and in these strong entities, she took a different way. As a woman, coming from the late 19th century revivalist Keswick holiness movement, she undertook her mission work and was inspired to spiritual activism in the larger context of theological and social development. The DF is a unique coexistence of faith and work, 'a sanctuary in the desert', as it is called, initiated by a woman, who with eyes on God had a real heart for the people.

We, standing on the crossroads, will have to live and work under a sense of urgency and to extend our horizons with the sense of Christ's supremacy and sufficiency. The contribution women made in the 19th century to the mission through their (often) years of service challenges us to be in the race and

24. Matthews, 'The Theological Contributions of Amy Carmichael', 39 and 53.

25. See also D.L. Severance, *Feminine Threads. Women in the Tapestry of Christian History* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2011), 13. 'Indeed, the feminists found themselves back in the garden with Eve, questioning what God had said and deciding to choose what looks best for them, rather than listening to any authority or examining the historical truthfulness of competing interpretations. Media acceptance of feminist revisionist history and its presence in leading academic circles gave it an aura of authenticity which belied the evidence. Feminist historians generally follow postmodern historical methods.'

26. Historians like H. Lehmann, G. Iggers and R. Frykenberg plead for 'a biography as a genre of historical writing, specifically in dealing with the recent past'. Frykenberg has called biography 'a veritable prism of history' (D.B. Daugherty, 'A dissonant mission: Stephen Neill, Amy Carmichael, and Missionary Conflict in South India', *IBMR* 31(1) (2007): 250). This method is also proposed by Ruth Tucker, in 'Biography as missiology'.

27. See Bishop Handley Moule in the foreword of *Pannamal, V.*

focus on the Gospel and call people willing to die for it.²⁸ The women who went as missionaries in the 19th century exercised an authority on missions that few men and women in our era can match.²⁹ They were, and Amy was like this too, strategic to God's vision for the world. Amy's influence and impact on the work as a 'Victorian lady missionary' – characterised as 'resourceful, self-sacrificing, dedicated and wilful'³⁰ – makes clear why for decades her influence was felt in the country where she worked and also within the world of missions.

In the world today, we assume that mission is a 'multidirectional enterprise in a global context'.³¹ In this enterprise, Amy's holistic approach to mission work shows us the undeniable story of courage, equality and partnership that reflects the Gospel and the world's desire to witness this. The work of Victorian women missionaries is often denigrated and dealt with a little giggle. I am sure we will see that this accusation does not hold with regard to Amy Carmichael and many of her contemporaries.³² We, in this 21st century, will find their lives, ideas and insights real contributions and of much relevance to the propagation of the Christian faith today.

Amy Carmichael's work is described in several biographies in which she comes across as a real Amma, doing good and revealing the dark deeds in the Hindu religion of her time. Many authors portray this missionary hagiographically and I have to admit that for many of her biographers it was difficult to be objective and not to mention any point of criticism. My aim is to transcend the hagiographic images of Amy Carmichael and to give a wide-ranging account of the work of the DF under their 'leader' Amy Carmichael as they responded to the call of God.³³

Frank Houghton's³⁴ *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, officially recognised biography of the DF, was published in 1953. More than 30 years later Elisabeth Elliot's *A Chance to Die* (1987) appeared with nearly the same framework, but she allows herself to give some more critical remarks. Elliot, as a woman author and a well-known missionary too,³⁵ gives details that are lacking in Houghton's biography. Both Houghton and Elliot had access to some information that I have not had. For some of these details, to make Amy's story complete I refer to them. Both authors preferred to be chroniclers rather than commentators;³⁶ however, Elliot makes room for some reflection of what really impelled Amy Carmichael. A pity is that in both biographies little indication is given where the notes for the quotations can be found. A lengthy religious biography is not in vogue in our

28. 'God sends us to the heathen for two purposes, to do them good, and to find a grave for a good self', in Amy Carmichael, *From Sunrise Land*, 119. The deepest motivation for women to go the mission field was an act of faith. Griffiths says that of those who went, two out of four laid down their lives within a couple of years [V. Griffiths, *Not Less than Everything* (Oxford: Monarch Books, 2004), 323].

29. Cf. J. Koppers 'A flame of sacred love: Mission involvement of woman in the 20th century,' *In Die Skriflig* 47(1) (2013).

30. Kent, *Converting Women*, 103.

31. D. Robert, ed., *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers. Missionary Women in the Twentieth Century* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 25.

32. The same is said of the CIM missionaries Hudson Taylor and Geraldine Guinness, who were accused of a 'conspiracy of silence' so that the truth was not to be told. Cf. G.W. Doyle's review of Albyn's *The China Inland Mission and the Late Qing Society, 1832-1905*, ["Mission round table," *DMF Bulletin* 3(2) (2007): 30-31].

33. Readers of this book will understand why 'leader' is here between inverted commas.

34. Houghton was consecrated as Bishop of East Szechwan (China) in 1937. Due to the difficult situation in China from 1940 to 1951, when all CIM missionaries were expelled from the country, he served as general director of the CIM. For several months he stayed in Dohnavur preparing Amy's biography.

35. She died 14 June 1915.

36. In Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 84.

present time, but the explanation of the length of this book is the following. I want to give a full record of Amy's life and work, which cannot be understood without the larger context of the era in which she lived. I have felt compelled to include this study with ample examples of her own writings, because next to her life's work in Dohnavur, my intention has been to uproot the sources of her inspirational missionary enterprise in order to get more insight into the formation and development of her inner spiritual life.³⁷

Missionary biographies that really address the complexities, compromises and contradictions that are experienced by those who engage in cross-cultural mission are relatively rare. People at home like to read biographies of a hagiographic nature because they feel them to be more effective in encouraging others to support or to engage in mission. I tried to avoid the pitfalls and the limitations of a hagiographic approach by portraying her in a balanced way and to see through the aura of holiness in which many wrap her. In giving too much attention to the missionary, the contributions of others, like national evangelists, pastors and catechists who worked together with the missionary, can be mysteriously absent. Amy was fully aware of her weaknesses and her idiosyncrasies. Her ideas about mission and education were often modern for her time. Next to her Bible, there were the mystic Christian writers, which in Dohnavur gave the Fellowship that unique existence of the Fellowship, which enabled her to resist assimilation. In shunning alienation from the Indian culture, she managed to shape her idea of early Christianity.

Elizabeth Kent centres her *Converting Women* precisely on 'understanding the far reaching transformations of custom and habit that took place over the course of Christianization' and uses Amy Carmichael's life and work as an example of a missionary who kept aloof from Indian interests. She asserts that Amy should have imposed her Western ideas on her passive Indian converts, which conclusion is an example of having a blank eye when it comes to certain aspects of the real intention of this missionary. For example, the way she portrays Amy as a woman working as a maverick 'validating a bold, iconoclastic, experimental style of evangelism that did not recognise the authority of any institution'³⁸ is not an honest portrait of her. When talking about the *devadasis*, Kent does not write about them used as sex slaves. That this hidden child trafficking system existed in the shadows was revealed by Amy. When Kent writes about Amy's work she uses the word 'rescue'. Does Kent deny what Amy wrote in *Things As They Are?* Amy looked behind the scenes and saw more than is revealed in the phenomenology.

My aim is to write about Amy Carmichael as I see her in her own written work and to listen to those who worked with her or met her. In the approach, I drew upon some previous research efforts which have focused on particular issues. In commemoration of her birth, 150 years ago, I am willing to listen anew to her phrasing and answers. It is a salutary reminder not only of this missionary but also of the deep realism of the Gospel. I am impressed by the beauty of her character and her radical, outpouring passion for Christ. I spent many years in research, reading through her written heritage, walking through the streets she trod as a child and as a young lady and viewing the work of the DF, recalling the things that happened there and then and seeing it as it now is in the 21st century. It is in consolation and hope that Amy Carmichael, who never lost her focus, will still influence future

37. J.A. Sharrock, in a memoir about Bishop Robert Caldwell, CMS missionary in Madras since 1838 and from 1841–1890 in Tinnevely (Tamil Nadu), wrote about his approach to writing a biography: 'A biographer cannot, I presume, do justice to his subject, unless he has a sincere regard for, and hearty sympathy with him whose life he writes. To some extent, at least he will be tempted to lay in his brighter colours with too lavish a hand, while hesitating to dip his brush in the more sombre hues. This is a temptation to be resisted. A picture without shade, like a harmony without discord, is not only untrue to nature, but is also "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable"' [Sharrock, *Bishop Caldwell*, 1].

38. Kent, *Converting Women*, 102.

mission workers. An instrument in God's hand, walking closely with God, listening to the Spirit, she measured her life by loss instead of gain. Giving up her own rights and taking up the cross and following Christ marked her as a missionary. Her ministry was in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and of healing India's secret – only known in a small circle – satanic sore, in fellowship with him whose heart is still utterly 'moved with compassion' for the perishing souls and suffering bodies. In things great and small, she seemed to have a way of mission so characteristic to her, depending on God alone.

From her birth in 1867, until 1951 when she died, world events moved rapidly and social conditions changed drastically. Missionary history at its heart is the biography of God-sent men and women who shaped this history. There are missionaries in the worldwide church who have had a great influence for a number of years. Some of these are content to be mere echoes of their predecessors. There are also people who leave their mark on a whole period. And there are a very few who by their work and writings influence whole generations and live in the hearts and thoughts of many people. Only a very few are given to break fresh ground and to share in laying the foundations of a movement which within their own lifetime profoundly and extensively influences the lives of their own generation for good. They show a great deal of originality and enterprise in their work. Three of those few are David Livingstone, Peter Cameron Scott and Amy Carmichael. All three have been studied in either academic or popular volumes, but the latter, 'this spiritual giant',³⁹ has a story to tell and to devote a single volume to her, in which her significant role in India as well as in mission history and mission theory is being told, is still a desideratum.⁴⁰

In mission history, the year 1867 was very eventful. That year the missionary of Scottish origin, David Livingstone (1813–1873), was in the middle of his fight against the cruel slave trade and that same year saw the birth of two children, a boy and a girl who would change the fate of many, adults and children, forever. Both children were from Scottish ancestry; both got their first religious experience from parents who tried to teach their children to love God; both attended a Presbyterian church in their youth, the boy in Philadelphia (USA) and the girl in Millisle (Northern Ireland) and later on in nearby Belfast. On these three, in later years, the burden of the lost multitudes weighed heavily. David Livingstone, Peter C. Scott and Amy Carmichael, they whose souls were lighted with wisdom from on high, could they deny to men and women benighted the lamp of life? When stories about Livingstone's life and aspirations to end the slave trade and to spread Christianity were published, they aroused a great deal of support among the British people, and strengthened the movement in Britain to abolish the slave trade *de facto*. The news of Livingstone's death in 1873 'sent a wave of missionary zeal throughout Britain'.⁴¹ The American Peter C. Scott, visiting Westminster Abbey in London one day, was caught by the name of David Livingstone, cut into a slab on the floor. There, oblivious of the crowds, he knelt on the floor and prayed for Africa, wondering what God might require from him. He 'saw' a line of mission stations passing through east Africa into the mysteries of the Sahara Desert. In all the questions, God calmed him. 'If the venture be of God, it shall and it must prevail.' He became the founder in 1895 of the Africa Inland Mission (AIM) and in that same year the first AIM missionaries led by Scott arrived in Mombasa, then British East Africa. A year later, after long safaris, the ultimate sacrifice came: malaria forced him into bed and on 04

39. This expression is in Frykenberg, *Christianity in India*, 484. His wide ranging study closes with: 'The legacies of Mother Teresa or Amy Carmichael remind Christians of India of spiritual giants from abroad who, in their hundreds and thousands, gave their lives to India'.

40. Frykenberg, *Christianity in India*, 462. Amy Carmichael is in his list of 'noteworthy missionary women'.

41. K. Fiedler & S. Paas, *The Faith Moves South. A History of the Church in Africa* (Zomba: Kachere Series no. 27, 2006), 90.

December his mother asked him, 'Where to, Peter?' He gasped, 'To the eternal city' and, raising his arm, he continued with his last breath 'I want the arm of the Lord of Hosts around me'. The last written words of this servant of God, buried in African soil were, 'Here am I, use me in life or death'.⁴² Scott started his pioneer mission enterprise in Africa in October 1895; in the same month, Amy, the object of this book, was ready to start a mission enterprise in south India, known today as the DF. When she closed her eyes in 1951 to be with the Lord, her death marked the end of an era of genuine mission movement. She was born at a time that was highlighted by massive mission enterprise, in the midst of the 20th century; the world and the focus of the essence of mission had changed completely. However, the vision of Peter Scott and Amy Carmichael is still vivid in the AIM and in the DF.

Amy Carmichael is one of those we encounter when we read the history of mission. History has to do with the past, which we can describe. Nevertheless, history does not always mean distance, objectivity or relativity. There is another type of historical encounter, which is close. The nearby decades disappear, as if they do not belong to us, and faraway times emerge so close at hand that we think they are our times, and we see the light of the people and the events of those days in such a way that we understand what was thought and what was going on. The reality is there at hand. It is there as a treasure we have discovered anew, a fullness that has only to be grasped spiritually with a deep affinity and to be understood. History can talk in a way that we grow to understand, and it is from here that we again understand again our life and our reason for being here. The history of mission is there where it compels our present time into a decision either to be worthy of her or to go to rack and ruin. Tracing the varied ways by which the Lord leads his people is always a fascinating study. Observing the joys and sorrows, the difficulties, the trials, the anxieties, the manifold vicissitudes, which are all implements in his hand to shape his servant ultimately for his eternal home. Amy Carmichael was one of the hundreds of British women who from the mid-19th until the mid-20th century went eastward, a shining participant in a unique venture of Christian womanhood.⁴³

Her life was saturated with the passion to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This element of mission was at the fore. This was what her life was like before she went to India and during her life's work there.⁴⁴ Tracing her in her web of time, beside the charm of noticing God's dealings and grace in her personal life, there is record of some valuable mission work committed to his servant's care. We see the hand of God at work in Asia around the turning of the 19th to the 20th century and especially over the past first 50 years of the latter century in the south of India.

This book is not a biography of a great missionary – she herself would not favour that idea – but more the account of a great mission enterprise. As mentioned before, we do already have some biographies of Amy Carmichael and my intention is not to add another one just to improve the ones we have. After having looked at reference lists in many studies about the church and mission in India, even

42. D. Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers, The Story of the African Inland Mission* (Nottingham: Crossway Books, 1994), 17–23.

43. Since 1834 women became more and more involved in missionary work. 'During the next three quarters of a century, Britain sent more missionaries overseas than any other country, by the end of the century, well over half were women' (R. Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2013), XX). At the end of the 19th century, 'women outnumbered male colleagues by nearly 20 percent' (J. Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700* (London: Routledge, 2010), 269).

44. 'For always the missionary element is to the fore. The whole work is saturated with it and the twenty-fourth of the month is kept as a preaching day, when a little band of girls go out to the villages near Dohnavur and an equally missionary-hearted group stay at homeland do the work of those who go' (*The Continuation of a Story*, 45).

academic ones, I was astonished how rarely I saw Amy Carmichael's name.⁴⁵ The Indian church and mission agencies are doing themselves an injustice by not taking notice of her mission enterprise.⁴⁶

Our focus will be on Amy Carmichael as a missionary and which sources her principles came from. I put everything aside that did not have a direct bearing on the object in view. I have only one object before me: the elucidation and illustration of God's grand missionary purpose. Amy had her faults and foibles and these are apparent when we look at her life story without rose-coloured spectacles. However, from whatever angle we focus our attention on her, the predominant impression nobody can deny, is that God's grace in all her human weakness was enough for her to do the things in Dohnavur and to glorify her Saviour.

I have to come down to earth. Amy puts faith in service. In India she discovered 'dark deeds', atrocities against women and girls. The dedication of little girls to the Hindu temples, seen as 'marriage to the gods', was nothing less than a euphemism for sex trafficking of little girls into a life of temple prostitution. Amy's DF is a landmark of protection, even today, of an ongoing war against the stream of violence against women, sex trafficking, child prostitution, forced child marriage and gang rape. What Amy grieved at is my grief, too. I often wonder how it comes into the head of a man to mistreat, disgrace and abuse a woman. Dignity of women and girls in the 21st century is continually at stake. Being a father of seven, I have seen what it is for a woman to raise a family, to bear children with all the possible complications in pregnancy and during childbirth and to regain health and strength. Years in Africa as a missionary in Kenya and Mozambique have opened my eyes to the sufferings of women, physically as well as the injustice done against them: the high rate of mortality of young women before, during and after childbirth, their vulnerability to the threat of being raped in conflict situations, female genocide, genital mutilation and always trying to keep the family going. A deep grief is in me when I see, hear or read about these sufferings of God's images.

Carolyn Custis James's *Half the Church. Recapturing God's Global Vision for Women*⁴⁷ convinces us not only that knowledge of Amy's work is important, but also that the actions she undertook must not be absent in our mission work. Even today in India and here in the West, evil practices with little girls and women still happen. In Dohnavur, the work Amy started is ongoing and her work challenges Christians today to be at the forefront to rescue God's daughters from evil. The work of Katie Davis⁴⁸ in Uganda, who with reckless abandon in 2007 followed Jesus Christ to care for children living in extreme poverty, is really an inspiration and a testament to what God will do when you obey and are willing to be used in his service. You are inspired and challenged by it, seeing the mighty hand of our Lord and you are encouraged by this for generations to come. Having said this, you will understand I cannot evade the biographical details of Amy Carmichael and I need to place her portrait in her web of time as an instrument in God's hands if we want to see God at work in that specific time, at that place, among the people he wanted to draw near to him.

Our vision of God's graceful dealings in this world can be traced from our ancestry and childhood, spiritual environment and spiritual encounters; for me it was a moving journey to discover God's interventions in the life of Amy Carmichael, making her the rescuer of so many young girls and boys

45. Cf. A. Kanjamala, *The Future of Christian Mission in India* [Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014], which covers the whole history of Christian missions in India, but does not mention her name and work.

46. The time Amy died in 1951 marked the end of pious but excellent writing by missionaries, mostly women, about mission work. The CIM had Geraldine Howard Taylor, Mildred Cable, Francesca French, Rosalind Goforth, Isobel Kuhn and A.J. Broomhall as its mission ambassadors and in Amy Carmichael India's need for the Gospel got a voice and a pencil.

47. C.C. James, *Half the Church. Recapturing God's Global Vision for Women* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011].

48. Cf. K. Davis, *Kisses from Katie. A Story of Relentless Love and Redemption*. [Croydon: Authentic, 2013].

whose lives reflected the grace of God. Her clear mission vision originated from her steadfast belief in God and his dealings in this world. Born in Ireland, she showed her strong Irish character throughout her life in faraway Dohnavur, where she was the inspiring missionary, shepherding her young flock and in biblical wisdom setting up a mission and fellowship to save, spiritually and physically, the lives of many endangered children. In her writings, she sheds light on hidden paths and gives us glimpses into a religion that consumes the souls and bodies of the very young into a sinful life and to death. Her tender heart saw the beauty of God's creation and with the brilliant colouring of an impressionistic painter the colours of the flowers and the ever-changing beauty of a landscape were etched in her writing, which describes the local people at the well, in the fields and in their homes, all pictures of a life that has gone forever.

Many decades after her death she influences and inspires thousands all over the world. She had a wide circle of friends and a host of confidants who were encouraged by her work and vision depicted in her books. The fire that burned in her, and which we warmed ourselves at, is still burning in the 21st century. When we can discover the secret of her life, we shall find the One, to whom all glory should be given.

Amy was the first who was supported by the Keswick Mission Council. She had lifelong links with Keswick. 'One of the most memorable missionary links with Keswick is through Amy Carmichael'⁴⁹ and because of her own deep spirituality very much based on Keswick teaching and experience, I need to spend a full chapter on Keswick and its relation to mission work.

It may be that when we describe her era, and the way she pioneered in India and penetrated with the Gospel into the heart of the religion there, that this is an essential and intimate glimpse into an era of mission work. What has been and still is her legacy? What gives her the claim to be listened to? How should one understand her influence, her impact, perhaps her presence, in a time so completely different from hers? I write about a time that does not exist anymore. I want to see Amy in historical perspective, with an eye to the future. I have tried to explain what the mission work in India was about, particularly the way that she was passionately engaged in 'the fight' and sought to conquer in God's power. The pages of this book tell of vision and obedience in early faith and lifelong faithfulness. Through her life and love she has ensured the right to be heard today. Through her struggle in fighting the dark deeds it is right that she presses her claims with confidence. She could speak to the society she lived in and even impress the secular world. Amy's consecration is not merely an act to look back upon, a date to be cited as a landmark in our spiritual history. Essentially, consecration for her was a matter to express in everyday life, in the trivial round, the common task. The mission field is right around us, as well as all around the world. Times have changed, not Jesus' commission to proclaim the Gospel worldwide. I hope that her commitment and service may be an inspiration to many who confront the challenges of our century for Christian discipleship. So many are living in superstition, spiritual darkness, without hope and where the abusive traffic of young girls and boys for evil practices is still going on.⁵⁰ Let us begin where she began and where we all need to begin – as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ! Let us who know the beauty and dignity of a God-given guided life indulge ourselves in her mission principles and perspectives. Let them in Amy's own words 'be seeds of light to us'⁵¹ and reveal to us her secret that the invisible is the actual, and the spiritual the real. Therefore, what is recorded here are many of Amy's

49. P. Hacking, *What He Says, Where He Sends, A New Challenge to Mission and Service, New Keswick Collection* (Hants, UK: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1988), 107.

50. Cf. the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, held from 10 to 13 June 2014 in London, a UN initiative aimed at eliminating sexual abuse against women.

51. In J. Guinness, *Mrs Howard Taylor: Her Web of Time* (London: CIM, 1950), 1.

actual words. Amy Carmichael was not a saint and we do not want to make a legend of her life. In *Triumphant Love* the secret of her life is pictured: a woman with a rich spiritual life, active since her youth in philanthropic activities and deep insights into the Bible and blessed with keen intelligence and spiritual acumen. The secrecy of a Christ-like existence in God takes care that a book like this will not become a voyeuristic enterprise. The title of this book indicates what she for herself was: a life consecrated to God to the utmost.

Built on the small and very dangerous Eddystone Rocks, 14 miles southwest of Plymouth, is the most famous lighthouse in the British Isles. Round about the Eddystone Lighthouse these words are inscribed: 'To give light and to save life'. Amy sailed from the British shores in 1895 – no small venture of faith for her – bound for the unknown India. A step of faith today – it was still greater then and she was never to return to Britain and Ireland. The words on the lighthouse exactly express the aims of the DF, whose beams have shone for more than 100 years over the south Indian lands to lighten the lives of so many living in spiritual darkness and to save endangered children from moral destruction. Still to this day the Dohnavur family, and thousands of men and women in Asia, are devout Christians, serving the Lord and doing what Jesus asked, namely letting God's light shine all over Asia. They continue to devote their lives to this great goal. Amy Carmichael left behind converts scattered over India and many parts of the world, and to each she has imparted a vision and a mission. Her capacity for love is a rebuke. She carries us to a higher level. Let go of earthly things and aim for the highest: to make the vision known, reflecting in our faces the radiance of God's own. Most missionary women got little resonance in mission-related literature and were not given a biography, or were not portrayed in mission handbooks. That is not fair or, in the words of Jemima Thompson in 1841:

Many excellent women have adorned, and still adorn, our foreign missions; - full of love to the perishing Heathen, and of zeal for the honour and glory of the Saviour of men. Missionary biography ought not, therefore to be limited to Schwartz, Henry Martin, Morrison, Milne, Carey, and such laborious and apostolic men [...]. Women, possessing those indispensable qualifications which have conferred imperishable honour and shed such sacred lustre on the cause of the Redeemer, are needed to accompany the servants of Christ in their evangelical missions.⁵²

Since 1841 much has changed, and today, as it was already at the end of the 19th century, women, married and single, outnumber men on the mission field. The lives of most women missionaries remain hidden or obscured, in part due to what can be described as 'a collective art of forgetfulness'.⁵³ In the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries the aim of mission work was to convert those who did not know Christ. The missionaries were constrained by love for Christ, the only Saviour. The church today has to see that those who went before us have left us a legacy not to be denied. Researchers in mission history will appreciate the fact that all their understanding and findings forever remain incomplete. To find a way in the abundance of all the verbal information, literature and source materials bring us to the point of just being faithful, and of using the insight and grace the Lord provides. In writing the life story of Amy Carmichael, I came into close contact with the way she was used by God, and this in such a manner that writing about her was a continuously humbling experience. The result is inadequate to the possibilities of the subject.

I was privileged to be in the place where she worked and now, with her personal Bible in my hands, I have the awareness of entering 'hallowed ground', to listen to what she wanted to say and to watch the Bible being lived out in her belief and in the common tasks of her daily life. What gives Amy and others

52. In *Memoirs of British Female Missionaries* (1841), quoted in Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, XX.

53. Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, XXI.

the claim to be listened to in our present time? What was Amy like as a woman who persevered in spite of all the rejections of her fellow workers in the mission? What were the assumptions and motives driving her mission and how did she and others enter the mission field? The names of the pioneers nowadays are unknown or have little resonance in today's Christian circles, but all are known to God. They had the Bible as their guide, in a form of *kerygmatic* caring for souls, and it is for us to interpret their words and doings. The reality of the people in Hebrews 11 is still flowing in the hearts and lives of people on the front lines of mission work in the present day.

We do know what this distinctive personality accomplished. Today many in India are witnesses of her amazing work, and the fruits of her pen are to be read in books and articles fighting against the 21st century sexual exploits of young girls and women. Her struggle against this evil continues into this century and the force of her convictions leaves traces in our own. The pages of this book tell of this: her vision and obedience, of early faith and lifelong faithfulness, of resource and courage, of wisdom, hope and love, of looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith. Surely, mission history helped to shape the person she was, and she certainly has helped to shape mission history of the first part of the 20th century. For many in our age she is a trusted source of inspiration and guidance. Not everyone would always agree with what she said, wrote and did, but we all know that her word and work originate from a steadfast communion with God, life experience, great independence of mind and from a deep interrogation of her own conscience. She was never in for a crowd-pleasing soundbite, but would be heard and understood by those who in stillness were willing to be led by the same Spirit who drove her, and then listened, to discover a truly God-fearing missionary, who set up a high standard for all her successors to live up to. This committed missionary already in her lifetime became a maker of mission history. Is not her life story a kind of *vade mecum* of missionary sainthood? In her struggle fighting the dark deeds, and bringing the saving Light, it is by right that Amy possesses her claims to us. The title of this book indicates what she saw as the utmost of a life consecrated to God. Her prayer was, that 'the sum of all my life be love'.⁵⁴ Owing to her life and love, she has earned the right to be heard.

Listen, this is her story.

54. *Edges of His Way*, 134; *Mountain Breezes*, 179.

**Setting the scene:
Unprecedented instability and
dawning of a vision**



Dawning of a vision

Amy Carmichael, for several reasons a fascinating character, was born in a turning point in political, social and spiritual British history. Her life reveals something of the amazing diversity and depth of the changing and sweeping missionary efforts when her mission activity was beginning to expand effectively and to reshape missionary thinking. At her birth Queen Victoria had been on the throne for nearly 30 years. The rise of Britain under this monarch – Victoria’s name became descriptive of the era – was huge and every decade in the 19th century brought Britain further advances and discoveries. Raised and educated during the Victorian era Amy’s identity was shaped according to this tradition. We meet her as an adult in the then closing age of nonconformity, in the liberty of the individual in life and conscience, and swept up in the religious fervour that had gone across the country since the 1870s. The vitality of the society in which Amy was growing up, the attitudes it created and its new involvement in the world were to have some influence on Amy Carmichael’s contribution to and in India. Her practical as well as her mystical approach found little in common with the then generally received missionary opinion, while her approach precluded fresh thinking of about keeping together word and deed in mission work.

Victorian women who served the cause of the Kingdom of God often involved themselves in philanthropic enterprises and charitable volunteer organisations, but few went far beyond the circumscribed boundaries. The role of women serving the cause of the British Empire through their professional work and the way they were portrayed in the literature of the colonial and imperial British nation, both as writers and as subjects of representation, has been widely explored.⁵⁵ Many Victorian women lived vicariously through the lives of other people. Their work offers a close look at the intersection of gender and race in Victorian times. Rule Britannia traces this connection from the early 19th century nostalgia for masculine adventure to later female assertiveness. The women stood out strongly in discussions about English education, class conflicts sparked by colonisation and patriarchal

55. P. Barr, *The Mem Sahibs: In Praise of the Women of Victorian India* (London: Penguin, 1976); P. Barr *The Dust In The Balance, British Women in India 1905–1945* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1989). A. Hayes & D. Urquhart, ed., *Irish Women’s History* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2004).

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responses to fears about feminine influence. Women's ambitions in the 19th century reached further than the British shores and the hundreds who went into the unique venture of Christian womanhood, the mission field, were the cause of 'the largest mass movement of women in Britain in the 19th century'.⁵⁶

■ Disturbing times

When 18-year-old Queen Victoria ascended to the British throne in 1837, very few of her subjects had travelled more than 10 miles from the rural spot in which they were born, goods and messages could only travel as fast as a horse could carry them, and only half of the English citizens could read and write. When the queen died in 1901, the pace and texture of life had dramatically transformed. About 80% of English citizens now lived in towns and cities, and some of their homes were fitted with electric lights, had cabinets stocked with canned foods, and sat on gaslight-dotted streets. Telegraphs carried messages in a blink, phone connections made the world smaller for many, railroad tracks crisscrossed the land, and luxurious steamships fairly whisked passengers from England to America in only nine days. A man could now write a letter on his typewriter, get the family portrait taken by the local photographer, or have an X-ray, vaccination or chloroform administered by his doctor. Education for the young had become compulsory, and literacy soared to nearly 100%. Not only in Britain: outside the British Isles the world at that time was also becoming a swiftly changing scene. Earthly powers emerged, others perished; wars and revolutions, new inventions and social changes intoxicated many with dreams of a better world. Just before Amy's birth in 1867, Madame Curie, the French scientist, had discovered radium, Alfred Nobel patented dynamite and Eiffel's tower in Paris, meant to stand only for a few years, still stands in full glory in the second decade of the 21st century.

Nineteenth-century British Protestantism saw a shift in its relationship to the world of thought after the rise of the Enlightenment⁵⁷ and Romanticism⁵⁸ as a reaction to rational philosophy. Many thinkers took for granted the truth of biblical revelation and creeds and the centre of epistemological authority moved from revelation to reason. Religion was removed from the authority of the state and the public arena. Authors such as John Locke (1632–1704), George Berkeley (1685–1753) and the Scotsman David Hume (1711–1776) found no 'principles of science' or of morality taught by the 'Almighty Lecturer'. They had prepared the ground for this secular thinking and they wielded great influence along a secular arc. The earthquake that devastated Lisbon on All Saints Day in 1755 inspired Voltaire's *Candide* and the French Revolution fostered much scepticism among the population of the European continent and the British Islands.⁵⁹ All this had many implications for British Christianity.⁶⁰

Negatively, many British churchmen adopted not only the categories of early modern philosophy but also its ideas; theological content began to reflect culture more and traditional belief less. An example of

56. In M. Taylor Huber & N.C. Lutkehaus, ed., *Gendered Missions, Women and Men in Missionary Discourse and Practice* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 18.

57. For W.R. Ward, the Enlightenment is a 'body of human knowledge resting upon foundations whose truth is self-evident to any rational human being' (P. Helm, 'Religion and Philosophy', in C. Partridge & D.R. Groothuis [Eds.], *Dictionary of Contemporary Religion in the Western World* [Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2002], 101).

58. Romanticism arose in the late 18th century. The German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) had his roots in Pietism, and stressed feeling and experience in his thinking: personal confession combined with critical thinking about the Bible.

59. Cf. D. Edwards, *Christian England, Vol. 3, From the 18th Century to the First World War* (London: Collins, 1984), 13–19.

60. See M.A.G. Haykin, 'Evangelicalism and the Enlightenment's,' in M.A.G. Haykin & K.J. Stewart (eds.), *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 37–62.

this range is to be found in a rationalist-influenced Aryanism in the Irish Presbyterian Church up to the subtle changes in biblical theology taught by evangelical leaders like Philip Doddridge (1702–1751).⁶¹ It was one of the deadest times in the history of the church in England since the Reformation. In too many cases, the clergy paid lip service to the Christian creed to which they had no heart attachment:

The churches of mid-eighteenth century England all but abandoned orthodox, historical Christianity and now preached a tepid kind of moralism that seemed to present civility and the preservation of the status quo as the *summum bonum*. [...] and a fog of hopeless and brutal superstitious spiritualism crept over the land.⁶²

Despite several local revivals during the 18th century, evangelical pulpits in the national church were few in number.⁶³ In those times when the savour and unction of divine grace was gone, a positive side can be mentioned: a large number of theologians and pastors recognised the changes – overt and subtle – to theology and sought to develop new ways to express and preserve what they saw as the faith once and for all delivered to the saints.⁶⁴ At the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries a new biblical, evangelical vision dawned. This new era often for polemics and apologetics made use of the categories and methods of the Enlightenment but without essential changes to orthodoxy.⁶⁵ Many theologians engaged the challenges to traditional theology from the doctrine of God, Christology and salvation to the integrity of biblical authority. Many saw the aridity and dead scholarship of modernism and focused on experimental Christianity and on a faith that subordinated everything to the Bible. ‘The preparation for eternity should be the main business and anxiety of time’.⁶⁶

The early years of the 19th century were more or less anxious ones for the British people as they were poised between the old order and the new. They were the dark days of the industrial revolution, with unmitigated economic slavery, labour done by workers who came from a background of centuries-old rural servitude.

The shadow of the French Revolution had lain darkly across Europe. A whole generation feared the probable eruption of corresponding tumults at home. Aristocracy and church knew about the mob at the gates with farm cart and guillotine. There was the fear that a complete social order could be wiped out when France would invade the country with military power, followed by cities thrown down, looting, rape and murder and a country tyrannised by evil powers. These terrors were subdued and these miseries ended only in 1815 with the decisive Battle of Waterloo, leaving many grieving wives and children, whose husbands had died on the battlefields in Belgium, Spain, Egypt and the West Indies. In

61. H. Leebody, ‘Henry Cooke, D.D., and Arianism in the Irish Church,’ *The Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review*, 1(2), [April 1872], 205–231; for Doddridge see his *A Dissertation on the Inspiration of the New Testament*, in *Miscellaneous Works* (London: T. Longman, 1793). Doddridge argued for three degrees of inspiration: superintendence, elevation and suggestion.

62. E. Metaxas, *Amazing Grace. William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery* (Oxford: Monarch Books, 2007), 7.

63. ‘If the people go to perdition in these days it is not for want of ministers. The clergy are likely to become soon as plentiful as the locusts in Egypt, and which of them is the greatest plague of the two, time and experience of the Church will discover’ (‘The Happy Man: The Abiding Witness of Lachlan Mackenzie’ [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth], 45, quoted in W. Hanna [ed.] *Letters of Thomas Chalmers* [Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth, 1979], IX).

64. When Robert and James Haldane after their conversion preached the Gospel at the beginning of the nineteenth century, they spoke to multitudes that had never heard of salvation by grace. See Hanna, *Letters of Thomas Chalmers*, IX.

65. Examples are Anglicans like Charles Simeon (1759–1836) in England, Congregationalists like Robert (1764–1842) in Scotland, Edward Williams (1750–1813) in Wales and England and Baptists such as Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) in England and Alexander Carson (1776–1844) in Ireland.

66. Thomas Chalmers in Hanna, *Letters of Thomas Chalmers*, XVIII.

the years following the end of the Napoleonic wars, bread, the staple food, was expensive and there was a surplus of labour. Revolutionary upheavals rocked the country, harvests failed repeatedly, cholera swept through the cities and social unrest was everywhere. In 1832, 'after fifty years of proposals, disappointments and agitation' culminating in scenes of protest and riotous anarchy and public rallies in several parts of England, the old parliamentary system was swept away.⁶⁷ In society, the contrast remained between the gentleman, who was seen as rich, cultured and clean, and on the other side the labouring man, who was considered to be poor, rough and dirty. The 'us' and the 'them', the upper class and the working people required differentiation.

Women got a voice and many were able to make their mark as writers, artists, travellers and actresses, breaking away from the accepted family roles for women and from patriarchal domination. British lifestyle came with government officials and missionaries to the colonies and this made dramatic and far-reaching changes in the signs and practices that constituted their worlds. Concern for decorum had wide-reaching implications for the role that women were to play in the family and society. It tended even to narrow the already restricted range of behaviours and choices deemed appropriate for women.⁶⁸ In the 19th century in politics and society, the contrast remained and between the rich and the poor came an element of fear, suspicion and resentment, which disturbed their relations.

Meanwhile, Enlightenment prepared the emergence of the evangelical version of Protestantism and, interpreting Protestant mission, we can argue that the Enlightenment shaped the vision. Many missionary enterprises were based on intellectual foundations with reason prominent.⁶⁹ Romanticism became a popular movement. Believers strictly defending the Bible and, holding firm the doctrines of Calvinism, were now open for more feeling, experience and personal explanation, which paved the way for Evangelicalism.⁷⁰ During Queen Victoria's reign, the queen herself was very outspoken about the role of women in society.⁷¹ Biblical values were interwoven in a rapidly changing society. Industries and offices forced the men to work outside the home the whole day, whereas the women had to create a home and a safe environment for the children and could use their free time to help the sick and the poor. The ideas of true womanhood were derived from the Bible. Queen Victoria did not believe the woman's natural place was in politics or in public, and she strongly opposed the 'women's rights movement'.⁷² Enlightenment and Romanticism held wider ramifications as we will see for Amy Carmichael's era when strict biblical thinking, holiness movement and vital Christian involvement in church and society influenced the Brighton and Keswick Conventions and shaped Amy's thinking about her involvement in society and about mission.

67. J.F.C. Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain 1832-51* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1979), 180. The Reform Bill of 1831 pushed through by the party in power (the Whigs) against the resistance of the opposition (the Tories), gave a vote to the larger tenant farmers in the country and to men owning their own homes in the new industrial centres, but it still left the real political power in the hands of the landed aristocracy.

68. For an extensive study about these issues, see Kent, *Converting Women*.

69. See D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge, 2005), 74; U. Gäbler, *Auferstehungszeit. Erweckungsprediger des 19. [München: Jahrhunderts, 1991], 161* v. 'Bebbington notes that the evangelical doctrine of assurance, itself an outworking of Enlightenment empiricism, gave the confidence necessary for wide proclamation of the gospel as the Bible and personal religious experience combined. This became a powerful driver for mission', [C.E.M. Wigram, *The Bible and Mission in Faith Perspective, J. Hudson Taylor and the Early China Inland Mission* (Zoetermeer, The Netherlands: Boekencentrum, 2007), 52.

70. 'The chief explanation for the transformation of Evangelicalism in the years around 1830 is the spread of Romanticism' (Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 103).

71. See C. Erikson, *Her Little Majesty: The Life of Queen Victoria* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).

72. See 'Victorian Women: *Keepers at home*', in Severance, *Feminine Threads. Women in the Tapestry of Christian History*. (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2011), 257-278. Quotation p. 257.

■ Exciting times

The old rural England, peopled by sturdy farm workers and independent artisans, was set on a course that would see the rise of Britain to the 'zenith of its power as the workshop of the world'; they were really 'exiting times'.⁷³ The labouring poor were sucked into the furnace of the industrial age, where the factory, the mine and the mill had to employ thousands on never-ending shifts. Major cities such as Manchester and Birmingham almost doubled in size within 20 years. The coming of the railway – 6000 miles of track were laid in Britain alone – and the establishment of penny post and telegraph changed the face of the kingdom. Business was booming, but the changes were traumatic in the extreme. 'It is hard to escape the impression that very large numbers of people in the 1840s were completely bewildered by the environment in which they found themselves'.⁷⁴ Meanwhile, the British Empire ruled the seas, the British flag stood proud on every continent and British influence was felt in the new dominions on every continent. The Victorian times stood for a loyal society where law and order, prudence, advances and discoveries meant Britain was looked at by the rest of the world. It was the time of the dispersal of English law and language across large parts of the globe.

The Bank of England was synonymous with a healthy credit system and spurred the growth of London City, making it the commercial and financial centre of the empire. The mood of society was excited with the visible material changes in the country, and there was individual commitment to self-improvement. Queen Victoria supported the Mines Act of 1842, which banned women and children from working underground. By 1870, education was compulsory for all British children. The rapid expansion of the railway network opened up travel possibilities both in Britain and on the continent. Thomas Cook organised excursions in 1841 and by 1860 large numbers of well-to-do middle class men and women were enjoying holidays in France, Italy and Switzerland.⁷⁵

For the rich, horse riding was very much the fashionable recreation in Regency London. The importance of the Victorian Age is best epitomised by the Great Exhibition, which Prince Consort Albert organised in Hyde Park in 1851 to display to the world Britain's supremacy and leadership in industry and technology. The new Crystal Palace showed the world the rise, the grandeur and the greatness that the new time stood for. Exhibits of modern inventions were erected in the Crystal Palace. In the first few years, the average daily attendance was estimated at no less than 43 000. Taylor and his sister Amelia were also among the visitors for Amelia's 16th birthday⁷⁶ and it was there that Taylor met a German missionary from China, Wilhelm Lobscheid, who gave him some advice and encouragement about becoming a missionary.

Scientific knowledge expanded, a science-based industrial revolution was to make life new and urban, and the popular wind was to become largely secular.⁷⁷ Among thoughtful believers, there was a

73. See N. Cliff, *A Heart for China* (London: Authentic, 1998), 1.

74. Harrison, *Early Victorian Britain*, 35. Trade unions were still illegal, and throughout 1840–1846 the infamous Corn Law imposed high duties on imported grain, thereby protecting British agriculture at the expense of the poorer people for whom the cost of bread was crucial.

75. Cf. the *Swiss Letters* of F.R. Havergal (1881) and *Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands* of H. Beecher Stowe (1854). Havergal advised over-tired Christian workers, urging them to escape to the beauty of the Alps as a tonic for mind, body and spirit. She also used the opportunities for evangelistic work and gave testimony of how she witnessed to many people on every day of her trip. Passing with her friend Elizabeth through Paris, torn apart by the war, they spent nearly three hours giving out tracts. See S. James, *In Trouble and Joy* (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2003), 170–172.

76. See P. Thompson, *Each to Her Post. The Inspiring Lives of Six Great Women in China* (Sevenoaks: Hodder & Stoughton, 1982), 19.

77. 'The old doctrines of Christianity and the Bible had served their purposes in their day, but the idea of believing them and preaching them in the late 18th century simply seemed wilfully anachronistic and silly' (Metaxas, *Amazing Grace*, 45).

revival of the glowing religious emotions and memories and the surrender of self-sufficiency in exchange for an emotional biblical assurance beyond the reach of the cold hand of science. Many Christians, in a reborn faith, believed in the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. When around 1730 several young men arrived at Oxford University, religion of the heart changed things profoundly. Of this generation of young students, the Wesley brothers and George Whitefield formed a small group, which was called the Holy Club.

Bible study and prayer kept them together and as they did this rather methodically, others soon labelled them as 'Methodists'. It was Whitefield who urged that living in a biblical way, holy and perfect, is a work of grace. From these young men, who preached where they were called, people heard many new things. It was like a new revelation for them; the old Gospel now fresh in plain language. For the starched theological establishment it was shocking, but now the banner of truth and grace waved over the countryside. Even open-air meetings were held and often Whitefield preached before crowds of 30 000 people. The Great Awakening would become a vibrant form of Christianity, which would ultimately change the whole of Britain's social order and religion of the 19th century. William Wilberforce (1759–1833) was definitely an exponent of this Awakening, which gave him the fuel to campaign as a social reformer to abolish slavery. Wesley's and Whitefield's preaching certainly was coined a century later when many evangelical Christians would refer to them as their 'founding fathers'. The change of the religious climate could also be seen in the political sphere. When Wilberforce entered parliament in 1780 there were about three or four MPs who identified themselves as seriously Christian, but half a century later there were nearly 200 members of Parliament who were known as real Christians.

The old faith was given new life. Many turned to the belief of the old Puritans, expressed to be a powerful religion, and private Bible study, an enthusiasm for hymn singing and Christian fellowship. A new missionary zeal was dawning. Years before, in New England, the Presbyterian preacher Jonathan Edwards revived the religion of the Puritans.⁷⁸ George Whitefield crossed the Atlantic 13 times. Never to be tied to any one parish, by talk and by letter he told the people about the new birth and urgently invited them to share it. If he was not allowed to preach in a church, many locations in the open field are now silent witnesses of the thousands – sometimes more than 30 000 – who once gathered there and were fascinated by the extraordinary power of his voice. Whitefield preached extempore in an age when the reading of sermons had become standard. At first, he regarded the still more famous preacher John Wesley as his spiritual father. On the surface, the split between them in 1740 was due to Whitefield's Calvinism. Whitefield objected to Wesley's optimistic teaching that converted Christians could and should be 'perfect'. Wesley, however, knew that he was not perfect himself and never expected others to be.

Wesley emphasised that Christians should be holy before God and men. 'O insist everywhere on full redemption, receivable by *faith alone*, consequently to be looked for *now* [...] we must have a thorough *reform of preachers*'.⁷⁹ The influence of these two, Whitefield and Wesley, in awakening the religious conscience of the 18th and 19th centuries went very deep. Wherever Wesley went, his 'revival societies' sprang up. These were groups of converts who were united together to worship the Lord.

The 18th century evangelical revival had 'fanned the embers of English-speaking Protestantism into a blazing fire'. There were, according to Bebbington, four main features of evangelical religion: there was conversion, activism (spreading the experience of conversion to others), a love for the Bible and a

78. Edwards presented man as a whole person who had to choose between darkness and light, as a figure in a tragedy, in that he habitually chose darkness, but who by grace, through belief in Christ Jesus, a son of God, was filled by God's grace with God's light.

79. In Edwards, *Christian England*, 58.

concentration on the atoning death of Christ on the cross.⁸⁰ Through the evangelical revival, Christianity gained an important place in national life and gave great impetus to people to work among children; social work followed the Gospel preaching, and instilled a new missionary vision.

In spite of all the achievements, starting an industrial revolution that transformed the entire world, restoration of the bridge in human relations with one another was utterly poor. The gulf dividing capital from labour was never bridged. There was still shocking inequality and scandalous poverty all over the country. The days of the industrial revolution, with unmitigated slavery, revealed many difficulties and horrors. At a rapid tempo, England was transformed from a rural society to an urban, industrial society, with all the attendant shocking issues of a society in major transition.

The novels of Charles Dickens reveal a lot of the poverty and bitterness in many socially low families, and that it was not easy to survive. In 1845 the Tory leader, Benjamin Disraeli, spoke of 'the two nations', rich and poor, living side by side in respectable Britain. The slums in east London were famous at that time for danger, crime, prostitution and social unrest. Many factory owners exploited women and children as a means of cheap labour. Men often spent all their earned money on alcohol, which hastened their deaths. Murray Pura wrote: 'The cities spawned poverty for the workers while they spawned wealth for the factory owners. Children could not be fed and infanticide resulted.' It is said that around 1830 three-quarters of all the children born in London died before reaching the age of 5.⁸¹

The poverty in the country was debilitating and immorality was shocking, with villages all over 'abounding in sin and wickedness'. One place was called 'Little Hell' and 'not one could read, but alas! everyone could, and did, swear'.⁸² Prison conditions were cruel and inhumane, to say the least. London's Newgate prison was one of the worst. In his *Great Expectations* Charles Dickens depicted in a very explicit way what was going on in Britain's prisons.

Women who could not tolerate factory conditions, or who could not find work, resorted to prostitution. Prostitution was practised blatantly; the neighbourhood of Victoria Station was known to be one of the worst areas, where girls stranded in the city sold their bodies. There grew to be 30 000–50 000 prostitutes in and around London alone, one in four of the population of single women. Girls between the ages of 11 and 14 were involved, while young boys turned to petty crime and joined gangs of up to 20 or 30.⁸³

Meanwhile, influential British citizens became more and more involved in reforming work and opened windows on various terrible aspects of Victorian practices. For many, their eyes were opened and this produced a national wave of indignation to those who had access to the news and knew the true facts. They started to raise their voices and influence. To mention just one, Lord Shaftesbury (1801–1885) for more than 50 years fought against industrial child abuse and 'in some ways became the conscience of the evangelical wing of the Church of England'.⁸⁴ In the first decades of the 19th century the heritage of the 18th century was deeply seen and felt:

Life in eighteenth-century Britain was particularly brutal, decadent, violent, and vulgar. Slavery was only the worst of a host of social evils that included epidemic alcoholism, child prostitution, public dissections and

80. In D.W. Bebbington, *Victorian Nonconformity* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 2–3.

81. R. Elliott Kendal, *Charles New and the East Africa Mission* (Nairobi, Kenya: Literature Bureau, 1978), 8.

82. In K.S. Prior, *Fierce Convictions. The Extraordinary Life of Hannah More – Poet, Reformer, Abolitionist* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2014), 143.

83. In M. Pura, *Vital Christianity. The Life and Spirituality of William Wilberforce* (Fearn, UK: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 27.

84. In G. Davies, *Genius and Grace* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1992), 124.

burnings of executed criminals, and unspeakable public cruelty to animals. [...] Britain [...] would staunchly retain the outward trappings and forms of religion – which were all well and good and would help keep the lower classes better behaved – but it would deny religion any real power.⁸⁵

So outwardly, religion was kept in place, but under the surface the decaying process in society continued. The corrupt and hypocritical government could not relieve the situation of the lower classes. In the church, the pulpits were filled with just such:

[L]ukewarm professors lukewarmly professing a lukewarm faith that thrilled no one and challenged no one, lacking, as it did, the indispensable tang of otherness that is at the heart of Christian belief.⁸⁶

How did all these developments influence the ordinary men and women? The Irish girl, eldest daughter of a middle class family and subject of this book, had seen and experienced many of the exiting things and was involved in the misery of the working class. The vitality of the society in which she was growing up, the attitudes it created and its new involvement in the world, were to have deep influence on Amy's contribution to India. The effects of the 1859 revival were such that by 1875 all missionary societies were beginning to receive more candidates. Among the Christians of various denominations, all these unsettling developments – social, political and religious – brought the feeling that the last days as pictured in the last Bible book Revelations were upon them, that their generation would see the stars fall and the Saviour coming in the clouds.⁸⁷

Yet before this great moment of Christ's return to gather his flock, the word of salvation must surely go out to the furthest parts of the earth. The times were ready for that. The *Pax Britannica* bringing law and order gave many Christians the idea that the time of the first mission endeavour of the early church was again at hand.⁸⁸

Side by side with the exciting industrial and economic expansion came a remarkable growth in missionary endeavour. The spirit of enterprise and adventure, which impelled people to explore and extend commerce, also drove Christians to carry the Christian message to tribes and peoples who had not heard it. Technological advance became the handmaid of missionary pioneers. Easier travel and more rapid communications assisted in the spread of the Gospel. Railways and steamships carried the messengers of the Cross to new fields across the world. Cable and telegraph improved communications between home bases and distant mission stations. Now the printing press could be used effectively to inform the Christian public in Britain of the spread of the Gospel in faraway countries, and to publish newly translated Bibles or portions of the Bible.

Victorian England was permeated with evangelical influence. The Established Church in the 18th century, characterised by worldliness and complacency, now changed under the powerful influence of the evangelical revival. A vital and living religious life came up. It was the Clapham Sect in the late 18th century who paved the way for the evangelicals to reform the church and everyday life in Britain. Its domestic reforms expanded outward across the globe: school, prison and Sabbath reforms extended to reforms for resettling former African slaves in Sierra Leone. The reforms also influenced the 1813 East India Company's charter in favour of allowing missionary work in the colony and the establishment of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in 1799. Karen Prior says 'the reforms they

85. In Metaxas, *Amazing Grace*, 69 and 71.

86. In Metaxas, *Amazing Grace*, 170.

87. In Germany we see the same strong expectation, due to the prediction of Johann Alfred Bengel that Christ would return in 1835.

88. The *pax romana* enabled the first Christians to go out, unhindered till the heart of the Roman Empire, to Rome and as far as the northern part of Africa and the south of India.

[*Clapham Sect*] sought and achieved set the tone for the coming Victorian age with its emphasis on religion, morality, family, and duty'.⁸⁹

Many supposed that the spread of the Gospel was imminent and this worked as a window into the thought culture of 19th century evangelicalism in general. As evangelicals from reformed and free church backgrounds answered the challenges posed from without and within, changes in England were significant. Churches had to be revived and industrial workers newly arrived in the cities encountered fresh ideas and gathered in barns, rooms and chapels where, due to continuous evangelistic enterprises, many were converted. Dissenters 'dissented'; nonconformists would not 'conform'; Anglicans looked further than their clerical traditions and Presbyterians saw the need of the Gospel implications. All were inclined to radical politics and concern for the poor. There came a real concern that Christianity is something of the heart and not just a clerical issue. This is evident in an exclamation of Bishop Ryle who was frustrated by the general attitude to baptism:

Why is it, he asked in 1858, that the sacrament of baptism appears to bear so little fruit? How is it that thousands are every year baptized, and never give the slightest proof of having received benefit from it? [...] Parents bring their children to the font, without the slightest sense of what they are doing. [...] Such baptisms may well be barren of results. They are not baptisms according to the mind of Christ.⁹⁰

In the 18th century the Great Awakening had taken place largely within the Church of England. The brothers John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield had remained members of the Established Church, although they found more response outside it. Though many Methodists had left the Church of England after John Wesley's death in 1791, many others remained within it. During the first decades of the 19th century, the Anglican evangelicals gained strength. Methodism in its evangelism did unite the pair so long disjointed: knowledge and vital piety. In their leanings, Evangelicals were Calvinistic and they wielded an influence beyond their numbers through such leaders as William Wilberforce and Charles Simeon. John Wesley's footprints are all over the 19th century evangelical movement.

By the 1830s, however, Anglican evangelicalism was starting to decline. The urgent call for individual conversion and personal holiness instigated by Wesley and Whitefield had given way to a more pragmatic desire for unity – an emphasis on loyalty to the Church of England. The great 19th century Irish evangelist William Arthur in talking about the declining influence of the Gospel gives us a catalogue of hindrances as he saw it in the 19th century. It included neglect of prayer, unbelief, lack of faith, the lure of respectability, idle speech, party politics, sensual indulgence, the desire for literary and oratorical effect, reductionist naturalism, scepticism, nominal Christianity, the reduced versions of Christianity to be found in the churches and a host of social sins.⁹¹

In the first two decades of the 20th century, partly due to the dramatic events of World War I, the awakening drive that had brought many denominations in the 19th century to start with mission work was utterly strangled. The approach of this minimising influence of the Gospel and yet the growing mission enterprise is sensed in Cowper's song:

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

89. In Prior, *Fierce Convictions*, 182.

90. J.C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: Luke* (London: J. Clark & Co., 1969), 102.

91. In W. Arthur, *Tongue of Fire* (Epworth, UK: Epworth, 1956 [1856]), 369–376.

■ Changing times

The spectacular growth of mission endeavour in the 19th century is a phenomenon still studied, especially in missiological studies in which lives of men and women, some until now totally unknown, are published revealing the most interesting details and methods to reach the unreached peoples. But the rise of the missionary movement did not occur in a theological and spiritual vacuum. In the 17th century it was the Puritans who enflamed the cause of missions. The honour of God and his sovereignty all over the world gave them the zeal to purify the existing church and to spread the Word of God. Many Puritans, in times of persecution, emigrated to America. From them, a large group went via Rotterdam – Delfshaven – in the Netherlands to the new continent.⁹² They were part of God's plan or God's mission strategy. The theological works of the Puritans were read by many Christians in the 18th century and by these writings they, too, were set aflame. English Puritanism encouraged the practice of a devout, holy life and man's personal responsibility in response to God's initiative for the salvation of man through faith in Christ Jesus.

Evangelical Christianity moved away from traditional Calvinist beliefs in total depravity and predestination, and instead emphasised a person's free will and that salvation was open to any who chose to believe and cultivate an inner faith. At the same time evangelical Protestants preached that a continued relationship with God was predicated on living righteously and that believers should strive for individual moral perfection, while also working to purify society, reform corrupt practices and uplift the downtrodden. The times and the religious scene in the first decades greatly changed. In sermons pastors tried to create an effect as much as impart information. The Scottish Presbyterian minister Edward Irving – a close friend of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) – tried to recapture the beauties of primitive simplicity and to recapture the idealised past. The emphasis was shifting from 'reason' to 'sentiment', from 'thinking' to 'feeling', from the head to the heart. Ministers urged for more personal religious experience:

Especially in the dissenting chapels ordinary working people learnt to follow Christ. They acquired a simple faith, a concern for others, an assurance of personal salvation and the hope of a better age to come; and they invited their friends and neighbours to join them.⁹³

Many committed Anglicans had learned from the Methodists about salvation through personal faith in Christ.⁹⁴ The feelings among Presbyterians differed. Many among them were suspicious towards the others outside the established churches because of their narrowness, alienation and bitterness. Staunch Irish Presbyterians considered it sheer presumption that anyone could be sure of being saved, while others made assurance of salvation the keystone of their doctrinal system.⁹⁵ It was seen now that nothing truly effective could be done without the personal activity of the Holy Spirit. The CIM missionary James Hudson Taylor, looking for missionaries for China, advised them to be ordained before they went, in order to give them more respect and recognition in China from other missionaries. Sometimes this required a lot of deliberation as he found that the English Presbyterians

92. Cf. the plaque in the Pilgrim fathers church in Delfshaven (The Netherlands). Between 1627 and 1640 about 15 000 people emigrated from England to America carrying with them their Bibles and the Puritan hope to see God glorified in the new settlements in America.

93. In R.B. Dann, *Father of Faith Missions. The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves (1795- 1853)* (Bath: Authentic Media, 2004), 543.

94. In Dann, *Father of Faith Missions*, 543.

95. In D.J. Beattie, *Brethren, the Story of a Great Recovery* (Kilmarnock: J. Richie Ltd, 1940), 292. About the Presbyterian church in Ireland we will learn further because Amy Carmichael's family in Millisle was from a strong Scottish Presbyterian background.

were too Calvinistic and the Anglicans too controlled by their bishops. The missionaries of the London Missionary Society (LMS) were of high calibre; they were lovers of books and knowledge and they worked with a reasonable degree of freedom under their society. British evangelical piety in the 18th and 19th centuries was essentially Puritan piety, as taught by preachers like Baxter, Owen, Bunyan, Jonathan Edwards and John Newton. The writings of these men plus personal ministry shaped the faith and devotion of many.

As shown earlier the spiritual need of countries beyond the British shores received more attention. After William Carey's *Enquiry*,⁹⁶ a stream of mission enterprises emerged. As faith became more personal, a desire for salvation of other peoples and places grew. Wars and commerce took many Englishmen far and near into the world, where they met many different peoples and languages. Had not Christ died for them, too? The Protestant churches were waking up to the reality of the big wide world and its vast spiritual need. Saved, they were now aware of eternal truth and spiritual riches, which should be proclaimed as widely in the world as possible.

After Carey left for India in 1793 'the day of the English-speaking peoples in overseas missions' began.⁹⁷ To support Carey the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) was formed in 1792. Three years later the LMS was founded, sponsored largely, and soon entirely, by Congregationalists. The CMS of the Anglican church followed in 1799 and the Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) in 1818. By that time, missionary work had spread to several countries in the Middle East, to India, south-East Asia, to the west African coastal countries and to North and South America.

We see a boost in missionary affairs when in 1856 David Livingstone was touring Britain after his epic journey on foot from the west to the east coast of Africa. The following year saw the publication of his *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*. Livingstone's exploits were recounted in churches and this provided a great stimulus for many in the younger generation. In his moving addresses, he pleaded urgently for missionaries. 'Can the love of Christ not carry the missionary where the slave trade carries the trader?' He closed his impressive speech before the University of Cambridge on 04 December 1857 with: 'I cleared the path [...] do you carry out the work which I have begun? I leave it with you'.⁹⁸ This last sentence, a loud cry from the heart, pierced many people's hearts. From that memorable meeting men and women came forward longing to enter missionary service. Livingstone's effort resulted in the establishment of a mission in Africa, to be known as the 'Universities Mission to Central Africa'. Thirty years after Livingstone's appeal, a young Irish girl Amy Carmichael heard the Voice and obeyed, following in her master's footsteps, never turning back, for 56 years keeping her eyes on him in faraway India. In the Far East, hundreds of young men and women, eager to spread the Gospel, undertook mission endeavour. One missionary couple held daily medical clinics and evangelistic gatherings during their honeymoon!⁹⁹

At that time England was ripe for a fresh wind of spiritual vitality. Conferences held at Broadlands, the country estate of Lord and Lady Mount Temple, brought many evangelical leaders together. Here, fundamental issues of the soul were dealt with. 'The Broadlands Conference was in fact more a "spiritual

96. W. Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen* (Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1892).

97. In S. Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1982 [1964]), 262.

98. In J.E. Chamblis, *The Life and Labors of David Livingstone* (Philadelphia, PA: Hubard Bros, 1875), 303-314. Also in R. Mackenzie, *David Livingstone, The Truth Behind the Legend* (Fearn: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 196.

99. Like Horace and Lilius Horton Underwood, Presbyterian missionaries to Korea, during their honeymoon, an in-country journey in North Korea in 1889.

clinic” than a conference in the traditional sense.¹⁰⁰ In particular, the 1874 summer convention was very well planned and eventually would grow into a worldwide institution, the Keswick Convention, vital to the 21st century. In London, Spurgeon’s Metropolitan Tabernacle was completed in 1861, which seated 6000 people. Until his death in 1892, Charles Haddon Spurgeon dominated with his sermons the evangelical field in London. He was known in every corner of England and many Christians abroad knew him. His printed sermons sold over 25 000 copies each week and were translated into 20 languages.¹⁰¹ As a result of the Moody and Sankey Evangelical Revival in 1873 and 1874, the various strands of the ‘holiness’ movement, and the start of the Keswick Convention in 1875, many underwent a religious experience which changed their lives as they gave up everything and went as missionaries to the East or to Africa. Famous were the ‘Cambridge Seven’, among them C.T. Studd the famous cricketer, who gave up a life of leisure, promising to invest in the bank of Heaven and dedicating themselves to ‘saving souls’, choosing a life under the obedience of Christ. The Cambridge Seven, as the press labelled them, were ‘one of the grand gestures of 19th century missions’. A ‘dream team’ composed of athletes, military officers and people with wealth and intellect.¹⁰²

For those who are not aware of the story of the Cambridge Seven, it is one of the great stories in missionary history. In the 1880s, Taylor and others of the CIM became keenly aware that they desperately needed men who had not only passion, but also leadership and organisational abilities if they were going to reach and preserve the harvest in China. They began praying for ‘Cambridge’ men. In 1885, D.L. Moody was preaching at Cambridge and seven of its most prominent students were converted to Christ and heard the call to go to China. Within a few years of their departure to work with the CIM, the size of the CIM quadrupled! Leaving England on 05 February 1885, the Cambridge Seven sailed for China; their whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ awakened worldwide reactions. They stirred the evangelical world and gave a new mission impulse. ‘The characteristic, very human slump in interest a few months after the Seven had left Britain, was offset by continuing enthusiasm in the universities and colleges’ in England as well in America.¹⁰³ American universities were feeling it: in Princeton Robert Wilder and John Foreman lit the torch of missionary flame, soon to set on fire the Student Volunteer Movement, which in 1888 adopted its watchword: *the evangelization of this world in this generation*.¹⁰⁴

■ The involvement of women in mission

Between 1880 and 1920, the expansion in numbers and activity on the part of Western churches reached its climax. The expansion of overseas missions in that period is one of the chief causes of

100. M. Huffmann Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible. The Life of Lilius Trotter* (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 2003 [1999]), 59.

101. In C.H. Spurgeon, *Sermons on Prayer* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), XIV.

102. Cf. Huffmann Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible*, 96; also A. Austin, ‘Missions Dream Team,’ *Christian History* XV (1996): 52, 19.

103. A.J. Broomhall, *It is not Death to Die! Hudson Taylor & China’s Open Century, Book 7* (Sevenoaks: Hodder & Stoughton and the OMF, 1989), 39. The year 1887 saw the completion of sending out one hundred new missionaries for the CIM to China.

104. According to I.H. Murray this slogan was a direct product of Finney’s theology. W.R. Nicoll believed that the phrase was born of ‘a young impatience’, and commented: ‘This feverish, superficial conception of things springs from that “irreligious solicitude for God” to which Christian men are strangely addicted, and more than ever in this pragmatic age’ (I.H. Murray, *Revival & Revivalism* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1996), 413).

this development. In particular, the growth of the involvement of women in mission work is remarkable. In the last two decades of the 19th century, the call to single women began to gain momentum:

The warmth and the flexibility of the Evangelical movement, which transcended denominational and national boundaries, was also the key to the rapid acceptance of the ministry of women in overseas mission work as the century progressed.¹⁰⁵

Evangelicals preached vital, living religion: Christians should examine their lives, seek continually holiness, and above all be useful in eternal spiritual terms and in seeing and assisting others in spiritual and basic life needs. Not only the songs of the Sankey–Moody duo, but also the hymns of Frances Ridley Havergal (1836–1879), Fanny Crosby (1824–1915) and Elizabeth Prentiss (1818–1878), was Christ’s saving love brought deep into the hearts and minds of the evangelicals. Christian poets like Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861) and Christina Rossetti (1830–1894) were read in many homes throughout the country. In many of the hymns and poems the mission enterprise was hailed and they were the cause of many Christian men and women hearing in them God’s voice to go into the mission field.¹⁰⁶

A.J. Broomhall, the historian of the CIM, remarked that 1875 was ‘the point at which the tide of all missions to China turned [...] The dawn of 1878 brought in the age of Protestant missionary expansion’. Broomhall’s publication *The Evangelization of the World* influenced John R. Mott. Some years after the publication the title of this book became part of the motto of the Student Volunteer Movement: ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’.¹⁰⁷

Although many became involved in mission work, still the majority of the church leaders and church members were only focused on their own local church affairs. A missionary from south India on furlough at the beginning the 20th century was not so enthusiastic about England’s spiritual situation:

He did not always find, even among true Christians, the depth for which he looked; there was less intensity of purpose, and a greater worldliness than he had expected, and a startling increase in pleasure-loving and luxurious living. [...] It’s as if people were so afraid of intolerance that they are beginning to have no convictions at all. [...] I want something far deeper than I find here. [...] One feels a stranger in England in spite of relations and friends. [...] God save us poor English folk.¹⁰⁸

In the Victorian era modern people’s minds turned to the ideals of honour, honesty and integrity, university honour codes like ‘women and children first’ and well-mannered behaviour. This era represented the birth of the modern mindset, and what was honoured seriously in their way of life developed in response to technological, sociological and economic factors that are still with us today. History does not always mean distance, objectivity or relativity. That can be its meaning, but there is another art of historical encounter, which is close proximity. We see that in the 19th century women’s

105. J. West, ‘The Role of the Woman Missionary, 1880-1914,’ in *Lucas* 21 & 22 (June & December, 1996): 1.

106. See R.A. Tucker & W. Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church. Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), 245–327; R. Tucker, *Guardians of the Great Commission. The Story of Women in Modern Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988); Griffiths, *Not Less Than Everything*; Kommers, ‘A flame of sacred love’.

107. I think that this watchword was not a prophecy that the world would be evangelised in the present generation. It is the affirmation that it might be and should be so evangelised in the sense that every generation of Christians is responsible for evangelising the world of that present generation, which cannot be realised by human activities and efforts. The conversion of men is a work of grace and is in God’s hands.

108. In *Walker of Tinnevely*, 434, 435, 439, 441.

perspectives widened drastically. However, motherhood was still glorified and mothers deemed most responsible for the passing on of religion and morality to future generations. Married or single, women often became leaders in the reform movements:

The office of mother is the highest a human being can hold. On its faithful and intelligent performance hangs the hope of the world. Next the sacred office of the mother in her family, who takes the children God had given her and trains them for His service on earth and His Kingdom in heaven, comes that of the Mother in Israel, the faithful female Missionary, who gathers under her loving care the lost lambs of Christ's flock.¹⁰⁹

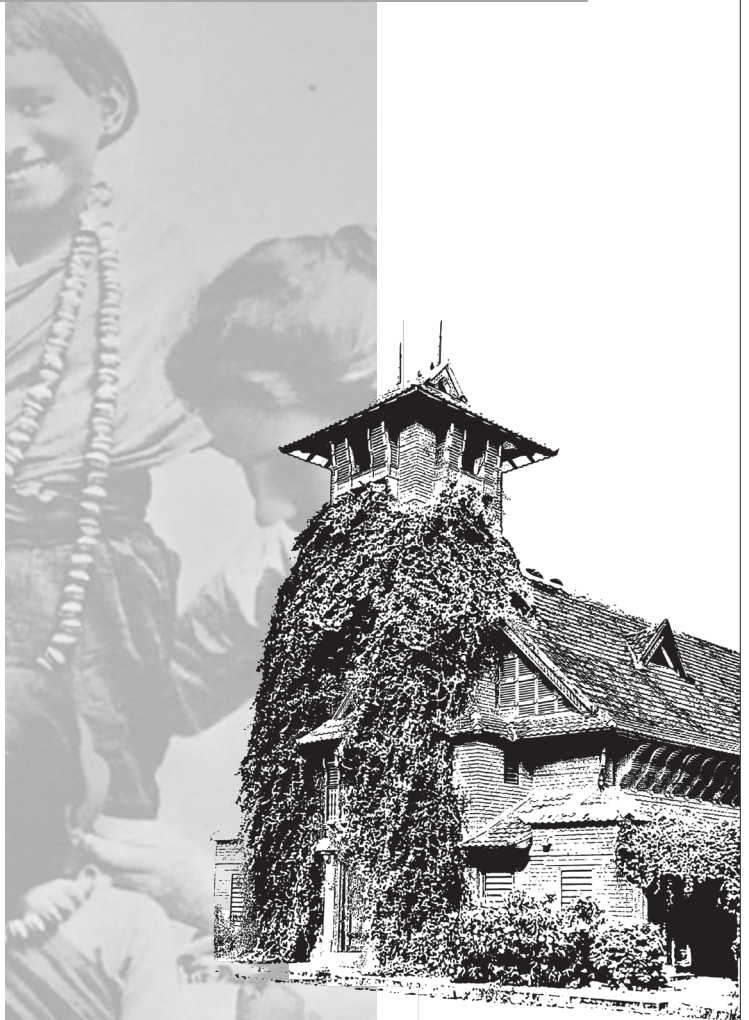
If we want to see Amy Carmichael as the person she really was, we have to discover her in the reality of the last four decades of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries and – more important by far – her life with the living God. Seeing her in these two worlds, the fascination of the past gives way to a fascination for the future.

109. In S.J. Hale, 'Women's Record: Sketches of all the distinguished women from the creation to A.D. 1854.' in *Internet Archive/texts* (London: Harper, 1855), 899. Also Severance, *Feminine Threads*, 258.

'The Vows of God are on me', and for life.
From the Fight, 61.

**These folk I find have all been given a gracious, teachable
simplicity of obedience and love to Christ.**

J.G. Miller about the Ulster Christians
in *A Day's March Nearer Home* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth
Trust, 2010), 152.



The girl from Millisle

In a Belfast teashop a young girl and her mother were resting for a while and they had something to drink. A little girl stood near the door and looked in with her face pressed against the window. Delicious cakes and sweets lay displayed in that window. As mother and daughter left the teashop, it had started to rain and they saw the girl with her face still pressed close to the glass. She was looking longingly at the cakes and sweets. She was a little girl in a poor, thin, shabby dress. The ragamuffin child was barefoot. It was raining and her feet on the wet pavement looked so very cold. At home, the girl who had been in the teashop with her mother wrote on a scrap of paper:

When I grow up and money have
I know what I will do.
I'll build a great big lovely place
For little girls like you.¹¹⁰

The child became a young woman and entirely forgot her promise. But there is one who remembers even a child's promise. God's work in the history of his worldwide mission does not happen in an empty sphere. The heritage of missionaries travelling all over the world can be traced. At the time of our birth, we already have a heritage. We bring something with us and for the greater part what that is remains hidden. We always have something of our ancestors in us and the older one gets, the more it shows in one's character, words and deeds. The Irish history is one of idyll, knighthood, struggle, slavery, famine, deportation, emigration and a war of liberation; no wonder their women unite all in them – the feminine sweetness, the readiness to suffer and that kingly pride; in short, strong characters. In this 19th century Irish Victorian setting, in the Ulster Covenant tradition, in an atmosphere in which the Gospel was lived, the young girl who wrote her promise on a scrap of paper was born. Eventually she would become the founder of the DF in south India.

110. See *Amma's Book*, 51.

■ Home in Millisle

In Amy's life, we can trace an atmosphere in which the Gospel was lived. In Millisle, a little seaport town in County Down, Amy Beatrice Carmichael was born on 16 December 1867, halfway through the Victorian Era and some years after the *Year of Grace*. That year God was rending the heavens and came down; honouring his own truth by supplying the power of the Holy Spirit upon the northern Irish counties and the wondrous awakening took place. There were close relations between Ulster and the USA at that time and the revival in the New World of 1857–1858 stirred believers in Ireland, where many Christians started to pray for revival. The awakening in Ulster provoked also great interest in Scotland and by 1860 many churches in Glasgow, in the highlands and Western Isles experienced the quickening of the Holy Spirit, and at last the revival left no part of the Kingdom untouched. There was no town or country district where at least some of the inhabitants had not felt the 'showers of blessing'.¹¹¹ The outcome of the revival was that lives were changed and that a new interest and support for missionary work overseas and at home was awakened. Christian social work was started among the poor, the factory workers and the thousands of women in industrial areas who often led a risky life. The revival gave to the Ulster evangelicalism a 'fresh impetus'.¹¹² One exclaimed, 'The whole country is studded with prayer-meetings, and the *whole face of society is changed*'.¹¹³ One of the leading evangelists at that revival time was Mr Guinness, who in 1858 commenced a series of meetings that extended 'to every town in Ireland'. A leading daily paper wrote that 'few preachers have ever addressed congregations more influential'. A more liberal newspaper, the *Northern Whig*, reporting on a sermon delivered in May Street Presbyterian Church, Belfast, swayed into positive, if somewhat reluctant, comment on Guinness's pulpit presence and impressive preaching skills:

We have spoken of this gentleman's remarkable power as a preacher. At present it suffices to say, that further experience strengthens our opinion. He sustained the audience upwards of an hour in admiration of his brilliant talents as an accomplished orator, and of his simple and yet majestic style of delivery. He may have said things which were hard to be believed by some of his audience, still no one present could but admire his unquestionable genius.¹¹⁴

Crowds, often more than 7000, heard about reconciliation to God, the work of Christ and sin, urging for conviction and conversion: all pointed appeals to the conscience of the hearers. Descended from an old Irish family from Iveagh, County Down, Mr and Mrs Guinness¹¹⁵ were well able to understand and appreciate the character of the people. 'The Spirit seemed to brood over crowded congregations. What upturned faces; what falling tears; what a solemn hush on audiences spellbound under the power of infinite, spiritual realities!' The spiritual influence of this quiet Quaker family

111. In E. Russel, *That Man of Granite with the Heart of a Child: J.C. Ryle* (Fearn: Christian Focus Publications, 2001), 112.

112. J.N.I. Dickson, *Beyond Religious Discourse. Sermons, Preaching and Evangelical Protestants in Nineteenth-Century Irish Society* (Bletchley: Paternoster, 2007), 188: 'This Pentecostal revival brought in its train phases rarely if ever experienced before. Hundreds were "stricken," otherwise physically prostrated, and the sense of sinfulness was so acute, that bodily agony was undergone until they realised their sins were forgiven. That remarkable visitation of the Holy Spirit was believed to be the answer to earnest prayer offered up at the village of Connor in Co. Antrim. From there, where the manifestation began, it spread like a flame of cleansing fire – by what earthly means no one could tell – until men, women, and even children, succumbed before its power, were seized and, as it were, forcibly gathered into the Kingdom' (L.M. Foster, *The Bush That Burned* (Belfast: Ulster, 2005), Kindle edition, location 1850).

113. J. Weir, *The Ulster Awakening. An Account of the 1859 Revival in Ireland, 1860* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 147.

114. In Dickson, *Beyond Religious Discourse*, 185.

115. Their son, G. Whitfield Guinness, went in 1897 as a medical missionary to China. Their daughter Geraldine became the daughter-in-law of Hudson Taylor, the founder of the CIM.

which heralded the great revival of 1859 still sounded several years after they had left Ireland to continue the meetings in the United States where a similar movement took place.¹¹⁶

Very memorable was the powerful revival meeting on 29 June 1859 in Belfast, where an open-air union prayer meeting was held in the Botanic Gardens, with an estimated 40 000 people filling every available space. Children sat in the branches of the trees.¹¹⁷ In those days thousands were convinced by the Spirit and 'glorious transformations' took place. Conversions crossed all boundary lines of society and from Belfast, the revival spread in all directions.¹¹⁸ The footprints of the Saviour were visible everywhere. Ireland at that time was 'full of life, and love, and praise'.¹¹⁹ Among the thousands that June day who listened to the Gospel preaching in the Botanic Gardens, was a young woman from Portaferry, Catherine Jane Fison. She saw what happened around her, that breaking forth of the power of the Lord, and 45 years later, she would recall to her daughter in Dohnavur how in that memorable 'year of years' she herself was saved.¹²⁰ Houghton writes that in Catherine's Bible there is an annotation in John 10:27-28:

The words 'My sheep', and 'they', and 'them', repeated several times, are marked in red, and linked by red lines to her own name, 'Catherine Jane Carmichael', in the margin, for she applied each of these precious statements to herself.¹²¹

Some years later Catherine Fison would marry David Carmichael and settle in Millisle where Amy was their firstborn.

The spiritual awakening also affected the little town on the shore of the Irish sea, and in the years after the revival many in Millisle still had in their memories the Word of God.¹²² Millisle is within a short distance (about 20 miles) of Belfast, in a rural district called Ballycopeland. The whole area had been visited by God to shed abroad his saving power and grace; people were led to speak about 'the things which belong to their peace'. The great concerns of eternity were realised as they had never been before, and the one great and absorbing topic, 'Christ and the Cross', seemed to occupy the attention and steal the affections of many. About the beginning of the awakening, a pastor commented what happened in the little town on the seacoast:

When the revival visited Millisle the whole village was moved. Few retired to rest, crowds collected around the doors of the awakened ones to hear them cry for mercy – such a night was never witnessed there.¹²³

Millisle and the district were on 'fire':

I may say that open-air services were held here throughout the entire summer, on the Sabbath evenings, with an attendance varying from three hundred to twelve hundreds of all classes in the district.¹²⁴

116. In G. Howard Taylor, *Guinness of Honan* (Philadelphia, PA: CIM, 1930), 1-5.

117. See W.L. Duewel, *Revival Fire* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 145.

118. See the impact of the 1859 revival in Belfast in 'The Belfast Connection' and 'The Irish Year of Grace' [Duewel, *Revival Fire*, 145-160]. When a great revival meeting was held in Armagh, special trains ran from Belfast and other cities to bring people to the revival gathering. During the journey, the passengers sang hymns all along the way to Armagh [p. 156].

119. Weir, *The Ulster Awakening*, 196.

120. See *This One Thing*, 170: 'It was an inspiring story, for the mother had herself been saved from the decorous life of conventional Christianity in that year of years.'

121. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 5.

122. Cf. W. Gibson, *The Year of Grace, A History of the 1859 Ulster Revival, 1860*, (Belfast: Ambassador Press, 1989), 3rd edition, 129-130.

123. In Gibson, *The Year of Grace*, 129.

124. In Gibson, *The Year of Grace*, 129.

The members of the local Presbyterian church, to which the Carmichael family belonged, were deeply affected. Caught by the heavenly fire, cold formality, an apathetic and unimpressible decorum were exchanged for a living of vigorous piety. This corresponds with Weir's observation, who saw churches 'filled with living worshippers, formality gone, love, and light, and song abounding' where many could say 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation'.¹²⁵

This we will also see in Amy's life: that the forces that the Church possesses always include, over and above mere machinery, the presence of the life-giving Spirit. The Presbyterian church, as well as the other Protestant denominations were deeply influenced by the 1857 revival.¹²⁶ Bebbington identified four characteristics as 'the defining attributes of evangelical religion':

There are the four qualities that have been the special marks of Evangelical Religion: conversionism, the belief that lives need to be changed; activism, the expression of the Gospel in effort; biblicism, a particular regard for the Bible; and what may be called crucicentrism, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Together they form a quadrilateral of priorities that is the basis of Evangelicalism.¹²⁷

The 1859 revival moved the strong Irish Presbyterians, a people peculiarly unimpressible, in the emotional sense of term. They held on to the old Reformation truth, with a comprehensive, intellectual grasp and true to their Scottish blood and origin. They did not want to shed tears, or to be demonstrative in any sense, in their devotions. What a change presented itself to the eyes of many, where after church services strong men were seen with tears in their eyes. Taylor in 1866 on a ten-day visit to Ireland as the guest of Grattan Guinness preached on Sunday 25 February in several Belfast Presbyterian churches. He then wrote to Maria: 'I commenced the day fearing [...] lest I might not get on well among strangers and rather stiff Presbyterians.' It turned out to be a blessed Sunday. 'Some hundreds know more of China's need than they did before. [...] So you see how wonderfully God has opened my way here.'¹²⁸ To this day, the Ulster churches are well-known for their mission outlook¹²⁹ and many Irish sons and daughters serve the Lord in the mission field.

The village of Millisle is within the townland of Ballymacruise, Parish of Donaghadee, Barony of Ards, County Down:

When people mention the old days in Millisle they tend to think of a village, pretty at that time, with green hedges and whitewashed houses, a church and a school and the huge mills which had put Millisle on the map.¹³⁰

The first Carmichael who settled in Ireland was James Carmichael, from Ayrshire in Scotland. The Carmichael family was from Covenanting stock.¹³¹

125. In Weir, *The Ulster Awakening*, 177.

126. The Presbyterian church at that time did not send missionaries to foreign countries. In the margin of T. Austin-Sparks, *The Stewardship of the Mystery, II* (London: 'Witness and Testimony' Publishers, no year), 175, when Amy was in Dohnavur, she wrote: 'The Irish Presbyterian Church sends not its missionaries physically. They [are] lending to the whole church. Surely this is Scriptural.'

127. In Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 2-4.

128. In A.J. Broomhall, *Survivors' Pact, Hudson Taylor and China's Open Century, Book 4* (Sevenoaks: Hoder & Stoughton and the OMF, 1984), 120.

129. See also Eugene Stock, secretary of the CMS who between 1874 and 1907 visited Ireland six times where he was a fervent advocate of missions encouraged the parishes and talked with candidates for missionary work (E. Stock, *My Recollections* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1909), 333-336).

130. G. Seymour, *Echoes of Millisle and District* (Rathfriland: Outlook Press, n.d.), 5. Amy is known as the founder of the Dohnavur Fellowship in India where children in danger found a safe haven. Parallel to this, from May 1938 to 1948 Millisle acted as a safe haven for hundreds of Jewish evacuee children, some a few months old, who escaped the World War II terror in a unique rescue operation.

131. Part of the Carmichael genealogical tree, in Seymour, *Echoes of Millisle and District*, 17.

The Carmichaels worshipped at Ballycopeland and three of its ministers married a Carmichael. The village was dominated by the Carmichael flourmills, leased by Amy's great-grandfather 100 years before she was born. The mills were developed and enlarged by Amy's father David and uncle William. These two brothers had inherited the milling business in 1854 from their father. The mills flourished and both families were enjoying comfortable secure lives. Next to the mills, the two brothers had acquired a large acreage of land, so farming also added to their income. The mills at that time were powered by water from a little stream. It had been dammed up to form a lake. In the middle was a little islet with one tree growing in the centre. According to local tradition, that is how Mill-Isle got its name. As Seymour noticed, David and William Carmichael were, to say in contemporary terms, 'outgoing' and always ready to take advantage of the new idea. They rebuilt the mills to have them work on steam power. In addition, a new flax mill was built and in 1860 they started with a new corn mill. It is recorded, that 'the little village Millisle contained, a few years ago, more perfect and advanced specimens of flour rollers than were to be found elsewhere in the country'.¹³²

Amy was born into the rather wealthy family of David and Catherine Carmichael. She was the eldest of seven children and grew up with her brothers and sisters in privileged circumstances, experiencing the private tutelage of a governess at home. Amy's parents lived in a large grey stone house – Mervue House – on the corner of Main Street and Abbey Road (Figure 3). The house, standing in the free, bracing air between sea and sky, looked as though it was meant to be a starting point for great ventures. In Amy's own words:

In my day Millisle was a little old-world village of whitewashed cottages on the shore of the Irish Sea. From our nursery window we could see the great rock called Ailsa Craig rising like a cloud out of the sea. Blueness of the sea that looked happy, greyness of the sea that looked anxious, greenness of the sea that looked angry – these are my first memories of colour.¹³³

She liked to walk along the coast or ride with her pony full speed along the seashore. The lovely Irish countryside made a deep impression on her young soul. Writing in 1928, in *The Widow of the Jewels* she referred to the Isle of Innisfree, a beautiful island just off the south coast, situated on one of Ireland's most beautiful lakes, Lough Gill, near Sligo in the north-west of Ireland.¹³⁴

■ Even a child is known by his doings¹³⁵

In order to understand Amy and her later work in India we have to see her religious and cultural background. The grace of God and salvation do not 'run in the blood', yet the Carmichaels' religious background gave Amy the blessings of a heritage of those who fear the Lord. The life of the Carmichael family was closely attached to the affairs of the church. We cannot separate Amy's personal spiritual life from historical facts. The spiritual life in her parent's home, but more important her spiritual life based on the historical fact, that is, on the life and statements of Jesus Christ. His work on the Cross and the illumination of the Holy Spirit were the great continuous consistencies through the spiritual development of young Amy:

The love which formed the climate of the Carmichael home was a sinewy one, without the least trace of sentimentality, holding not only the conviction of her father's side of the family and the courage of her mother's,

132. In 'Historical Notes on Old Millisle and Neighbourhood', in *Keswick Convention Mission Minute Book* (PRONI D/4031/33/1), 169. Here we also find the notation that the Carmichael family had many new initiatives in cattle breeding and were the first to introduce new agricultural machinery into this part of the country.

133. *Amma's Book*, 1.

134. See *The Widow of the Jewels*, 11.

135. Cf. Proverbs 20:12.



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FIGURE 3: Parental home of Amy Carmichael in Millisle.

but the toughness of the Irish Presbyterians, the ruggedness bred by winters on that cold sea, and no-nonsense principles of child rearing.¹³⁶

Amy's father and mother attended the Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church. Her parents are mentioned in the list of the Ballycopeland Presbyterian Congregation in 1843 as David and Catherine Jane Carmichael. The Congregation of Ballycopeland was constituted in the year 1773.¹³⁷ In 1788, this Congregation was transferred from the care and jurisdiction of the Associate Synod of Scotland to the care of the Associate Synod in Ireland, and in 1818 it was placed under the care of the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, distinguished by the name 'Seceders'. Seventy-five families were registered in 1843, of which three belonged to the Carmichael family. Ulster Presbyterians in the 19th century were proud of having such stern ancestors:

136. E. Elliot, *A Chance to Die. The Life and Legacy of Amy Carmichael* (Carlisle: OM Publishing, 1996), 3.

137. The details here on the church and pastor of Ballycopeland and Millisle can be found in T. Kilpatric, *Millisle and Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church* (Millisle: Henry Bros, 1934).

The Ulster Presbyterian is born with the confidence that to be a Presbyterian is what the Almighty intended a man to be, and if he ever forsakes the Church of his father's for pulpit or pew of another, there is one thing sure, that it is not from conviction! It is this world – not the other – he is out to gain!¹³⁸

The name of Amy Beatrice Carmichael¹³⁹ appears in the baptismal register of the Presbyterian Church at Ballycopeland¹⁴⁰ of 19 January 1868. Amy's father in 1850 granted a portion of ground 'on generous terms' to build a manse for the congregation and the three Carmichael families donated nearly half the costs for building the manse. The Carmichael families were 'the pillars' of the Church. Amy's father also donated money for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.¹⁴¹

The potato famine of 1846 and 1847 in Ireland was to make itself felt throughout the country. Many young men and young families went to America; the whole of Ireland suffered greatly with the hunger and the working and brain drain. Because County Down is on the seaboard and so in contact with England and Scotland, the famine did not cause the same distress as in most other parts of Ireland where many had difficulty surviving.¹⁴² The population of Ballycopeland and Millisle district was much reduced during the 10 years that followed; even Robert Carmichael, brother to David and William, left the country and went to America in 1850 to provide business training for a linen firm. Many church members, too, were affected, and could not sustain their pastor and finish the small manse they wanted to build for him. In those days, the Carmichael family generously supported the completion of the manse, the school and in helping the poor. When Amy lay in her cradle, a new school opened in Millisle. On Sundays, a Sunday school was conducted in the schoolhouse, run by the Carmichael family. In 1866 Amy's father David and his brother William provided over 500 pounds for the building of a schoolhouse, the first in Millisle's neighbourhood. As well as day school, there were evening classes, intended partly for the employees in the mill, and services on a Sunday night. When the pastor loci, the Rev. Beatty, was unwell, Amy's uncle would read sermons of a man called Spurgeon, a famous Baptist preacher.

Rev. John Beatty (1832–1906) was ordained minister of Ballycopeland in 1860. He had seen what had happened during the 1859 revival and his sermons had the same spirit. It is recorded, that 'no pastor and people ever lived in more complete harmony, mutual confidence, and affection the one for the other'.¹⁴³ Seven years after his ordination, Rev. Beatty commenced evening services in the village of Millisle in the newly erected school. Amy's mother presided at the musical instrument, a harmonium, which was used at the services. She also trained the members of the choir. When Rev. Beatty was no

138. In Foster, *The Bush That Burned* (Belfast: Books Ulster, 2005), 178.

139. Amy rarely used her second given name, Beatrice. When in India she once referred to it, because someone after baptism wanted to have her name, but Amy persuaded her out of that. When she was in Manchester, 1887, she read Dante's *The Divine Comedy* in the Manchester Free Library, and about the visions Dante had seen. She discovered that the noble Beatrice was the love of Dante's life and also that she was his guide through Paradise. She felt it was too high for her, and so had tucked the name out of sight. From that time onwards, she was very reluctant to use her second name. For the new convert, also, that name was not an option, see *In the Forest*, 67–68.

140. See 'Register of Baptisms and Marriages in Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church' (PRONI D/4061/33/1B).

141. See about the Carmichael family in Millisle in 'Historical Notes on Old Millisle and Neighbourhood' (PRONI D/4031/33/1). In Belfast David Carmichael was also involved in politics. He had an active part in working out the reorganisation and invigoration of the liberal party in this town. He also had a part in forming the Ulster Reform Club.

142. The potato blight, *Ptytophthora Infestans*, struck Ireland in late August 1845. For the people, whose staple diet was the potato, this was a disaster. They saw their harvested potatoes rot in their cellars. In 1846, the blight was total. Many could not survive in the following cold hard winter. The potato blight went on until 1849. It is estimated that during the years 1845–1850, around 800 000 people died of starvation or of a famine-related disease. A further two million people emigrated. The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) in Belfast holds excellent material about this subject. The information in this note is from 'Education Leaflet 3: The Great Irish Famine'.

143. In Eddies Book Extracts, *Millisle and Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church*, 6.

longer able, owing to illness and infirmity, to be present at these evening services, Mr David Carmichael conducted them. The services were held in the church, in the school and in Killaughey National School. Rev. Beatty led the congregation in 'earnestness and by a fine spirit of enthusiasm'.¹⁴⁴ From far and near the young people came to hear him, and young and old alike were blessed and brought in many cases to choose Christ and the Christian life. In 1870 Mr William Carmichael was chosen to the office of eldership and became the secretary of the Presbytery of Ballycopeland Church. When Amy's father died in 1885 the Presbytery recorded to his family in Belfast his 'deep and lively interest and of his great personal worth and of the services he rendered to the Presbyterian church in Ireland'.

As a licentiate, Rev. Beatty had worked in the town mission in Belfast. The Brown Square district, his mission area, was a rather difficult one, but he enjoyed it 'because of the manifold opportunities of doing good it afforded'¹⁴⁵ and because he had people to deal with who greatly needed the Gospel he loved to proclaim. He conducted many prayer meetings and evangelistic services within and outside the congregation. In the sermons, the personal relation with Christ was always an aspect that in one or another way was mentioned, but also the knowledge of the saving blood of Christ and the practical servitude in daily Christian life. Here, in her youth, her mystic side, the knowledge, the communion with Christ had a great impact on Amy's spiritual development. As we will see the mystics of the Middle Ages and of the 16th and 17th centuries were widely read by her when she was in India. Amy's parents loved their pastor and his experiences there, his love for children and those lost, undoubtedly made a deep impression on young Amy's affectionate character and this must have stimulated her to do this kind of work after the family moved to Belfast some years later. Amy heard several of Spurgeon's sermons read by her father in church at the time that Rev. Beatty, due to increasing paralysis, was not able to conduct the services. In Belfast, Amy would enter in the city mission work, where she threw her heart and soul into the work and rejoiced in the work she undertook in the Shankill area of Belfast. There, deeply devoted to her high calling she must often have thought of Rev. Beatty's example when she trod the Belfast roads. On Sunday 28 January 1906, 'God's finger touched him, and he slept'. Of interest for us is that Amy in her youth must have heard many stories from the mission field as both the brother of Rev. Beatty and his son had been missionaries in India.

■ **Covenanter ancestry: The forming of a character**

Carmichael lands are located in the lowlands of Scotland, in the Clyde Valley of Lanarkshire, midway between Glasgow and Edinburgh. These lands were granted to Sir James Douglas of Clan Douglas in 1321 and ruled by his nephew Sir John Carmichael between 1374 and 1384. Carmichael Clan members in Northern Ireland originally came from Scotland, as had most of the Northern Ireland Protestants. They migrated to the Americas from 1650 onwards and to Ireland since 1690. Covenanter blood was still in their veins. Bearing in their intellectual features the stamp of their Scottish ancestry, they were a pious, shrewd and eminently practical people, having ever a keen appreciation of the strong points of the argument for Protestantism. Like most Presbyterian believers with this Scottish ancestry, they were not prone to reveal by speech their deepest religious experiences.

Since the Middle Ages, the Carmichaels had been fine warriors. The traditional hero of the family is Sir John de Carmichael of Meadow Flat, who became the first chief of the clan. Sir John de Carmichael distinguished himself in the Battle of Bauge, which was part of the Hundred Years War, on 22 March 1421. There – as tradition has it – he unhorsed the Duke of Clarence, brother of King Henry V of England. In doing so, he broke his spear and according to the tradition, the Carmichaels gained their crest of a broken spear. The English troops fled in disarray, turning the tide of the war. The Carmichaels produced a succession of notable descendants known for their courage and who distinguished themselves among many others of their time,

144. In Eddies Book Extracts, *Millisle and Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church*, 6.

145. In Eddies Book Extracts, *Millisle and Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church*, 9.



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FIGURE 4: Carmichael Clan Crest, a dexter hand and arm in pale armed and holding a broken spear.

assisting in social, educational and charitable organisations.¹⁴⁶ Since the Bauge victory, the motto on the Clan Carmichael Crest (Figure 4) was 'Toujour Prest', ancient French for *Always Ready*. That family characteristic of courage, always being prepared to take up new challenges, Amy has upheld in her spiritual battles.

Amy's mother, Catherine Jane, née Fison, the daughter of a respected doctor of Portaferry, on Strangford Lough, was a God-given role model for her. Her mother traced her ancestry back to one

146. Millard Fillmore, the 13th American president, was married to Caroline Carmichael McIntosh in 1858.

whose name in Gaelic meant *I dare*. Amy tells an interesting story of General Dalziel, friend of the Claverhouse who persecuted the Covenanters:

My father's people were Covenanters in the Lowlands of Scotland and they fled to the North of Ireland because of these persecutions. When my mother married my father it was as if persecutor and persecuted were united. So you see, after all, cruelty and wrong are not the greatest forces in the world. There is nothing eternal in them. Only Love is eternal.¹⁴⁷

Amy liked to stay with her grandmother and enjoy the environment. One day she went in a boat with two of her brothers and the strong current swept them to dangerous waters. They started to sing very loudly and the coastguard heard them and they were saved. In telling later on this story to the Dohnavur children, she said: 'Perhaps our kind Father was thinking of you. For He knows from the beginning all that He intends to do.'¹⁴⁸

The way Catherine educated Amy and her other children in joy, in singing and with consistent discipline was one of love. Here Amy would learn the unforgettable lessons of prayer at 'that best academy',¹⁴⁹ her mother's knees, while Bible stories would become indelibly impressed upon her memory. At the sound of the bell, all the children were called to attend the daily family prayers. Life's difficulties were handled with grace and her example as a caring and praying mother, coupled with Amy's adventurous spirit, served her so well on the mission field in Japan and India, where she faced grave difficulties. The vivid examples taken from Bible stories and her parents' example of their God-fearing life alike became a tapestry for the Carmichael children's souls. Amy's father was a 'devoted and affectionate husband and father'.¹⁵⁰

Amy used to say that she got 'endless fun out of life'. Little did the Carmichael parents realise that their daughter would grow up to become one of world's most famous missionaries. There was nothing particularly unusual about the girl, who the people in Millisle knew for her wilfulness, tomboyish attitude and a propensity to get into mischievous pranks. She was a feisty child whose longing for excitement often got her into trouble. When told how naughty she was, Amy thought, 'If only you knew how much naughtier I could be, you wouldn't think I'm naughty at all.'¹⁵¹ A big temptation for her was to become angry suddenly. Some years before her death she wrote in a letter to the Dohnavur children that that was her temptation:

That was mine when I was a little girl. I used to feel something like a fire suddenly burning up in my heart. If you feel like that, ask the Lord Jesus to pour His cool, kind, gentle love into your heart instead.¹⁵²

At home, certain rules were strict and if necessary the children knew they could expect sanctions. Where else did Amy learn diligence, integrity and persistence under difficulties? These and other sterling qualities were not developed by lax discipline. This upbringing gave the young girl the strong emotional base and love that permeated her life's mission with the DF. Holding the conviction of her father's side and the courage of her mother's side, as became more explicit in her later life, she developed a rare spirituality, a sensitivity to the voice of God. Amy is one of this illustrious heritage. Always ready to act and being born under a flash of actions, she was ready when the call came to her to serve the Lord in faraway Japan, Ceylon and India.

147. *Amma's Book*, 5.

148. *Amma's Book*, 12.

149. M. Broomhall, *Robert Morrison, A Master-Builder* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924), 9.

150. In 'Historical Notes on Old Millisle and Neighbourhood' (PRONI D/4031/33/1).

151. Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 23.

152. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 353.

■ ‘Please come and sit with me’

A vivid account of Ulster Presbyterian life of the time Amy was in her teens is given by Lydia Foster. In *The Bush That Burned*, Foster depicts the mid-19th century Presbyterian way of worship by reminiscing on youth impressions. Looking back she saw communities who shared a devout faith that they had to defend against persecution, which gave them a strong satisfactory doctrine. She remembers that psalm singing was one of the most honoured forms of Presbyterian worship and that pipe organs were banned from the churches.

‘Northern Ireland is staunchly Christian’ is the still banned remark of an OMF missionary in the 50s of the 20th century who went to Chefoo (China). ‘Yet’, she goes on, ‘Northern Ireland’s Christianity lacked sunshine.’¹⁵³ A little more than 100 years earlier this was not Amy’s experience of Northern Ireland’s Christianity. As a young child, she lived in the world of the Bible and moreover she became familiar with the school of prayer, so she grew up in the soil of revival piety. ‘The Carmichaels were a family of considerable substance, godly, generous, well-intentioned people, much respected by all classes of society’;¹⁵⁴ the sphere at the Mervue house was one of mutual love and ‘never were children happier’ than there.¹⁵⁵ When Amy was in her seventies, she still remembered the solemn sound of her father’s voice reading at family worship, ‘like the rise and fall of the waves at the shore’, and ‘there is the sweet, sweet sound of my mother singing to her children’.¹⁵⁶ She too remembered her first great grief. After her mother told her the story of Christ at Calvary, she rushed into the garden in a vain attempt to forget the thoughts ‘too dreadful to be borne’. ‘How could anybody hurt another so, especially One who was so good?’¹⁵⁷ Here in Millisle her parents taught Amy the faith, which remained the mainspring of her life. The genetics of the Carmichael family with the strong daring faith and inventive talents were seen in all the best qualities that she inherited, in her future life and work in India.

Due to their mills’ business and the more than 100 acres of land to cultivate, Amy’s father and her uncle David had a considerable income, so they could afford to give their children private lessons at home and there Amy and the other children had a carefree life. In the community, the Carmichaels were known to do good with their money for widows, the poor and in social welfare. At home, the Carmichael children were raised in a lively evangelical faith and at home as in church they were instructed – in the two long Sunday services – in the Scriptures and the Westminster Shorter Catechism. That time children were usually in the church for the whole service (without drawing or colouring books to ‘occupy’ them) and had to be quiet throughout. When young, Amy heard many sermons, and she was very attentive: ‘I used to amuse myself by trying to finish the preacher’s sentence before he got half-way through’.¹⁵⁸ The preacher must have noticed in her an attentive, expectant listener. Many years later in India she would write:

When we go to services, let us listen with keen expectation to what God, who knows exactly what our need is, has prepared for us. When the pure gold of the word of God is given, it lays a great responsibility on all who listen, lest they lose that precious thing. We cannot afford to lose one word.¹⁵⁹

153. In S. Miller, *I Can Trace A Rainbow* (Singapore: OMF, 1988), 56 and 58. Sheila later wrote: ‘Living in the Far East, I am aware more than ever of the blessings that were mine in Northern Ireland. No amount of dissonance can take that from me’ (Miller, *I Can Trace A Rainbow*, 59–60).

154. Seymour, *Echoes of Millisle and District*, 15.

155. *Amma’s Book*, 2.

156. *Amma’s Book*, 1.

157. *Amma’s Book*, 1.

158. *Though The Mountains Shake*, 4.

159. *Whispers of His Power*, 137.

She was nurtured by the preaching in church and the lively Christian fellowship at home and in the family. Recording later on she saw in her memory herself sitting on a sofa ‘wedged in between three grown-ups’, listening to their dealing with the Word of God and strong adherence to the hymnbook, ‘for was not the hymnbook almost as inspired as the Bible?’¹⁶⁰ Young as she was, about 10 years old, she had a Prayer book in which she wrote down her prayers and the answers the Lord gave her.¹⁶¹ Her love for books already showed in her youth when she liked to read what she could get. Bunyan’s *Pilgrim Progress* was in nearly every Covenanters home; Fox’s *Book of Martyrs* often gave her dreadful dreams about the Spanish Inquisition.¹⁶²

Education at an elementary level was in the private schoolroom taught by a governess. Her name was Eleanor Milne. Amy loved her and called her ‘Sister’. She cared for what was lovely and good and she hated cruelty with a very bitter hatred. Amy still could in her old age remember ‘the flash of anger in her eyes’, when she saw people doing cruel things to animals. This governess told Amy many stories from the English martyrs, like Ridley and Latimer. She would write, ‘You, who are teachers, magnify your office. You are working in wax that turns to marble.’¹⁶³ Amy’s love for all things created, and her grief if the smallest of animals were needlessly hurt, is a characteristic which went back to her earliest youth and which endured to the end of her life. The children in Dohnavur saw how she knelt for a small flower or animal and taught them to treat these tiny creatures well.

Through this godly home, these influences were mediated to her young and receptive soul and her parents’ convictions influenced her future life to a great extent. In this spiritual climate, very radiant characteristics were bred, but most of all her strength was bred in communion with God. The first memory of this tiny child, when she was just tucked in bed, was that:

This is an indented quotation:

[A]fter the nursery light had been turned low and I was quite alone, I used to smooth a little place on the sheet and say aloud, but softly, to our Father, ‘Please come and sit with me’. And that baby custom left something which recurs and is with me still [*she wrote 60 years later*].

She then learned a first lesson, which would ever be for her a certainty: ‘Our God is a God at hand’.¹⁶⁴

Sunday was for churchgoing and Christian fellowship; no other work should be done. Church services in Millisle were ‘never less than two hours long’.¹⁶⁵ Sunday was dedicated to God and this was the pattern she kept throughout her life.¹⁶⁶ An old man, Robert Brown, still remembering Amy, told Houghton that on Sunday mornings the Carmichael family ‘filled the road’, and that he sat in the pew immediately behind the Carmichael family. Amy remembered that on the road he had tried ‘to slip a few peppermint lozenges into our hands as we went into the church’. Amy always remembered her

160. In *Rose from Brier*, 83.

161. About 60 years had passed when this first notebook turned up among some old papers, and Amy exactly remembered every detail of that prayer and the answer God gave her that rainy Sunday morning in Millisle. In *Edges of His Way*, 24 June, 90–91.

162. *Whispers of His Power*, 24 February, 47.

163. *Amma’s Book*, 12.

164. In *Rose from Brier*, 202.

165. Cf. the letter sent from Hemeratgoda, Ceylon, 25 November 1894 (in the PRONI archive), was written after the church service. The letter is illustrated with some drawings. One of the drawings is of a honey sucker. Under this sketch Amy wrote: ‘Not done on Sunday!!!’; see also *Amma’s Book*, 11 and 15.

166. Cf. in Matthews, ‘The Theological Contributions of Amy Carmichael’; in an interview, Nesaruthina Carunia said: ‘She was very strict about Sundays. No work and no play were allowed on Sundays, all had to attend worship’ (Appendix XI).

grandmother's love for flowers and that in Portaferry every Sunday morning before going to church she picked flowers and that she put the flower arrangement on a table in the church, 'so we might have something lovely to look at during the long service'.¹⁶⁷

David Carmichael's children were seen as models of good behaviour, but it was not always easy for a child like Amy to behave as her parents wanted. When someone offered her a peppermint, she was told:

You must refuse politely. You must smile and say, Thank you very much, but my mother would rather I didn't. [...] That church was a little white-washed kirk, very unpretentious, and it was near the road on the end of the Irish Sea. We went there with the village people, but were not allowed to do the nice things they did. Many a time we enviously watched a fond mother extracting something – we know what it was – from a black kid glove during a long prayer or still longer sermon. It had probably melted a little in the hot palm, but that did not matter. Even in our pew, removed two or three pews from that bliss, we could sniff the delicious, promising smell that meant a white or pink lozenge, heart shaped or round, with 'Forget me not' or some other interesting words upon it. We could see the small girl or boy who sat next to that mother snuggle down, and economically lick a doubtless sticky finger. O to be farmer children! But such a solace was denied us.¹⁶⁸

Years later Amy got a letter from the same Mr Brown who wrote:

I am sending a cheque for two pounds. I think I would like to give the children some sweets. With many thanks for this privilege, I remain yours in His will, Robert Brown'. – The name brought back with a rush, like a wind blowing over the sea, thoughts of old, unforgettable things: the old church by the road and the beat of the waves just below its windows; the old-time singing of the Psalms in the old Scots metrical version, 'The Lord's my Shepherd I'll not want', 'I to the hill will lift up mine eyes' and many another sung to their own well-beloved tunes; the wise old face of the minister looking down upon us all – and the smell of peppermints.¹⁶⁹

At home Amy's parents made the Sunday 'as happy as possible, for mother kept the best toys for that day'; the children even had toy telephones. Walking on a Sunday (except to the church) was seen as not right, but father Carmichael took his children out to the fields.¹⁷⁰ That time in Northern Ireland no Christmas tree came into the house, but Amy's parents had Christmas presents for their children. Amy's grandmother in Portaferry had a Christmas tree, 'a dazzling thing to my eyes'.¹⁷¹

During her whole life, she kept in her heart the preaching she had heard in the church: bound to the Scriptures and in the main strongly Christ-centred and of an evangelical and invitational nature. The free grace of God and the centrality of the cross of Christ, with thrilling appeals to sinners to be reconciled with God, to receive the offer of the Gospel in one's personal life and have a personal knowledge – the saving sight – of Christ, and the sanctification were all tendencies in the theological outlook of the preachers. Amy's parents' spirituality was not confined to their church pews only, for if we could look beneath the surface of their highly respectable Presbyterian church life, we encounter really God-fearing people, loving God and with a heart for the needy. Spiritually they waded into deeper waters: a personal knowledge of the redeeming grace and love for those around them. This made a tremendous impact on the expanding spiritual life of their eldest daughter. Home life and church life around her were well fitted to win an ingenuous girl. Though grace does not run in the blood, blood and tradition tell. The stern biblical training in duty and obedience, the bracing influence of the Calvinist creed and especially

167. *Amma's Book*, 15.

168. *Windows*, 110. Cf. also *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 10–11.

169. *Windows*, 110–111.

170. Cf. *Amma's Book*, 2.

171. *Amma's Book*, 4.

the Spirit of Christ in the Carmichael home, the purity of the parents' lives and the godly upbringing of the children; it was due to these that Amy and her six brothers and sisters grew up as strong Christians. Of the Carmichael home, it can be said that 'godliness is profitable to all things'. The parents emphasised the beauty of the Word of God, to be applied to their own hearts and to the hearts of the children.

As has been stated before, when Amy grew up it was clear that she was a fun-loving person and always up to mischief. However, at home the reins were not held in a loose hand.¹⁷² Little Amy, with her four brothers and two sisters, received punishment when necessary as was the standard of that time: 'people believed in the efficacy of the rod'. Next to five ordinary kinds of punishment, the child had to learn self-control. A firm rap on the hands was the most approved form of discipline, then you had to be polite and say 'Thank you'. Worst was to drink 'Gregory powder':¹⁷³

It was useless to say how sorry you were and that you would never do it again. That was not the time for promises. When mother had prepared the cup, you had to receive it with a 'Thank you, Mother'. We were always sent to bed after 'Gregory'. This was wise, as bed was the best place for such afflicted children.

And all this was 'to do us good'. She was a born leader and often led her brothers and sisters to do naughty things, like walking on the roof along the gutter or eating the poisonous seeds of a laburnum tree: 'Let's count how many we can eat before we die'. What then happened next was 'Gregory'.¹⁷⁴

'Children do appalling things. Their angels must be kept busy.'¹⁷⁵ She learned a big lesson. One day, after she had done something and had to say 'sorry', but was not willing to, she suddenly saw her mother's face and something melted inside her:

In one moment I was in her arms, soft and sorry and wanting to be good. It was the look on her face, such a grieved look that was too much for me. And often since then I have thought that if when we sin we could see the face of our Saviour as in a mirror, we should never have the heart to grieve Him again.¹⁷⁶

Catherine told Bible stories and the children knew that the secret of her life was the power of prayer. She told them that God answers prayer always, and he hears always: at times it was with 'yes', at times with 'no' and at times he wants his children to wait and to trust him. As a child, Amy learned that God does not always provide in the way we expect, but that he is faithful and always provides in his way. The children saw the way their parents walked with God and they knew that when their parents were talking to God, they were talking to someone they loved. Still very young she started to read the Bible herself. One day she was reading Jeremiah 6. In her Bible she wrote in the margin: 'V.14. This verse startled me when I was a little child of six. The first verse which I remember, which spoke to me. Millisle 73 or 74.'¹⁷⁷ Amy could remember very well the sounds: 'And there is the sweet, sweet sound of my mother singing to her children; and the merry sound of laughter and play'.¹⁷⁸

Amy established a reputation for audacity, and in the town she was known for her acts of daring, giving her spirit of independence full scope. One day she led her brother to the top of the house

172. Amy tells of all the punishments children – and she too! – received at that time in *Roots*, 6–7.

173. Gregory powder: 'a formulation of rhubarb powder used as a laxative or purgative', named after Dr James Gregory who first made it. Often also mixed with magnesium and ginger. Cf. *Collins English Dictionary*, 2012.

174. *Amma's Book*, 7.

175. *Amma's Book*, 8.

176. *Amma's Book*, 9.

177. Amy's Bible (1895). Jeremiah VI:14: 'They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace; when there is no peace'.

178. See *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 5.

enclosure. In this perilous position they were discovered by their parents. Of her two brothers closest to her in age she confessed that more often than not it was she who had led them into trouble.¹⁷⁹ Later she confessed in one of her letters: 'I never found patience easy, being by nature a most impatient mortal' and being confined to her bed in older age she says, 'even one week in bed seemed impossible'.¹⁸⁰ Throughout her life she was fond of animals. She tells, when she was a child, that there was a cat at home called Daisy and a collie called Gildo. She had a pony, Fanny, and although the pony at first frightened her, her father taught her how to hold the reins and 'never to nag', 'how to ride with a light rein and yet never lose control'. 'I am very grateful to my father for what he taught me never giving in to a difficulty.' All that she had learned then came in useful long afterwards, 'for in some ways people are rather like ponies'.¹⁸¹ Amy's view of the world was intensive. She saw the colours, of which blue was her favourite, because it could express what no other colour could. Nearly all her books were bound in blue cloth:

One day, I walking in a gallant wood,
 New-dressed in all her bravest greenery,
 Felt stirring in me dull listless mood,
 That murmured pensively,
 Till from my eyes fell scales; the wood was blue
 With blue, blue flowers; carpets odd gentian spread
 On mossy open floors, and speedwell grew
 Low in a lupine bed.
 Forget-me-not was there; blue India pea
 Strewed sapphire on the bushes; blue-bells played [...]
 And overhead in tassels and festoons
 A gayety of blue was everywhere,
 And frail convolvulus, like pale blue moons,
 Hung in the pale blue air.¹⁸²

When she was in India, Thomas Walker, in 1911, came back for furlough, and he, too, loved the colour blue. It was a joyful welcome and happiness, for Amy as well as for the children. There were presents for all the children:

He had sent blue Cambridge ribbons to the family to be worn as shoulder knots, yards of it, wide and narrow. [...] Everything was bright that day; the expectation that Mrs Walker would soon follow prevented the disappointment of her absence from shadowing the place; it was all blue sky, blue ribbons, blue garments – for the children were in his favourite blue – all that the happy colour seems to express as no other colour can, filled the day.¹⁸³

From a very early age, perhaps even as a toddler, Amy experienced a sense of God's presence. Here Amy learned a fundamental lesson: for her life work, prayer became the foundation of her ministry. She never asked people to give money to support her mission work. She asked God only. Mother Catherine not only taught the children the Bible, she exemplified it, having a deep love for God and an intimate personal faith in Jesus Christ. The Carmichael children saw that to believe was not only with the heart, but they saw the real effects in charity and compassion for the needy and the sick. Catherine gave the

179. M. Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner I Remember Amy Carmichael* (Belfast: Impact Printing, 1996), 5.

180. *Candles in the Dark*, 66.

181. Cf. *Amma's Book*, 3.

182. *Pools and The Valley of Visions*, 39–40.

183. *This One Thing*, 208.

children every opportunity to develop these God-given gifts and she wanted her children to see the needs of others and then act to meet them.

At home Catherine taught the girls to cook and to sing and she made hospitality a way of life. Rev. Beatty was the family's minister and Amy would have learned a lot about India from his brother who was a missionary in India. On one of his visits home, he came and lived in a house next to the manse for a year, and his wife used to tell the children stories on a Sunday afternoon about India. Amy would often stay behind and beg to hear more.

The ambivalence between a worldwide horizon and the strict reference to the Calvinistic Presbyterian way of life at home might have shaped the atmosphere in which she grew up. What the parents intoned *piano*, their eldest daughter sang *fortissimo*. In Amy's early teens we already see her develop into an *unconventional* self-confident young woman, who did not allow herself to be squeezed into any mould and by no means into any system. She examined the Scriptures and by prayer she waited for God's answer. The cosy Victorian world of Amy's childhood was the formation time of DF's respected leader.

In this way little Amy grew up in a God-fearing home in a little village along the Irish coast. She always had nice and loving memories of Mervue House where a solid foundation was laid for her future life; she was 12 years old when the spell of her childhood was broken. Soon the life that she knew, being nurtured in a controlled environment, was to be rocked by several events that would change her life forever.

The great world around Amy was becoming a swiftly changing scene at the time she went from us in 1951; her life was caught up in the currents of violent change and prolonged disquiet in the East and the West. During her lifetime she saw and experienced many changes in the world around her and she pitied those who suffered during the revolutions and the two world wars in which her country, too, was involved. The strong foundation she had during her life, generally speaking, was due to her upbringing in Millisle, which had been pious, orderly, settled, and deep-dyed in the Ulster Presbyterian Irish life. Very early, she had already what she years later would prize so much in the Quakers, 'a cool and tender frame of spirit'.¹⁸⁴

■ Harrogate: Drawn into his fold

Amy, educated at elementary level by a private governess at home in Millisle, as a teenager went for further education to Harrogate (Yorkshire)¹⁸⁵ to a Wesleyan Methodist boarding school, called Marlborough House in those days, where a Miss Kay was the principal. Harrogate was in the uplands, a town known in England for mineral springs, and many British people visited the place to enjoy the recuperative powers of the springs. While Amy went to Harrogate, two of her brothers at the same time attended the King William College, Isle of Man. For Amy's parents to send their daughter to an institution running on Wesleyan Methodist lines was obviously not a problem. They could cope with those who believed the Bible as the word of God and accepted Christ Jesus as their Saviour. 'We hard-nosed Ulster Irish do not puzzle over questions like "How many angels can dance on the head of a pin"' Amy told her startled classmates.¹⁸⁶

184. See *Gold by Moonlight*, 37.

185. Harrogate that time was also associated with the famous Clergy Daughter's School at Casterton, immortalised by Charlotte Brontë in *Jane Eyre*.

186. In S. Wellman, *Amy Carmichael, Selfless Servant of India* (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing, 1998), 18.

From an academic point of view, the three years in Harrogate were not years for Amy to remember with joy. Only botany, geology and literature were lessons she enjoyed. Other subjects were dull for her. The students were hedged around with ‘numerous petty rules and restrictions’. ‘Few teachers made our lessons shine’, of whom Mr Grindon, her botany teacher, was one. He went on plant searching with the children.¹⁸⁷ Due to the freedom and atmosphere she had had at home in Millisle, it was very difficult for her to cope with her new environment. After 60 years, a schoolfellow remembered Amy as a ‘rather wild Irish girl who was often in trouble with the headmistress, as she was something of a rebel’. Among the girls she was the leader. However, she was also remembered as being ‘very kind to, and popular with the little girls’. As we will see later on in her way of doing mission work in Japan and India, she could argue – for the sake of the Gospel – against conventions made by men, and sometimes thought it better to shock the prim and proper by unconventional behaviour.¹⁸⁸ Most likely, she was irked by the many petty rules of Harrogate’s schooling system. Not to say that Amy was proud of this kind of doings. In *Gold Cord* it was sufficient for her to say little about the Harrogate years. Homesick, she had been in Harrogate with mixed feelings. She also regretted afterwards that she had not listened enough to her father who wanted her to work hard at her Latin. ‘I wish I had’, she confessed:

Many things happened which should not have happened, because I hadn’t learned to set to, and work at things which seemed to me dull and not useful. This was great pity. I have often been very sorry about it. Once, just once, I got in serious trouble with the authorities. [...] If I told you much it would not help you, for I was not at all I want you to be.¹⁸⁹

One event in Amy’s life that had a dynamic impact on her life and ministry was her experience of being sure of her new life in Christ. Spiritually, it was in Harrogate that she came – probably in the spring of 1884 – into her deeper life experience of surrender to God during the activities of the Children’s Special Service Mission (CSSM). Years later, she would write:

For long ago Mr Edwin Arrowsmith took the children’s service in Harrogate, and to that service the children of a certain school went. In the quiet at the end, a sense of the great love of God came to a child kneeling there. It was the single watered moment of an arid three years.¹⁹⁰

She writes:

My mother had often talked to me about the Lord Jesus, and often, as I sat on her knee with her arms about me while she sang, ‘Jesus, the very thought of Thee’, and ‘It passeth knowledge that dear love of Thine’, I had felt the love of the Lord Jesus, and, as it were, nestled in His love just as I nestled in her arms. But I had not understood that there was something more to do, something that may be called coming from Him, or opening the door to Him, or giving oneself to Him. I don’t remember what the speaker, Mr Edwin Arrowsmith, spoke about, but after his address he told us to sing ‘Jesus Loves Me, This I Know’¹⁹¹ and then

187. *Roots*, 13.

188. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 16.

189. *Amy’s Book*, 13. It was in 1882, the year a comet appeared. Amy and the other girls there wanted to see it but were not allowed. As a ringleader Amy led them all at night to the roof of the school. Amy was afraid to be expelled from school, but she was pardoned. Wellman writes what happened afterwards in the dormitory: ‘Back in the dormitory, Amy said breezily, “Well girls, now you can tell your grandchildren you saw the great comet of 1882.”’ (Wellman, *Amy Carmichael*, 20). See also in *Walker of Tinnevely*, 16, where Amy writes about Thomas Walker’s viewing of the comet.

190. *Nor Scrip*, 15. More than 30 years later a member of the Arrowsmith family in Harrogate, whom Amy did not personally know, sent a cheque. That money was used for a new nursery.

191. Composed by Anna Bartlet Warner (1827–1915). The song appeared in 1860 in the novel *Say and Seal*.

The girl from Millisle

to be quiet. During those quiet few minutes, in His great mercy the Good Shepherd answered the prayers of my mother and father and many other loving ones, and drew me, even me, into His fold.¹⁹²

Now she fully understood what Christ had done for her, and what was to be her response to it all. Her life changed, she, the weak and defeated, exchanged life for Christ's life. She knew now that Christ was asking her to give him her heart, and to yield up her life for his use. Her spiritual life, of which she became fully aware at that time, now followed a deep, hidden channel laid in her early life. A life of complete trust and rest, prepared to go the way the Spirit would guide her. This poem became full reality for her:

Upon a Life I did not live
Upon a Death I did not die
Another's Life, Another's Death,
I stake my whole Eternity.¹⁹³

For once and for all Christ and his redeeming love and sacrifice on the Cross for her was her focal point, of her personally and for her future work. Still a young teenager her heart was for the Lord and she embraced him who had met her with his overwhelming love. Many lost sheep, elderly and young, in her further life would be shepherded by her to Christ and find refuge under his wings. Irrevocably, the great transaction was effected which eventually would change the current of her life, which was destined to become influential towards the same transformation in many other lives:

Home of our hearts, lest we forget
What our redemption meant to Thee,
Let our most reverent thoughts be set
Upon Thy Calvary.
O Lord beloved, Thy Calvary
Stills all our questions. Come, oh come,
Where children wandering wearily
Have not yet found their home.¹⁹⁴

Many members of the established churches found strength and comfort in the familiar rites and rituals of their respective denominations, and religion did not go beyond the institution of personal faith. Amy had been raised in a family of faith, instructed in biblical stories and heard of Christ's great love for sinners; she had experienced her parent's personal faith in Christ and now, here in Harrogate, she saw the full reality for herself: faith rooted in Christ that brought her soul into blossom. Years later in Dohnavur she wrote:

Do you not think that a great deal of what we call faith is not worth the name? It is too flimsy to be called by so strong a word. Faith is the steel of the soul.¹⁹⁵

Looking forward, especially the last verse of the hymn 'Jesus Loves Me, This I Know' resonated in her heart:

192. *Amma's Book*, 13. The song *Jesus Loves Me*, written by Anna Bartlett Warner (1820-1915), was not only taught in many Sunday schools and sung to sick children, but became mostly the first song missionaries worldwide taught to new converts. Amy often used this song in Japan, Ceylon and Dohnavur.

193. Horatius Bonar, in *Amma's Book*, 13. The chorus of this poem is: 'I build on what Thy cross has done for me; There both my death and life I read, my guilt, and pardon there I see.'

194. *Gold Cord*, 164.

195. *Edges of His Ways*, 23 June 90.

Jesus loves me! He will stay
 Close beside me all the way.
 Thou has bled and died for me;
 I will henceforth live for Thee.¹⁹⁶

This great factor in Christian experience was the one the Lord brought about in her life, viz. the reception of the Holy Spirit who did in her what he did for her, and surely her natural life was transformed into a spiritual life through obedience. This obedience to God meant that some time or other she had to enter into desolation for a time. Amy would experience this very soon as dark clouds appeared above the Carmichael family in Millisle.

While Amy was in Harrogate changes were taking place in the milling industry in Millisle, forcing Amy's father to move. First, the family lived for a while at a place called the Knock,¹⁹⁷ near Belfast, and then they moved to Belfast, where the family settled in College Gardens. Various factors, such as competition with the increasing American flour import, made the move a clear decision for her father and uncle. The Carmichael brothers had built a new mill near the Dufferin Dock, and Amy's parents decided to move to Belfast to be close to the new mill. Due to the economic circumstances and complete with heavy competition in the flour industry the financial problems heaped up and money at home decreased drastically. Amy's parents could no longer afford to pay the boarding school fees for their children. With this loss of money, Amy's further plans to continue her studies at Harrogate were dashed. She left Harrogate and her brothers were withdrawn from King William's College. From Harrogate she took with her the rich spiritual blessing God had given her and also her more matured leadership qualities which she would very soon need in the family and the rescue work in Belfast. In short, of the Harrogate years we can say 'she had come into a desert as a pilgrim, and away from the distractions of human love at home, she had found God'.¹⁹⁸

Soon after she left Harrogate, her father took her on a trip to London. There she saw the Tower, the Westminster Abbey, Windsor Castle, the British Museum and the Kensington Museum. 'Sunday found us in St. Paul's for morning service. I was not impressed by that church, Westminster Abbey moved me far more.' Her father took her to the great singers, and the notable people of the day, to the House of Commons (where they saw William Gladstone), and others things worthy to view. 'But most of these things you will find in books, so I will go on to Belfast, where we lived in a pleasant place called College Gardens',¹⁹⁹ located near the university and the Botanic Gardens. Here Amy went to Victoria College²⁰⁰ to study music, drawing and painting. Wilkinson says that these years in her teens shared with her father were surely education in the broadest sense and is one of the strong influences, which helped to make Amy the woman of wide interests whom I came to know.²⁰¹

196. In K. Osbeck, *Amazing Grace: 366 Hymn Stories for Personal Devotions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1990), 73.

197. Here Amy for the first time met the Quakers. Many Sundays she spent several hours with Mrs Bell, 'the lovely Quakeress'. See *Amma's Book*, 9.

198. Wellman, *Amy Carmichael*, 21.

199. *Amma's Book*, 14.

200. A voluntary non-denominational independent institution founded in 1859 by Mrs Margaret Byers and established in Wellington Place. Initially called the Ladies Collegiate School Belfast, it soon required high reputation for academic excellence and sporting prowess. It is now one of the longest established girls schools in the British Isles.

201. M. Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 8.

■ Belfast: The emerging city

The Carmichael family moved from the small coastal village Millisle to an ‘emerging city’.²⁰² They knew the area, because earlier, when Amy was very small the family had temporarily lived at a place called Knock, near Belfast. The name of the house there was Glenview. At that time she liked to play outside and always was found along the water in the woods; with dolls and prams she would not play. One day she saw a poor man and threw her doll and pram out of the window for that poor fellow. ‘This may sound a generous gift. It wasn’t. I had no affection for dolls.’²⁰³

When David and Catherine Carmichael moved to Belfast, the city was booming. It was granted city status by Queen Victoria in 1888:

Granted city status in 1888, Belfast was emerging as Ireland’s largest and most dynamic urban centre and as a key player in the British industrial landscape. The rapid expansion of the linen industry, the growth of the port, the development of the shipbuilding industry and of related heavy and light engineering contributed to an explosion in population.²⁰⁴

Belfast is in every way a flower of late Victorianism. The city bloomed in the 19th century with its industrial revolution and the heyday of the linen trade, and the expansion of her dockyards greatly enlarged the glory of the Empire.²⁰⁵ It was a triumphal era of history, and her buildings reflect that mood. The shipyards symbolise the days when Belfast was world famous for its shipbuilding on which the whole city’s pride was built, and which would ultimately sink after the *Titanic* disappeared into the ocean in 1912. Belfast grew from a town of 53 000 inhabitants in 1831 to a typical Victorian city 70 years later of 349 000. As a city of immigration, Belfast saw the migration of many who had their birthplaces in County Down and County Antrim. ‘The port of Belfast was an important part of a global trading network that extended from the USA and the West Indies to Australia and Japan.’²⁰⁶ The sea carried Belfast’s goods, and its peoples, to the far reaches of the earth and that made the city the success story it was.²⁰⁷ In 1846 the Great Victoria Street railway station was opened,²⁰⁸ and from 1872 trams drawn by horses trafficked through the streets of Belfast. The Belfast Public Library and the Albert Bridge were built in 1890. In 1887 the numbers of telephone subscribers in Belfast was 419.²⁰⁹ By 1900 the prosperity and power of the city was virtually unrivalled among western European cities.²¹⁰

Presbyterianism was very strong in the city. ‘Large churches in important thoroughfares; rich merchants and fashionably-dressed ladies worshipping in their high pews. Men of importance in the public life of the town holding the eldership.’²¹¹ In Belfast, the Presbyterians accounted for 34% of the

202. Cf. the subtitle of O. Purdue’s, ed., *Belfast. The Emerging City 1850–1914* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2013).

203. *Amma’s Book*, 9.

204. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, XVI.

205. The shipbuilding yards at Harland and Wolff were world famous. This company alone employed up to 35 000 workers and was one of the largest shipbuilders in the world. In V. Maxwell, *Amy’s Tin Tabernacle, Amy Carmichael and the Welcome* (Belfast: Books 4 Publishing, 2013), 33. See also E. Gillespie, *The Country Life Picture Book of Ireland* (Feltham, Middlesex: The Country Life Books, 1980), 24–37.

206. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, XX.

207. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, XXIV.

208. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, 72.

209. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, 13.

210. See Dickson, *Beyond Religious Discourse*, 146.

211. Cf. Foster, *The Bush That Burned*.

population, gathering twice per Sunday in one of their 32 churches.²¹² The supremacy of the Presbyterians was also reflected in their position of economic and social dominance. The connection between Scotland and the Ulster Presbyterians was shown in the new Assembly Buildings at Fisherwick Place and Howard Street, begun in 1901 and completed in 1905,²¹³ still more than 100 years later Belfast's most iconic building. The crown spire, most commonly associated with Scotland and, most famously, the High Kirk of St Giles in Edinburgh, on the new building created an easily understood identifier.²¹⁴ This population was closely followed by the Protestant Episcopalians, or members of the Church of Ireland, at 31%. The Roman Catholic share was lower at 24%. The modern industrialisation coexisted with pre-modern forms of social conflict. 'Belfast was deeply divided, not just along class lines of religion but nationality as well.'²¹⁵ The linen industry was the largest employer in Belfast by the late 19th century with a labour force of nearly 70 000, of which a vast majority was female.²¹⁶ The powerful linen industry gave Belfast the nickname 'Linenopolis'. Next to this, the city became a major centre of heavy engineering and shipbuilding. Nowadays Belfast's historic area, Donegal Quay, tells about the changing face of the city's harbour, which built well over 10 000 ships.

In Belfast Amy's father's money problems increased drastically. In his generosity, David Carmichael had lent some thousands of pounds to a friend in serious need, who at the very end was not able to repay the amount lent. Next to other losses in the mill business, and due to the cheap flour imports from the USA, Amy's father could not afford to go on with the business. A trying and traumatic period it was for Amy and the family when her father, due to the infection of a severe chill, which developed into double pneumonia,²¹⁷ died at the early age of 54 on 12 April 1885. Some days before, 08 April, a Wednesday – the traditional day in the Carmichael family for singing hymns – her father had asked his family to sing Ray Palmer's (1808–1887) 'My Faith Looks Up to Thee', of which the last two verses ran:

While life's dark maze I tread,
 And griefs around me spread, be Thou my Guide;
 Bid darkness turn today, wipe sorrow's tears away,
 Nor let me ever stray from Thee aside.
 When ends life's transient dream,
 When death's cold, sullen stream shall o'er me roll,
 Blest Saviour, then, in love, fear and distrust remove-
 Oh, bear me safe above, a ransomed soul!²¹⁸

When he died, that Sunday morning the church bells were ringing to call the people to church. Amy wrote, 'The last thing I read to him was this from Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. The words have been with me ever since.'

All is best, though we oft doubt,
 What th' unsearchable dispose
 Of Highest Wisdom brings about,
 And ever best found in the close.

212. See Dickson, *Beyond Religious Discourse*, 11.

213. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, 74.

214. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, 74.

215. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, 194.

216. Purdue, ed., *Belfast*, 212.

217. See *Roots*, 34, where Amy writes about the sickness of her father.

218. *Roots*, 14. The hymn was composed by Ray Palmer in 1830. In *The Keswick Hymn Book*, 97.

The official announcement of David Carmichael's death goes as follows:

The Carmichael Family of Millisle: Carmichael – April 12 (1885) at 21 College Gardens, David Carmichael, J.P. aged fifty-four years. His remains will be removed for interment in the Borough Cemetery on tomorrow (Wednesday) morning 15th inst., at nine o'clock. With very deep regret we announce today the sudden death of this gentleman, which took place on Sunday, at his residence College Gardens. [...] He was born in a family deeply attached to the Presbyterian Church and his parents intended to devote him to the ministry and he was accordingly sent to the Belfast Academical Institution where he prosecuted very successfully the usual classical and mathematical studies, introductory to a university career. He went however, to business, but probably his early studies helped to form the decided literary taste which marked his whole life.²¹⁹

Mrs Carmichael was strengthened through the strong assurance of Nahum 1:7: 'The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble'. Years later, she marked in her Bible that verse again and wrote in the margin: 'Found true all along the line ever since'.²²⁰ For Amy the loss of her father was a great blow. Her father had been an example for her.²²¹ In the mourning period 'we all wore black for two years and wrote on notepaper edged with black'.²²² Out of childhood, Amy suddenly passed into young womanhood. Mother and daughter became inseparable and to her younger brothers and sisters she often acted as a second mother. One of her brothers later wrote his memory of that time – he was 11 years old – and about Amy he said: 'My memories are of a wonderfully sincere, downright, unafraid and sympathetic sister'. Amy had the faculty of placing herself in the position of the one in trouble. Five years after the death of her father her younger sister Ethel wrote about Amy:

She lived an amazingly full life in those years, taking classes in painting and other subjects, teaching Eva and me during a period when we were not well enough to go to school and starting various 'good works'. [...] If anybody asked me what were the strongest impressions Amy made on me in her youth, I think I would say – her enthusiasms. She would kindle so quickly to anything that promised the betterment of the poor or unhappy. [...] She was always able to see the positive and ignore the negative, and once she had an object before her which she was convinced was worth working for, no difficulty in the way would deter her.²²³

How to live a God-honouring life was the problem Amy struggled with for some time. She found the answer when in 1886 she went for a visit to Scotland:

[W]here something happened that changed everything for me. 'O Lord, we know Thou art able to keep us from falling'. Those words found me; it was as if they were alight. And they shone for me.²²⁴

Enlightened and revived, she re-consecrated her life to the Lord. She now rested in the Faithful One. She reckoned to use Taylor's words 'on God's faithfulness'. Soon the family relocated in Belfast and her mother relied on her for help. Life went on rather smoothly and Amy grew into adulthood rather early due to the many responsibilities she had at home.

219. In 'Historical Notes on Old Millisle and Neighbourhood' (PRONI D/4031/33/1), 167.

220. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 19.

221. 'I am very grateful to my father for teaching me never to give in to a difficulty', in *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 24.

222. *Fragments that Remain*, 143.

223. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 19.

224. *Amma's Book*, 15.

■ The encounter at the old Victorian fountain

As mentioned in the Introduction, on my visit to Belfast I came across the old Victorian fountain that once influenced the whole course of Amy's life. I had nearly the same experience Margaret Wilkinson describes in *At BBC Corner I Remember Amy Carmichael*. It was here in 1885 when 18-year-old Amy passed the same fountain – at that time it was just built – on her way home from church. More than 30 years later she could still remember what had happened that Sunday.

It was on a hot September day in 1918²²⁵ that Amy set out with several happy Indian children to trace their mountain river to its source. That moment tells of the beginning of the DF; she related why it took shape as it did, and how it came to be a little thing committed to the hand of God. Her thoughts went back 33 years and it was as if she experienced again what had happened then and what had left her unable to return to the ordinary:

It was a dull Sunday morning in a street in Belfast thirty-three years before the day when the children climbed their mountain stream. My brothers and sisters and I were returning with our mother from church when we met a poor, pathetic old woman who was carrying a heavy bundle. We had never seen such a thing in Presbyterian Belfast on Sunday, and, moved by sudden pity, my brothers and I turned with her, relieved her of the bundle, took her by her arms as though they had been handles, and helped her along. This meant facing all the respectable people who were, like ourselves, on their way home. It was a horrid moment. We were only two boys and a girl and not at all exalted Christians. We hated doing it. Crimson all over (at least we felt crimson, souls and body of us) we plodded on, a wet wind blowing us about, and blowing, too, the rags of that poor old woman, till she seemed like a bundle of feathers and we unhappily mixed up with them. But just as we passed a fountain recently built near the kerbstone, this mighty phrase was suddenly flashed as it were through the grey drizzle: Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble - every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide ---.²²⁶ 'If any man's work abide': I turned to see the voice that spoke to me. The fountain, the muddy street, the people with their politely surprised faces, all this I saw, but I saw nothing else. The blinding flash had come and gone; the ordinary was all about us. We went on. I said nothing to anyone, but I knew that something had happened that had changed life's values. Nothing could ever matter again but the things that were eternal.²²⁷

The icy stares of the 'proper Presbyterians' embarrassed her at first, but when the Lord moved in, the whole scene changed. Saul of Tarsus's revelation on his way to Damascus at that moment was hers, in a different way, but as important for the course her life as it was for Saul. The words of Paul from 1 Corinthians 3 which flashed into Amy's mind changed her life course completely. She went home with her brothers and that afternoon Amy, 18 years old, shut herself in her room and there, talking with God, she finally settled the pattern of her future life. The Lord she had met at school in Harrogate showed her clearly what would be the aim of her life. Her affection for the Lord Jesus Christ deepened and the love for the world of vain gaiety where Christ was nudged into an inferior place was definitely expelled.

This is the 'pool', the 'origin' of the whole Dohnavur story. From this pool flowed the stream, which is still running. From that moment onwards, nothing could ever be the same. Crucified with Christ, the world now became crucified to her, the world with its fascination and power, now that she had agreed with God. Christ's disciple now, she had no programme, only a distinguished passion of devotion to her Lord.

225. *Gold Card*, 1.

226. 1 Cor 3:12-14.

227. *Gold Card*, 2-3.

In September 1886, during a spiritual life conference in Scotland, Amy encountered God in a way that deepened her outlook on life. Her expensive taste in food and clothing suddenly vanished. Weaned from the world, things that were important to her lost their significance. She stopped desiring the things she used to desire. This happened suddenly. Things began to matter that were there before, but not so strong. There was then no conflict of desire. This well-brought-up young woman realised that she no longer cared about trivial things in life. A singleness of purpose had entered her life, a willingness to do God's work faithfully, even when nobody was watching. This led her in 1938 to write these verses for all workers – Amy calls them 'under-shepherds'²²⁸ – in God's field:

If by doing some work which the undiscerning consider 'not spiritual work' I can best help others, and I inwardly rebel, thinking it is the spiritual for which I crave, when in truth it is the interesting and exciting, then I know nothing of Calvary love.²²⁹

In Belfast, after the long mourning period for her father was over, her mother said she would go with her to purchase a few pretty dresses and among them, of course, an evening dress for parties:

The long time of being 'in mourning' for our father was over. (In those days we wore black when one whom we loved entered into the Golden City. Strange wasn't it?).²³⁰

Amy decided she could not have all these pretty dresses and go to parties. She was, in the words of Paul, 'dead to the world'. To Amy, the world meant fashion, finery, luxury of any sort. She would follow him who had no home, no earthly possessions beyond the bare minimum. She would be dead to the world and its applause, to all its customs, fashions and laws. For a girl with her eye for beauty, it is the measure of her commitment that she did not hesitate to relinquish all that seemed to her inimical to the true life of discipleship. She saw another beauty the world could not give, she glimpsed the beauty not only of a life of total consecration, but of the one to whom she had delivered herself, so beautifully expressed by Lilies Trotter:

A path lies within our reach, that makes the ordinary Christian life look cold and colourless by contrast; a path leading even beyond that consecration in its lower sense, for this latter may be very subjective in tone, and may hold out the way of obedience chiefly as a means of rest and victory. It is to many of us a distinctly fresh life when God's Spirit leads us to the objective side, lifting our gaze from the road beneath our feet to the form of Him who goes before, and riveting it there by his radiant beauty. [...] Then the measure of the sunshine and shadow of our days will be simply in the shining or the veiling of His face. Nothing on earth will make up for the slightest dimming of that light; nothing will really matter that leaves it untouched.²³¹

She was ready with all her heart and soul to 'follow Him, Who went before'. Where he would lead her, she had no idea. The Lord did not give her full account of his leadings; she had to learn to wait and to learn several lessons in obedience and in fellowship with him, even then, when this meant to deny herself, and die as the corn of wheat to bring forth fruit. The preparation for her future work of selfless ministry, of caring for hundreds of children she rescued from moral and physical danger, she had to learn, just like Moses in his 40 years in the desert. Through those years she could utterly rely on the God who clothes the lilies of the field.

228. In *If*, VII.

229. *If*, 43.

230. *Amma's Book*, 15.

231. In P. St. John, *Until the day breaks... The life and work of Lilies Trotter* (Carlisle: OM Publishing, 1994 [1990]), 10.

At that time, like many other young women of independent means, Amy became involved in volunteer service. After the Harrogate experience and other encounters with God, Amy was as impulsive as ever, living her life as in a whirlwind, trying to help and assist the needy. Amy was both devoted to evangelism and she had a deep compassion for the poor. Her heart was apprehended by a great love, a love that compelled her to live differently.²³² She longed to relieve the deep need of the less fortunate around her. The almost profligate giving of herself mirrors the very radical teaching of her Saviour. She came into contact with Dr Henry Montgomery of Belfast City Mission, who used to take her through the streets on Saturday evenings. He said little, but left the signs of poverty and evil to make their impression on the soul of Amy. Still young, 18 years old, she also used to visit the streets around her home on Sunday afternoons, and brought children to the children's meetings in her own home. Never did the children leave the house without having had something to eat. When doing street work she was not tempted to anger, and usually spoke calmly and gently. Together with the daughter of Dr Montgomery, Eleanor, and two other girls she went to a night school on Monday evenings, and helped to teach a lively group of boys. The classes ended with a 'good-night service'. With two of her brothers, she was also involved in the morning watch. It was her initiative to spend each morning in prayers and Bible readings with other people. Those who participated enjoyed it, as one member of this group writes: 'Amy saw to it that there were no dull moments, and we all loved her'.²³³ Her sympathies were drawn forth for the myriad of girls working in the mills who were suffering due to long working hours, little payment, not having any possibilities for proper education and who were in moral danger. Her work was seen by William Johnston, pastor of Townsend Street Presbyterian Church and founder of the Presbyterian Orphan Society, who admired her work. Amy could also often be found at the YWCA in Donegal Square. During these years we see a young woman who threw herself wholeheartedly into serving others.

■ The tin tabernacle

'Millies' they were called, the many girls working in the mills, together with their other denigrating name 'shawlies' because they covered their heads and upper body with a shawl. Wealthier women always wore hats. These girls were often rather unrefined or had no social skills. On Sunday mornings Amy had her class for the 'shawlies'. Sometimes the sensibilities of the respectable people were shocked. Amy knew that these poor and underprivileged girls were so vulnerable to fall for many temptations they faced in their home life. She pressed her brother Ernest, who at that time worked as an apprentice in the Northern Counties Railway shops, to tell her about the conversations of the men he met during his work. She was horrified by what she heard from him, and she longed even more that the mill girls might grow up in purity and true Christian life.

Dr Park, the pastor of Rosemary Street Presbyterian Church, where the Carmichaels had attended since their coming to Belfast, agreed that the 'shawlies' could meet every Sunday morning in the church hall. In this work Amy was assisted all along by her mother. It was a work based on faith in God alone, and he met the needs in most remarkable ways. In the evenings there were several meetings with Bible study and practical work, for instance needlework and elementary housekeeping.

232. Cf. the way more than 100 years later Katie Davis, the American young lady who rescued many children, left her comfort zone and gave herself for the children in Uganda: 'Jesus wrecked my life, shattered it to pieces, and put it back together more beautifully. [...] And if one person sees the love of Christ in me, it is worth every minute. In fact, it is worth spending my life for' [Davis, *Kisses from Katie*, XVIII and XIX].

233. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 40.

She later told the Dohnavur children that ‘those were happy days’.²³⁴ But many church members of Rosemary Street Presbyterian Church were not amused that the numbers of girls attending the meetings in their church hall increased. Some of these girls were very loud in their talking; they ‘seemed to address God in their coarse and common vernacular’, which the decent Presbyterians felt was unbecoming. Members made their objections known to Dr Park who supported Amy 100%:

However, God, who makes the wrath of man to praise Him, used these unwelcome and discontented complainers so that, instead of hindering Amy’s outreach amongst the mill girls, they would actually be the harbinger of a new work that God would unfold for Amy in the near future.²³⁵

The work grew and grew until she needed a hall that could seat 500. She saw an advertisement in *The Christian*, a monthly publication for the churches, for an iron hall that was available for 500 pounds. And so the work of the ‘Welcome Hall’ began, which is now the Welcome Evangelical Church. When Amy was about 10 or 11 years old she was asked to collect money for the ‘Bird’s Nest’, a Christian orphanage in Dublin, and as she was staying with her grandmother, she took the collecting card to her various friends in Portaferry, asking them to help. She also met with opposition and some refused to give anything. ‘Why not ask the Lord to make those who love him help the children whom he loves, instead of asking money from those who don’t love him?’ So she and others decided to pray for 500 pounds. Amy came into contact with a Miss Kate Mitchell who wanted to do something in memory of a friend. She talked with Amy and tried to find out more about the work of the mill girls.²³⁶

Kate Mitchell wrote to Amy saying that she wanted to donate 500 pounds for the hall. Now they prayed for a piece of land, and one of the mill owners hearing of this request granted her a piece of ground on the corner of Cambrai Street and Heather Street. The hall was put up, and the Rev. Park came to dedicate it. Invitation leaflets had been printed and sent out to many people to attend the opening of ‘The Welcome’ on 02 January 1889. This work was a branch of the YWCA for ‘the mills and factory girls’. We see Amy’s reason for the opening of the hall in the invitation (Figure 5).

‘The Welcome’ was the name of the hall, a most appropriate name for this new venture, in view of the many reproaches Amy and her friends had experienced from many church members of the Rosemary Street Presbyterian Church. Here in The Welcome was no distinction by social class. Amy and Miss Mitchell mixed with the girls and sat beside them when activities were held.

During the dedication service, Amy, 22 years old, sitting, not on the platform but in the middle of the hall among the people²³⁷ – did she not like to be called ‘Nobody’ in the *Scraps?* – over and over read again the words printed by hand in large letters, and hung in a long strip just above the platform: ‘That in all things He might have the pre-eminence’.

On that occasion Amy said: ‘As truly, as truly as I knew how, I wanted those words to be fulfilled’.²³⁸ The work in The Welcome opened with a mission conducted by two students from the Moody Bible Institute. Here D.W. Whittle’s well-known hymn, composed in 1883, ‘I Know Not Why God’s Wondrous Grace’²³⁹ was for the first time sung on the British Isles.

234. *Amma’s Book*, 14.

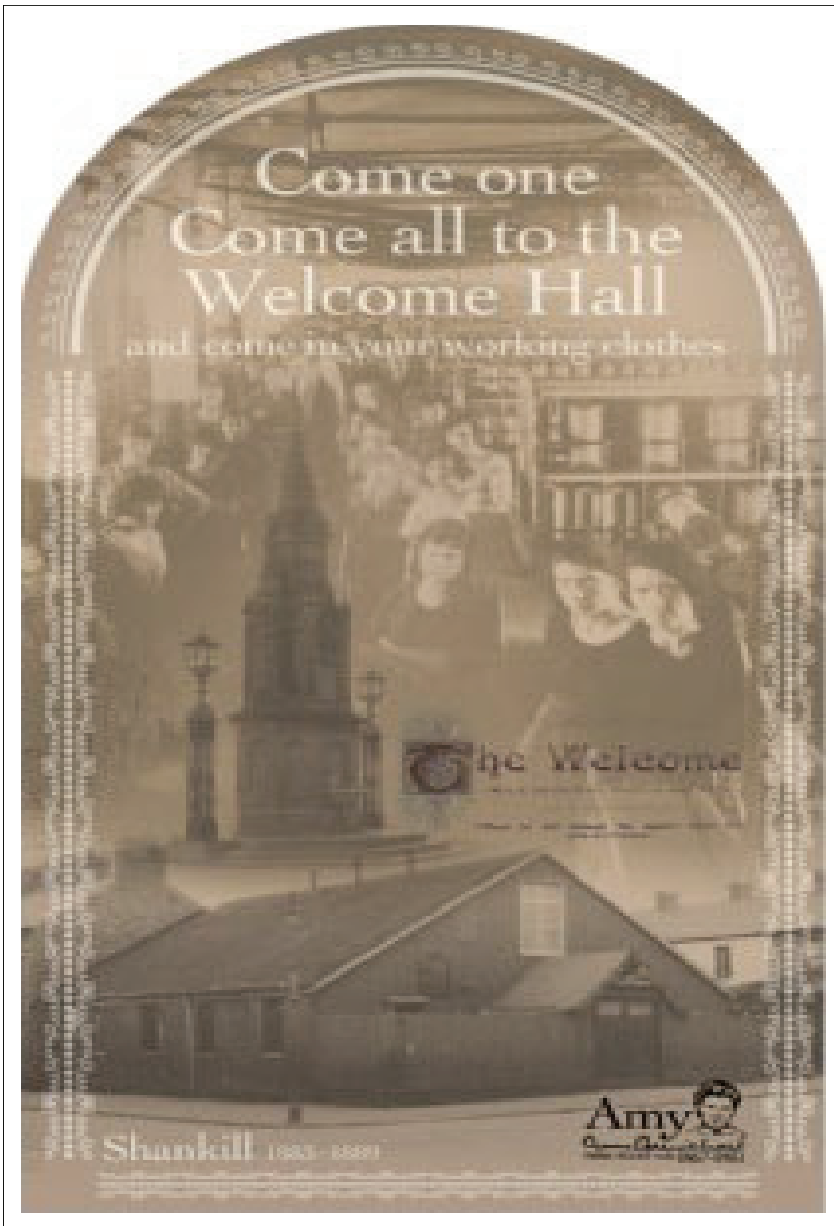
235. In Maxwell, *Amy’s Tin Tabernacle*, 36.

236. Kate Mitchell was the daughter of a wealthy linen baron who lived in Olinda, Craigavad, near to Bangor on the County Down coast.

237. In Maxwell, *Amy’s Tin Tabernacle*, 42.

238. Maxwell, *Amy’s Tin Tabernacle*, 43.

239. Daniel Webster Whittle (pseudonym El Nathan), 1840–1901. This hymn was first published in D. Sankey’s *Sacred Songs and Solos* and since then in more than 216 other hymnals.



Source: © Welcome Evangelical Church. Permission to reproduce was obtained from Jonathan Clarke. Photographer unknown. See also Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 28; Maxwell, *Amy's Tin Tabernacle*, 44–45.

FIGURE 5: The Welcome Hall invitation, 'Come one Come all to the Welcome Hall and come in your working clothes'. [Agenda: Sunday - Bible Class (4:30 pm) and Sunbeam Band Meeting (5:30 pm); Monday - Singing Practice (7:30 pm) and Dinner Hour Prayer Meeting (1:20 pm); Tuesday - Night School (7:30 pm); Wednesday - Girl's Meeting (7:30 pm) and Dinner Hour Prayer Meeting (1:20 pm); Thursday - Mother's Meeting (4:00 pm); Friday - Dinner Hour Prayer Meeting (1:20 pm). First Wednesday of the month Gospel Meeting – All welcome.]²⁴⁰

240. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 28; V. Maxwell, *Amy's Tin Tabernacle*, 44–45.

Without knowing it, Amy received a special training for her future work in India. Among the wretched, the unhappy and despairing, she found that something of infinite value was entrusted to her to convey to them. Her one anxiety was to get these girls in touch with Jesus Christ. In the first weeks, after the opening of 'The Welcome Hall' many girls received the Lord as their Saviour. This work kept Amy busy; looking at the weekly schedule, we are impressed by what was done then and there.

For the maintenance of the building and the supply of the material for the activities, there was no regular support, but Amy trusted God to provide what was needed. And he did! For it was here that Amy learned to trust the Lord for provisions and whenever she needed money for 'The Welcome' (Figure 5), she prayed for it and it came. Throughout her life she had this principle: only look to the Lord for help. The work grew and others offered to help. She did not accept assistance from just anyone. After studying her Bible in Ezra 4 she learned that only God's people could do this work. Later, in recruiting new workers for Dohnavur, people from Australia, Canada, America and New Zealand offered to come. She then first talked with the Lord and after they arrived, Amy watched them and some were advised after some time to leave:

What I want you to notice specially is the great kindness of our Lord. He led me into this truth at the very beginning, and He has kept it as a settled thing in my heart ever since. Nothing that I have told you made for a superior attitude, as some said it would. It was just the opposite. It had, and it has, a very humbling influence.²⁴¹

Young as she was, she was the leader and showed great ability in organising the meetings in 'The Welcome'. She had the gift of involving others and the generosity to give them full credit for their work. One of her sisters said that Amy usually reserved the Gospel service for herself:

Frequently I played the hymns for her, and so heard the Gospel message, clearly give, full of power and the longing of her heart for the conversion of those rough but attractive girls. [...] She was often depressed in the tram afterwards as we returned home, but was cheered by a word of comfort, leaving results with the Lord.²⁴²

Amy's mother released her daughter wholeheartedly and unreservedly to this work. Her greatest act of love was when she completely gave Amy to God when she had heard his call to the mission field. She let her daughter go into and under God's hands. While in Belfast Amy also learnt a very important lesson for her future work:

She once went to Portaferry, where her grandmother lived and took there a collecting card to her various friends there and asked them a help for The Bird's Nest, a children's orphanage in Dublin. There was one who had just built a new house for himself. He refused to give anything. Perhaps it was the repulse of that refusal that set me thinking. Why not ask God to help little children He loves instead of asking for help from people who don't love Him? Later on many other thoughts came, and in the end I settled that it is enough to ask our Father only for money for the work.²⁴³

Within a year of opening 'The Welcome', Mr Jacob Wakefield MacGill, from Manchester City Mission, invited Mrs Carmichael to come to Manchester, together with her daughters. Amy's mother consented to work in Manchester as superintendent of a rescue home associated with Star Hall, a mission outreach located in the Manchester Ancoats area. Here Amy would work among the factory girls, the same type of work she had done in Belfast. When Amy with her mother and sister left Belfast, Miss Mitchell took

241. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 28.

242. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 29.

243. *Roots*, 20; *Gold Cord*, chapter XVII, 121 - 126.

charge of 'The Welcome', and left her lovely home every day to work among the girls.²⁴⁴ Amy never could forget the work in 'The Welcome'. In 1848 she wrote: 'Every foot of that place is dear to me. Everything concerning it was prayed over. [...] I never, never forget "The Welcome" and my beloved girls.'²⁴⁵

The way churches and mission organisations raised money was secular in Amy's eyes. In *Scraps* is a long piece on the subject:²⁴⁶

We must have money. We can't build spires ninety feet high without it, we cannot decorate our churches with elegant windows without it, we cannot issue costly programmes for our social meetings without it, we can't furnish our sanctuaries with real polished mahogany without it. [...] How are we to get it? You may touchingly plead for the 865,000,000 heathen abroad. You may paint a picture terrible and true of the state of the home heathen at your doors. You may work yourself into hysterics over these and other intensely real realities but you won't get the money. So another plan must be devised. We shall get up a fancy fair.

And she goes on a little while about what churches and mission organisations do to get some money, what people do to give for this work and that because you get in return nice cakes and so forth, in return some money will be brought in. She comes to Exodus 35:22, where Moses urges the people to give to the new tabernacle. Three things were important about those donations:

1. as many as were willing-hearted
2. brought their own possessions
3. unto the Lord.

Then Amy quotes three Bible verses:

1. 'Isn't all the silver and the gold Mine?, said the Lord.' (Hag 28)
2. 'Ask, and you will receive.' (Jn 16:24)
3. 'My God shall supply all you need.' (Phil 4:19)

Amy discovered three principles about giving:

1. Is the work for which we want the money chosen work for us, or our chosen work for him? If the former, will not he see after the money necessary? If the latter, then how can we expect anything better than we have?
2. Can we expect a blessing to follow money giving grudgingly?
3. Should we not see that our root is right, before expecting flowers and fruit?

These thoughts surprisingly are nearly the same as Taylor used for the CIM, but Amy arrived at them from her regular Bible studies. Throughout her life, she never laid aside these principles. And the Lord never left her with empty hands and baskets.

■ *Scraps*: A family magazine

The Carmichael family, mother and children, was very close and usually the atmosphere at home was a joyous one. It was Amy who proposed a family journal. The board members were the mother and the children. *Scraps* would be the name of the journal. Mother unanimously was elected president for 1887, Amy as secretary. Each member had a 'nom de plume'. Amy signed her contributions 'Nobody'. The

244. Information on the further history of 'The Welcome Hall' since 1890, in Maxwell, *Amy's Tin Tabernacle*.

245. *Roots*, 25.

246. See *Scraps*. Also in Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 25–27.

object of *Scraps* was ‘for the improvement and amusement of the members.’²⁴⁷ When reading through all the contributions we see how they were teasing each other in a nice way or encouraging each other. In one of the contributions in 1888 it is worthwhile to notice that ‘the family generally have not quarrelled more than three times a day’. Amy’s brother Norman, writing under the name ‘Namron’, gives us a vivid impression of what happened and whom he encountered in streets of Belfast. He sees the ‘shawl shrouded girls of every height and age’, and ‘the shawl covered barefooted mill girl’. Norman speaks of:

[P]oor men, rich men, beggar man thief, all pass us in ceaseless flow, till we wonder where all come from and where all go to, we pass the poor men with their jailing story telling faces, we pass the rich men (and are passed by them). A wet cold stormy night, the sea ebbing house wards, and little shivering tag-ragger news boy, quite a common boy, very dirty, very hungry, very wet.

In one contribution, titled ‘Under the surface’, Amy was inspired by one of the poems of Miss Havergal, describing life on and under the surface: ‘Little we know when we glance on the surface’; ‘Let us not rest with the outward seeing. Pleased or not, though it be, let us dig deeper until we reach truth and reality.’ Here we already meet the missionary who in India dug deeper until she found the truth of what really happened with the girls and boys dedicated to the gods. And when she saw the people she saw the emptiness of their lives without Christ. Here is one of her thoughts in *Scraps* after she met Taylor of the CIM in Belfast:

Think truly, and thy thoughts shall be spotless with God’s own purity.
On every thought-bud let us bear the stamp of truth, and love and prayer.²⁴⁸

Does it not stir up our hearts to go forth and help them, does it not make us long to leave our luxury, our exceeding abundant light, and go to them that sit in darkness?²⁴⁹

Sometimes a play was performed at home and we read ‘that it would meet with our sincere approval if the money thus realized was devoted to the most charitable of all charitable objects “The Amy’s Mill-girls Society”’.²⁵⁰ So the whole family supported Amy in her work at the ‘Welcome’. In one of Amy’s editorials in *Scraps* she set out her attitude to the life of faith. At length she wrote about Moses and Aaron appealing to the children of Israel to make their contributions for the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness. She pointed out that Moses did not organise a bazaar or a sale of work to raise funds for God’s house. She quotes Exodus 35:22, from here she drew the abovementioned three principles:

And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of Gold: and every man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto the Lord.

The Carmichael children read a lot as we can see in *Scraps*. Often the contributors refer to Shakespeare, Ruskin, Kingsley, Coleridge, Havergal and others. Due to the loss of family capital for the widowed mother it was not always easy to make ends meet financially. But the children were prepared to help. In order to save money the children resolved and wrote down that they would ‘eat for one week one soup-plate full of porridge and one cup of milk (for the youngest one) and for the elderly one teacup’. ‘This we promise to continue to stick to matter how tempted we are by other materials and also no matter how disagreeable.’ The children with their initials signed this promise. Separately the elder children added ‘also that we do without any lunch for one week.’²⁵¹ In 1887 Taylor paid a visit to Belfast. At a meeting,

247. *Scraps*, [18 March 1887 onwards].

248. *Scraps* [vol. 2, January 1888].

249. In Wellman, *Amy Carmichael*, 32.

250. *Scraps*, [vol. 1, 23 April 1887], 1.

251. *Scraps*, [vol. 1, 23 April 1887], 3.

sponsored by the Keswick Convention, Taylor told that every hour 4000 Chinese enter the gate of death without ever having heard the precious name of Jesus. In *Scraps* 20-year-old Amy wrote:

Does it not stir up our hearts to go forth and help them, does it not make us long to leave our luxury, our exceeding abundant light, and go to them that sit in darkness.
 Listen! Listen, English sisters
 Hear an Indian sister's plea-
 Grievous wails, dark ills revealing
 Depths of human woe unsealing
 Borne across the deep blue sea.
 We are dying, day by day,
 With no light, no cheering ray.²⁵²

We see a harmonious family ready to help each other in a God-fearing atmosphere.

■ Broughton Grange: Turning the corner

Amy became acquainted with the Keswick Movement, and it was there that she learned of a close deeper walk with the Lord. The first contacts were in September 1886 when a friend invited her to attend the Glasgow Convention, a convention in a Keswick style. This is what she experienced there, and it was so important to her that she wrote down the date in her Bible – 23 September 1886:

The hall was full of a sort of grey mist, very dull and chilly. I came to that meeting half hoping, half fearing. Would there be anything for me? Could there be anything? I don't remember feeling there was anything (my fault) in either of the two addresses. The fog in the hall seemed to soak into me. My soul was in a fog. Then the chairman rose for the last prayer. [...] 'O Lord, we know Thou art able to keep us from falling'. Those words found me. It was as if they were alight. And they shone for me.²⁵³

That time God spoke very clearly to her. One year later, a similar convention was held in Belfast. It was here that she and her aunts met Mr Robert Wilson, the co-founder of the Keswick Convention and James Hudson Taylor, the founder of the CIM.²⁵⁴ Amy until then had never heard of Mr Wilson. Meetings were held in Belfast at the Exhibition Hall and Mr Wilson had asked the people to write questions on paper:²⁵⁵

My aunts had questions. I got a nice pink card with gold edges – we wanted to be polite to the speakers – and wrote a list of questions, the kind of questions good Presbyterians would ask, doctrinal and argumentative. [...] After the meeting to our surprise Mr. Wilson found us out, and asked if he might call. When the family was sat round the fire, Mr. Wilson asked 'May I read something', and then he read a joyous hymn written by Frances Ridley Havergal. The poem was written by her after she came into the life of restful faith: 'Master, how shall I bless Thy name, | For love so great to me: | For the sweet enablings of Thy grace. | So sovereign, yet so free | That have taught me to obey Thy Word, | And cast my care on Thee.' [...] After he had read all the verses he asked 'May we pray together?' After that he shook hands and said Goodbye. Not one question on the pink card had he answered and yet all the questions were answered. We did not expect to see Mr. Wilson again, but

252. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 20.

253. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 16.

254. In the margin of his Bible at Zephaniah 3, under the date 04 September 1887, Robert Wilson had written, 'Belfast with Hudson Taylor'. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 31.

255. We follow here Amy's words in *Amma's Book*, 19–20.

somehow we became friends, and when he returned home he wrote to us and we wrote to him. So simply, so without observation, do we turn the corner of the road of life, but as yet we did not know that we had turned the corner.

Changes came in the happy Carmichael family, as mother and two daughters moved to Manchester. This move was made in response to an invitation from the leader of the Manchester City Mission, J. Wakefield MacGill.²⁵⁶ For the last time, before they left for Manchester, mother Catherine with all the children was at home in Belfast. While reading Psalm 133 in India, Amy could remember that memorable day and she wrote, 'Sunday before Easter Sunday. 1885. Our last together as an unbroken family. We said this Psalm together then. College Garden. Belfast.'²⁵⁷ On 03 December 1887 she was in Knock Dara, Ireland, with Mrs Bell, and they talked about her work. Amy, nearly 20 years old, thinking of the future and afraid of what lay before, heard the word of God:

But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am only a youth, for to all to whom I send you and you shall speak. Be not afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord. [*In her Bible she wrote in the margin of this verse*] First launch into the deep.²⁵⁸

It was of course difficult for Amy to loosen the ties from the work in 'The Welcome'. Her four brothers also left the house and eventually all went abroad.²⁵⁹ When one of her brothers sailed:

[T]wo of us went with him to see him off. Somewhere on his ship, I saw this, 'Though the day be never so long | At last it rings to evensong'. On our return journey by train we skirted the shore. I was looking out of the carriage window at the sea and thinking of that brother, when, as the train flashed passed, I saw written in huge letters on a boulder, 'God is Love'. It was a cold bleak day, and in spite of 'At length it rings to evensong', my heartfelt cold and bleak. But there was warmth and blessed comfort in that, 'God is Love'.²⁶⁰

In Manchester Amy lived in very poor and shabby conditions in a slum area to do the evangelistic work,²⁶¹ 'in exactly the sort of place I should have chosen if I had been asked to choose', among the factory girls in Ancoats. Her mother became lady superintendent of a rescue home.²⁶² Here Amy met down-and-outs in all their undisguised misery. In this industrial, seafaring town, with many houses of bad reputation, many were living in darkness and shame, and the profession of young girls was to sell their bodies to visiting men. In the cellars and attics wretched families lived and the public houses were crowded with men, women and children; she had to find her way among these sin-seared people. Often Amy went through the poorer streets of Manchester where evil men sometimes threatened her life. Often there were fights at night. She must have had an angel as guard there. Here in Manchester she lived beyond the bare minimum, dead to the world and all its vanities. God prepared Amy with her eye for beauty for her future work here.

256. In the hymn books *Consecration and Faith* and the *Keswick Hymn-Book* the missionary hymn 'Coming, Coming – Yes, They Are' is written by MacGill.

257. In the margin of Psalm 133 in Amy's Bible [1895].

258. In Amy's Bible [1895].

259. Ernest went in 1889 to New Jersey, Norman to British Columbia in 1890.

260. Poem of George Tankervil (±1500–1555); *Amma's Book*, 20.

261. *Amma's Book*, 21.

262. First Mrs Carmichael and her daughters settled at Lymn, Cheshire, but later set up a house at 47 Halliwell Lane, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, while Amy rented a home [particularly for use at weekends] close to the hall in Ancoats. A place ideal for her purpose – except it was very filthy. Her sister writes, 'Well I remember that awful room' and Amy herself writes of the 'most loathy sort of insect which used to crawl through the tin walls from our next door neighbour's house into ours'. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 33.

Amy, just over 20 years old, of medium height, with dark brown wavy hair matching her brown eyes, had started her new work in Ancoats, with her vivid nature and enthusiasm. Sometimes she visited her mother, who was living in a cottage in the country, and once hooligans of Ancoats threatened her life. A woman, standing in her open door, saw her in the midst of the mob and she ran out, caught her hand and brought her into her kitchen. In India she would write in her Bible: 'Only safe on the high places when He setteth me on them, Ancoats, March 1890'.²⁶³ Working and living in poor conditions herself, with just the necessities to survive, her luxuries in the realm of mentality, she grew in spiritual things. Her training here was rather severe. She writes, 'Uncle Jacob (Mr McGill) had no patience with people who weren't ready at a moment's notice'; 'you had to learn to do without a quiet room for preparation'; but 'I have thanked God for that training'.²⁶⁴

Leaving Ireland, she took with her the treasures of home fixedly rooted in the Word of God. Her eyes on the one necessary thing: a desire to live not for earthly gain but to live for other ends. She, as a young woman, loved the beauty of the world around her and there was a friendliness too, and willingness to do anything to give her hands to others for help. The burden to reach out to the downtrodden of society, to love them and to win them to Christ, would become her life work. Love was her motto and constant pursuit for the rest of her life.

When she was in Manchester Amy's two youngest brothers stayed with Mr Wilson at Broughton Grange, his majestic estate near Cockermouth, Wordsworth's town. Broughton Grange, the 11-bedroom house, was built by Mr Wilson in 1859 and from Broughton Grange you have a magnificent view of the Derwent river. Ten miles to the west, Solway Firth flows into the Irish Sea, and to the east range the beautiful Cumbrian mountains. Amy also often stayed there, but never forgot to go to her mother too. Gradually Amy 'slipped into an empty place' and became like a child to Mr Wilson. It was here she met many persons who were connected with the Keswick Convention and eventually she visited the Keswick Convention in 1888. 'The friends made then, and afterwards at Broughton Grange, were friends worth having'.²⁶⁵

After the death of her father, Amy found in Mr Wilson a father figure and a spiritual mentor. Robert Wilson owned coal mines in Cumberland and was a co-founder of the Keswick deeper Christian life conventions in England. Mr Wilson's wife had died in 1884 and his only daughter, Rachel, about the age of Amy, had passed away as well. At the 1885 Keswick Convention, Mr Wilson spoke a characteristic parting word to all who had attended the meeting. He said:

As God comforts us that we may pass it on, I want to say that I have found Him a very present help in trouble, and that He has kept me in perfect peace, and has given me a song of praise in the midst of deep sorrow. Pray for me that I may help others who are in sorrow with the same comfort He has given me.²⁶⁶

The connections of the Carmichael family with the Wilson family resulted in the request from Mr Wilson, who was very lonely, to her mother if Amy might come and live in his home and be his secretary. Due to the hard work in the Ancoats area Amy's physical condition was very low and she needed a complete change of environment to get new strength. Amy agreed to stay with Mr Wilson and doing this she overcame his loneliness. For Amy, Mr Wilson became the DOM (Dear Old Man). While never

263. In Amy's Bible [1895] in the margin of Psalm 18:33, 'He makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to stand on the heights' [NIV].

264. *Amma's Book*, 21. See also Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 17.

265. *Amma's Book*, 22.

266. W.B. Sloan, *These Sixty Years. The Story of the Keswick Convention, 1875-1935* (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1935), 31-32.

officially adopted, she used the hyphenated name Wilson-Carmichael as late as 1912.²⁶⁷ Broughton Grange (Figure 6) would be another turning point in Amy's life. She saw it like this:

I can see that it fitted into the Plan; it was part of the preparation for something out of sight. For if ever I was to do the things 'before prepared' (see Eph 2:10 margin) certain great lessons not learned yet had to be learned, and Broughton Grange was the appointed school.²⁶⁸

In 1888, for the first time, Amy visited the convention in Keswick where she dedicated afresh her life to the Lord. After the convention she wrote: 'It was an unforgettable time; it meant a new committal of one's whole life'. She liked to read news from various mission fields. One of the first missionary books she ever read was about the 'Cambridge Seven' who went to the mission field in 1882. From 1888 she lived with the Wilson family in Broughton Grange. From the garden, there was (and is) a wide view over the river Derwent and here the big decision in Amy's life took shape. This place in the beautiful Lake District was lifelong remembered: 'In Cumberland, where I used to live, [...] "the Lord keep us



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 6: Broughton Grange, home of Mr Robert Wilson near Cockermouth in Cumbria.

267. After Amy had offered herself to the CIM, she was once with Mr Wilson in the house of Miss Henrietta Soltau and it was there that Mr Wilson 'said in the dear "thee and thou" of Quaker speech, "Thee must sign thy name 'Carmichael Wilson' to the CIM papers". A little later he said, "Thee had better write 'Wilson Carmichael!"; and that is how it came to pass his name was in my name. [...] After he had gone it became a little difficult in some small ways, and as I saw he would not misunderstand and be hurt, I went back to my own name' (*Amma's Book*, 24). Her second name *Beatrice* she did not use any more after having read Dante in the Manchester Free Library: 'and came out into the street afterwards wondering what the people who brushed past me would be like if they had seen his visions, had felt too high for me, and so had tucked itself out of sight' (*From the Forest*, 68).

268. *Amma's Book*, 22.

from forgetting”.²⁶⁹ She learned much from her close stay with Mr Wilson. In Broughton Grange visitors regularly came to see Mr Wilson; Amy had come there at the centre of evangelical life, piety and activity. Mr Wilson was a leading person among the Quakers in and around Keswick. She remembered the Saturday evenings in Broughton Grange, where Mr Wilson – for the preparation for the worship on Sunday – used to pray ‘We thank thee, O Saviour, for the much incense of thy merits’ and ‘this phrase sank deep into my mind, and all these years has stayed with me’.²⁷⁰

In August 1888 she promised to write for Miss Nugent some articles for *Living Waters*.²⁷¹ She remembered one occasion at Keswick where Mr Moody preached on the prodigal son, in which the father said to the older son ‘Son, thou art ever with me and all that I have is thine’. Mr Moody said, ‘I never saw it before. Oh, the love of God’s love. Oh, the love. God’s love.’ Tears rained down his cheeks. Amy never forgot that spiritual truth, ‘all that I have is thine’ (Lk 15:31). It reinforced her faith that God knew her needs before she asked and wanted to supply them by faith.

■ ‘All rays in this one centre meets’

From early childhood to a mature woman we can trace the spurs of God’s dealings with her. The strict Presbyterian upbringing in her youth, and her later dealings with Quakers and Keswick evangelicals, combined with her strong determination and ‘in’ for new visions, with her quiet loving unselfishness and thought for others, made her a person of her own. The records of her early life reveal a mind extraordinary well stored with Scripture and the need and claims of the foreign mission field early laid hold upon Amy’s heart.

She could enjoy the beauty of nature and had no objections to a nice joke; however, she would not amuse herself at the expense of others, and by nature not made for the chit-chat side of life, she took no pleasure in it. The spiritual fibre under the unassuming manner made her a lovely person among many of Mr Wilson’s friends. At Broughton Grange (Figure 6) Amy learned to drop church labels, and to think only of the one true invisible church, to which all who truly love the Lord belong. ‘Suppose He came tomorrow what would labels matter? [...] Why think much of them now?’²⁷² Mr Wilson belonged to the Friends, but he had a wide view. On Sunday mornings he went to the Friends Church and in the evening to the Church of England. Amy wrote: ‘I grew to value the quietness of the Friends’ way of worship and also to care very much for the beauty of the Church of England ways’. For her spiritual training Amy saw the value of participating in a local church. She underlined these words in *The Stewardship of the Mystery*: ‘A rightly constituted assembly is the very best training centre, and draws out or makes demands upon every kind of gift and grace’. But in the margin she wrote: ‘True, but if the one called has not had great help? We have proved then what the Lord can do.’²⁷³ Does Amy suggest here that she had not had support from the Irish Presbyterians? During her years in India she got more support and encouragement from English evangelicals than from Ireland where she had grown up. In the same book she wrote next to the words ‘no college or institute can provide a young Christian with spiritual measure’, ‘True’.²⁷⁴

269. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 198–199.

270. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 63.

271. In Amy’s Bible [1895] in the margin of Isaiah 41:13.

272. *Amma’s Book*, 22.

273. In Austin-Sparks, *The Stewardship of the Mystery*, 174. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

274. See on p. 174.

For the Keswick Convention Mr Wilson had chosen the motto *All One in Christ Jesus*. From Mr Wilson Amy learned to read the Bible in a new way:

All thoughts, all searches to this centre tend,
All rays in this one centre meet.
Here as of old the wise men journeying spend
Their treasures at Thy feet.
There is no record but doth hint of Thee.
All history else were false and vain.
The stones Thy Kingdom preach; loosed with this key
All hardest things are plain.²⁷⁵

In Wilson's house Amy learned what silence meant. Mr Wilson was not only the chairperson of the Keswick Convention but also of other conventions and often heard opposite things and different opinions. To talk about all these things could do harm, he knew and he used to keep silent. When he spoke or wrote letters it was 'in the know' and he had to learn to be careful to be silent. Others trusted him, because they knew their words were safe with him. 'It is a temptation to say, "O yes, I knew that long ago". Learn to be a deep well. A deep well does not talk.' From him Amy learned never to say 'I won that soul'. No one can think of himself so:

What blew broke the stone? The first one and the last one, and everyone between. And I learned something of the unimportance of the earthly things as compared with heavenly. It is in the three inscriptions over three doors in the Milan Cathedral. Above one is a carving of roses and the words, 'All that pleases is for a moment'; over another, a Cross, and the words, 'All that grieves is but for a moment'; over the great central door only the words are carved, 'Nothing is important but that which is eternal'.²⁷⁶

Amy also learned a lot from Andrew Murray:

Abiding in Christ is not a work we have to do as the condition for enjoying His salvation, but a consenting to let Him do all for us, and in us, and through us.²⁷⁷

Andrew Murray (1828–1917), the son of a Scottish Presbyterian minister, came to South Africa early in the 19th century. He was deeply influenced by the Dutch pietistic movement called Réveil while a student in the Netherlands, and became the epitome of an evangelical pietist. Murray was also a mystic, influenced by both St Bernard of Clairvaux and by the English 18th century Anglican devotional writer William Law,²⁷⁸ who was influenced by John Wesley.²⁷⁹ Murray was a regular speaker at holiness conventions and it was in Keswick in 1895 that Amy met Murray at the convention there. Amy shared with him the same devotion to Christ, along with his contemplative spirituality.

275. *Amma's Book*, 23.

276. *Amma's Book*, 23.

277. A. Murray, 1978, 'Abide in Christ', in *The Best of Andrew Murray*, ed. S.W. Sorenson (Grand Rapids, MI: Honor Books, 2005), 67.

278. William Law (1686–1761) in 1711 was Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and later on family tutor. He preached through his books. Best known of his earlier works were *A Treatise Upon Christian Perfection*, 1726, and *A Serious Call To a Devout and Holy Life*, 1728.

279. 'I confess that in all my reading, I have never found anyone who has so helped me in understanding the Scripture truth of the work of the Holy Spirit. And it is because I know of no one who has put certain aspects of needed truth with the same clearness, that I cannot but think that he is a messenger from God to call His church to give the blessed Spirit the place of honour that belongs to Him'; John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, Henry Venn, William Wilberforce and Thomas Scott each described reading William Law as a major turning-point in their life ("An Introduction to William Law", last modified 28 December 2012, <http://www.passtheword.org/William-Law/wl-intro.htm>).

This also found expression through leadership, energising missions, evangelism, establishing schools and activating diaconal service. His literary output was prodigious. Of Murray's devotional books, *Abide in Christ* and *The Holiest of All* are perhaps among the most well-known embodying his evangelical piety and mysticism.

Like Andrew Murray who never got loose from his Scottish Presbyterian background, so it was with Amy. The strict Presbyterian piety at home in Millisle was interwoven in her latter thinking and writings. Like Murray she too was influenced by the evangelical pietistic movement. By the Christian atmosphere at Mr Wilson's home and her Keswick experiences to 'drop labels', the quietness of the Friends' way of worship and the spiritual beauty in the liturgy of the Church of England, she developed a strong evangelical faith. The many encounters with Christians from several parts of the world rejoicing together in the fullness of Christ at Keswick opened for the staunch young Presbyterian girl from Ireland the door for a fuller Christian experience. She represented a blend of Quaker piety with evangelical fervour. Amy became the epitome of evangelical pietism, which was seen in the old evangelical mystics, influenced by a number of mystics like Mme Guyon, Bernard of Clairvaux, François Fénelon, Père Didon, Geert Grote, Thomas à Kempis and many others. Here she learned to abandon her own self for the sake of God. She experienced that to lose your life is to gain it.

In Broughton's Quaker atmosphere, Amy adhered to the typical Quaker practice of listening for the inner voice of God. However, she cautioned against trusting the inner voice rather than Scripture and stressed the need for discernment, by avoiding negativism and making positive confessions of the Word of God and recognising the reality of spiritual conflict. She dropped her measuring rods for God and for men, in everything prepared to be led by the Word of God. The Lord would advise her and she did not want to be taken up with precedents and preconceptions of church and mission. Theology was a good thing, but God was for her greater and consequently so was her relationship with him. True to her God who gave her the initial inspiration in her youth, now devoted to Christ, not to principles. Jesus's life was manifest in her mortal life. In Amy's experience, God was very near to her and she often expressed whom God was for her in a very intimate way. Even amidst temptations, in times of sickness and other difficulties, she could say:

The entrance to the wood is dark. But we quickly pass through into light. The long, pure rays of that conquering light are interwoven with the tall stems of the trees, even as warp and woof, threads bright and dark, are interwoven in the web of our lives. But it is the bright threads that we shall see most clearly when we look upon this finished web. We are called to light, not to darkness. [...] Our roof is like the roof of the forest, transparent. So verily, there is no roof; we live under open heavens. [...] We have far too poor a conception of the intimacy with our God which He desires should be habitual.²⁸⁰

As she grew into maturity, we see a young woman blending intensive Bible study and reading with strong faith, holiness and practical Christian living. The devout life was diligently cultivated, and she cherished an aversion to a wooden orthodoxy, and a tottering morality in alliance with Christian life. Her view of church and mission life was based on her simple, literal interpretation of Scripture and application of it to daily life. Traces in her family show Presbyterian and even Puritan ancestors, while contacts with Anglicans, Quakers and Baptists gave her a distinctive religious tolerance; Keswick brought for her all these influences together.²⁸¹ This made her a friend of all who fear the Lord and no stranger to 'the religion of the heart'.²⁸² A combination of providential leadings finally indicated India as God's appointed field.

280. *Gold by Moonlight*, 21–22.

281. See the next chapter.

282. The expression is of John Wesley ('The Way To The Kingdom', Sermon 7, 06 June 1742).

The way Amy practised her faith in God reminds us of that other woman who was one of them, who about 100 years before paved the road for more evangelical fervour, more practical Christianity instead of the unmovable doctrines and teachings of the Established Church, which were done by many almost automatically without any emotion. The ‘heart’ was absent, and this created a form of nominal Christianity. The upcoming evangelical movement held an aversion to religious or doctrinal strife. Amy went to the mission field without labels, without prejudices. She shunned controversy and divisions, and she would have agreed with the words of her ‘sister’ Hanna More²⁸³ who wrote in her diary on 08 July 1803:

My very soul is sick of religious controversy. [...] Christianity is a broad basis. Bible Christianity is what I love. [...] A Christianity practical and pure, which teaches holiness, humility, repentance and faith in Christ; and which after summing up all the Evangelical graces, declares that the greatest of these is charity. Charity of course is the old-fashioned term for love.²⁸⁴

Amy was endowed with a very practical nature. She was a risk taker, not afraid of entering new challenges, a woman of independence and firm resolution, leaning on God’s guidance, prepared to encounter difficulties and to surmount them. She was a type of woman at her best, full orbed in Christ, ascending the hill of the Lord with clean hands and a pure heart. Covenanter spirit, rooted in firm Biblical preaching and staunch adherence to Reformation principles, but open to God’s leading into unknown ways, heart and eyes open, even when within sight of the better country, ‘the one thing desired’. For those who would live for many years together with her in Dohnavur, the fellowship on earth was to them a taste of the joys of the world to come. Through trials and setbacks she experienced that – like her Covenanter forefathers – the deepest joys even carried the shadow of the Cross. Some of the Presbyterian iron has been always in her blood. The song of all the redeemed in the great day of triumph – ‘worthy is the Lamb that was slain’ – was never far from her. How deeply she loved her precious Lord and Saviour! And just like her forefathers, how greatly at heart she had those still unreached with the saving Gospel. With daring faith she would tell about her Lord in the strongholds of the devil, believing that the kingdoms of the world are to become his, and his name called upon the rising of the sun to its going down. Whether it was in Japan, the land of ‘the rising sun’, or in Kanyakumari, the very tip of India, where she had often seen the setting sun, everywhere her work was to uplift Jesus Christ and to enlighten the poor pagan world.

As Amma (mother), she prayed and lived for ‘her’ Indian children, the priceless jewels of her life, in a brave, godly, inspiring way, bringing up her children, succouring the helpless with the comfort with which she had been comforted by God. Throughout her long, busy life, she always wedded all her thoughts and doings together with that mystical thought and experience. When the child who had sat with her mother in a Belfast teashop reached maturity, no one could have imagined at that time that she would emerge as one of the most fascinating women of her time. When she entered what would become her life work, we see a young woman, who had a clear vision, not the world’s estimate but God’s. She looked forward and from then on, she took God at his word, believing he had spoken, Jesus had acted on it, and this she believed and that settled it. She had been led to see the claims of the Lord upon her life. Now ears open for God and a heart full of compassion, open for the world, and feet knowing the way to the throne. The call to service she had heard was the echo of her identification with God. He had brought her into a relationship with himself; she had heard his voice and understood what he wanted her to do. She would do it out of sheer love to him. To understand her openness to the world and entering inter-denominational mission involvement, Ian Dickson gives us an interesting explanation

283. Read about her in Prior, *Fierce Convictions*.

284. Prior, *Fierce Convictions*, 155.

about the Ulster Presbyterian sermons in Amy's time, when he writes: 'evangelicalism had the potential to sap the energies of denominational life by involving local church members in the activities of the wider evangelical community'.²⁸⁵

Her story as a missionary will be revealed in the many events of her life, intertwined with God's sovereignty, and offers us the possibility to see the Lord working out in human beings the impossible into the possible, and to show the way to anyone who wants to make a difference not only in time but also for eternity.

285. In his *Beyond Religious Discourse*, 66.

From prayer that asks that I may be
Sheltered from winds that beat on Thee,
From fearing when I should aspire,
From faltering when I should climb higher,
From silken self, o Captain, free
Thy soldier who would follow Thee.

From subtle love of softening things,
From easy choices, weakenings,
(Not thus are spirits fortified,
Not this way went the Crucified)
From all that dims Thy Calvary,
O Lamb of God, deliver me.

Give me the love that leads the way,
The faith that nothing can dismay,
The hope no disappointments tire,
The passion that will burn like fire,
Let me not sink to be a clod:
Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God.

Gold Cord, Introduction.



Amy Carmichael's Keswick connection

When the founder of the Keswick Convention was once asked to put in one sentence what had brought such a joy into his life, and what had made the name of Keswick fragrant over the whole world, he answered in the words of the Psalmist, 'I have set the Lord always before me' (Ps 16:8). The questioner was the Ulsterman W.Y. Fullerton²⁸⁶ at the 1916 convention in the series of Bible readings 'The Practice of Christ's Presence'.²⁸⁷

The testimony of the convention is that the living Christ, received by faith as the Saviour, can also give deliverance from sin by faith, the Holy Spirit making the truth, apprehended by faith, effective in experience and conduct. Many convention visitors will agree: Christ's presence in Keswick means everything for them and they will not exchange the learning of one hour's fellowship with Christ for all the liberal learning in hundreds of theological colleges. For them, to look into his face is earth's most exquisite joy. Why do thousands of people travel to Keswick every year to attend the convention? It is the new listening to the voice of the Master, which they came for. 'We are not here to listen to preachers, but to meet with God; to expose our lives to the searchlight of its truth.'²⁸⁸ At the first convention in 1875 God gave to the founding leaders the words of Psalm 62, *for God alone my soul waits in silence*, and that has been the purpose of the Keswick Convention ever since.

286. W.Y. Fullerton, born 1857 in Belfast, died in 1932. He was influenced by C.H. Spurgeon and, from 1894 until his death, was the Home Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society.

287. In H.F. Stevenson, ed., *The Ministry of Keswick, First Series 1892-1919* (London: Edinburgh, 1963), 289.

288. See *The Keswick Week (TKW)* (1958): 24-25.

■ Meeting place with God

Driving on the main A591 south-north route, towards the summit of Dunmail Raise, between Grasmere and Keswick, the traveller is inclined to stop every mile to view the stunning scenery. But nearing the busy capital of northern Lakeland, it is clear that times have moved on since the time Amy visited the town several times from 1887 to 1895 to attend the Keswick Convention. However, the beauty of Keswick's encompassing hills appear enchanting and are still the same. Brilliant sunlight touches the mountains and the lake transforms all that comes within its range with radiant glory. Years ago, readers of *Review of Reviews* were asked to vote as to the loveliest view in Great Britain. The great majority voted that the most beautiful vista in the world would be from the terrace of St. John's Church at Keswick. For most people this town in the Cumbria Lake District is dedicated to country life and yearly many tourists favour this place. But once a year in July, many come not primarily for a holiday, but first and foremost to meet with God. The convention that Canon Harford-Battersby started in 1875 could have no more wonderful setting: 'Beauty is here, aye, beauty rare, but something fairer seek we here, "Beauty of holiness": to see Thy face in glorious majesty.'²⁸⁹

Once a year – formerly for one, now for three weeks – the town is early astir when the streets echo to the sound of footsteps of many making their way to the morning prayer meetings. During the day, notes of praise sound strongly and in worship thousands look upon the Lord with the notes of intercession, supplication and prayers. People from all over the world have their Bibles open and then the responsibilities and privileges of the full-orbed Christian life is preached to the listeners. The convention is closed with a united communion service. Many frankly face the implications of the messages heard, and the 'great transaction' is made.

The thousands then disperse all over the country and to many parts of the world with thanksgiving, one of the vital secrets of Christian life. The town is transformed into a centre of evangelical devotion, under the watchword of holiness. The big tent erected for the accommodation of the thousands of visitors listening to the addresses given from the Bible is for many a sanctuary where many have often had days of heaven on earth. 'Lives were revolutionized, deep seated prejudices went up in smoke, and men and women were liberated.'²⁹⁰ This was Keswick at the time Amy attended several of the yearly Keswick Conventions.

■ The Keswick Convention

The birth of the convention needs to be set against the backdrop of the growing turmoil in the Christian church, resulting in a tumult of faith. The publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859 challenged much traditional Christian belief. The year 1860 saw the controversial volume *Essays and Reviews* in print, with contributions from Jowett and Temple. Jowett pleaded for the use of reason in the interpretation of the Scripture, and Temple argued that the advances in physical science in the maturing 19th century forced a more fearless and critical view of the Bible. The bishop of Natal, John Colenso put oil on the fire with the appearance of two commentaries, on Romans and on the Pentateuch, for which he was tried for heresy, and controversy continued to rage throughout the 1860s. These were years of huge religious uncertainty and the birth of the Keswick Convention needs to be set against the backdrop

289. By S.T.M.R. in *TKW* (1955), placed on the first unnumbered page.

290. This was the experience of Mildred Cable when present at the Keswick Convention of 1893. In M. Cable & F. French, *Something Happened* (5th edn., London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1964), 65. A year later in the same place she committed herself for mission work (p. 67). In 1901, as CIM missionary, she sailed from Liverpool to China (p. 76).

of this tumult of faith. The revival movements 100 years earlier supplied the logistic networks, interregional, international and interdenominational, that contributed to the formation of several evangelical conventions, of which Keswick is very outspoken and long-lasting. The catalyst for a change originated in America. In 1858–1859 a great movement for holiness – a defining idea for John Wesley in the previous century – swept through the Methodist church and affected other churches too. During the next 15 years, a number of American evangelists came to Britain to spread the message, notably Moody and Sankey, and Robert Pearsall Smith and his charismatic wife Hanna, the author of *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*.²⁹¹ A stream of correspondence, crisscrossing the Atlantic, brought the news from Northern Ireland's revival to the other side of the ocean and the events during the revivals in America stirred the evangelical circles in Britain. The American A.T. Pierson²⁹² became in the 1880s and 1890s one of the most formative influential persons on the American and European missionary scene. When in 1893 Amy travelled to Japan she had some of Pierson's books in her suitcase. As we will see further she heartily agreed with Pierson that everything in the church and on the mission field should be directed toward the saving of the lost.

The invitation to the first convention at Keswick in the summer of 1875 (28 June – 02 July) goes as follows:

We implore all who are interested in the welfare of the Church of Christ, and in the advancement of practical holiness, to unite with us in earnest prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the arrangements of these meetings, and for His blessing on the teaching and testimony of God's servants.

These two factors: the welfare of Christ's Church, and the advancement of practical holiness – and their interdependence – are as important today as when these same words were quoted again in the 1908 convention. To them were added the words from the Bampton lectures that year: 'The startling contrast between the lives of Christians and the rules which they profess to accept, is the great religious difficulty of the present day'.²⁹³

In the 19th century, in Brighton, Presbyterian higher life leader William Boardman and others founded a series of deeper life meetings in what would become known as the Keswick Holiness movement. The union of the believer with Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit were emphasised. The Spirit filled the Christian's experience with 'full salvation'. The believer finds 'rest' in the Lord where there is entirely surrender to him. For some it meant that sanctification became a passive process of surrendering to God, rather than an active process of fighting against sin. This tendency is there but reading the Bible studies held at Keswick we clearly see that the believers never were discharged from the day-to-day reality of Christian obedience. It is by the Keswick message that many became active in home and foreign mission.

The man who brought this movement to Keswick was the Rev. T.D. Harford-Battersby, the vicar of the parish church of Keswick St. John from 1851 to 1883. Harford-Battersby was deeply impressed by the earnestness, holiness and sincerity of the leaders of the Oxford Movement like Newman, Pusey, Keble and Manning whose ideas were strongly Anglo-Catholic. Harford-Battersby's teaching was always evangelical, based on sound reasoning and a study of the Scriptures. He thought the High Church and the ritualistic should be met by the energy and spirituality of the evangelicals. He went to

291. Printed first in 1870. 100 later nearly two million copies had been sold [publishers' foreword, [20th edn., Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1970], 8].

292. Arthur Tappan Pierson (1837 – 1911). See D.L. Robert, *Occupy Until I Come. A.T. Pierson and the Evangelization of the World*, [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003].

293. M.A.P. Wood 'The Magnet of Keswick', *TKW* [1962], 5.

meetings of the Evangelical Alliance and attended conferences in Amsterdam and Basle. With Robert Wilson, a member of the Society of Friends, from Broughton Grange, near Cockermouth, he was at a convention in Oxford in 1874. There he believed to have had a revelation of Christ. Afterwards he wrote, 'He was all that I wanted'. With Robert Wilson, Harford-Battersby decided to promote a religious convention in Keswick. He sent out invitations to three days of 'Union Meetings for the Promotion of Practical Holiness' to Christians of every section of the church of God. The first meeting was held on the grounds of the parsonage, but this meeting was postponed for one month because one of the main speakers, Pearsall Smith, withdrew at the last minute. The following month, July 1875, the meeting was held in a hired tent, erected in Eskin Street. A heavy storm caused the collapse of the tent, but nothing could stop the movement, which has flourished and grown ever since.²⁹⁴

Mr Robert Wilson, one of the founders of the convention who took its chair from 1891 to 1900, was a wealthy businessman, with great interest in the business of heaven. His characteristics were chiefly two: 'great strength of will and purpose, especially in resisting silently, and great sweetness of spirit'.²⁹⁵ He was the one who selected the Keswick motto – 'all one in Christ Jesus' – and was responsible for the three flags – Love, Joy, Peace – which flew over the tent. He was a great help to Harford-Battersby at the beginning of the Keswick story, and one can ask oneself if there would have been a Keswick Convention after 1875 if Robert Wilson had not backed and supported it so tremendously.

'This Convention, its message, all that it may do, and all that it has done, depends upon the preaching of the Cross.'²⁹⁶ These pregnant words cover everything that Keswick stands for. About Keswick, Amy Carmichael fully agreed with Bishop Handley Moule:

Keswick stands for the great and eternal truths, some of which, so to speak, it takes for granted but never forgets: the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. [...] His death for us upon the Cross: Keswick is a rock upon the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and the benefit of pardon, utterly unmerited by us, which we have because Jesus died.²⁹⁷

There is nothing formal or rigid about the sequence of Keswick teaching, it is recognised that a true abhorrence of sin, a confession and renunciation of it, are the steps toward 'fullness of the blessing of the Gospel', which Keswick exists to proclaim. Keswick disagreed with the teachings that certain gifts of the Spirit are strongly manifested, like speaking in tongues. For Keswick, faith is the evidence of the filling of the Spirit, and not the outer extravagant manifestations. Faith involves full surrender and implicit trust in God. To walk in faith, a believer is looking to Jesus and not for physical evidence or manifestations. The emphasis is on holiness in the Wesleyan sense – that is, the possibility of the Christian living a life of faith free from the stain of sin – and on missions. Often many Christians attending the conventions were dispensationalists, which further strengthened their missionary resolve, along the lines of Matthew 24:14: 'And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached, ... and then the end will come'.

'Holiness is the characteristic of the man after God's own heart'.²⁹⁸ Is not holiness, chastity of life and a living communion with God the end of a Christian life? Keswick speakers applied doctrine to everyday Christian living, as was done by the Puritans in their expository preaching. They wanted to win souls by preaching to heart as well as mind and to turn believers into active doers of the Word of God. Keswick made much of the application of the Word to holy living in daily life. Those attending

294. Cf. M. Armstrong, *Linen and Liturgy. The Story of the Marshall Family and the Parish Church of Keswick St. John* (Keswick: Peel Wyke Publications, 2002), 20.

295. J. Elder Cumming, in *Leaders of the Keswick Convention* (<http://www.praetonicx.hubpages>).

296. E.M. Blaiklock at the Keswick Convention in 1959 ('The Costliness of Our Salvation', *TKW* [1959]: 11).

297. Cf. Elliot, *A Chance To Die*, 29.

298. O. Chambers, 'Biblical Ethics', in *The Complete Works*, 93.

the convention come to Keswick with the express intention to know something of the wholeness, which they believe is in Jesus Christ. Cowper's prayer 'Oh, for a closer walk with God, A calm and heavenly frame' is often remembered by the thousands who attend. Their confidence in the Scriptures as the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation was simple, total and pure. They were not different from other evangelical Protestants, but they behaved with greater intensity and – according to Sharpe 'in a High Victorian earnestness'.²⁹⁹ To be ready to lay down the life in sacrificial service, having the marks of a Christian whose life is beginning to count and be of value in the world. On the opening night of the 1911 convention the Rev. E.H. Hopkins, whose name is always linked with the Keswick Convention, summarised what the people are looking for:

The first thing is to see whether we are right with God. [...] We must submit, by trusting to Christ. Then we must commit, by trusting to Christ what you yourself have failed to manage.

These words were quoted at the 1962 Convention and the speaker then goes on:

As in earlier times, so today, the emphasis on personal holiness needs to be shown, not as an exotic bloom to be grown in the greenhouses of sheltered Christians, but as the hardy perennial, which should be the common flower in the garden of every work-a-day Christian where ever he may find himself.³⁰⁰

Since 1875 the Keswick Convention has expounded the Scriptures in that lovely Lakeland setting. Over the years, the centrality of the life of holiness in the believer has been emphasised, viz. on holiness and God's claim that we shall become like him – in faith, which works by love. However, holiness is not self-centred nor self-contained, but will lead inevitably to dedicated service. Bishop Ryle of Liverpool was at first a bit reluctant to embrace Keswick teaching, because some Keswick holiness preachers placed emphasis on 'entire consecration', 'victory over sin', that ultimately would lead to the doctrine of sinless perfection.

Due to the work of the Bishops Moule and Ryle, Keswick is known throughout the world and it is no coincidence that a convention that highlights on holiness will inevitably lead to a call to service. Christian holiness is no cloistered virtue but a call to live in the world as men and women who, separated from the world, yet have a world-transforming message and mission. It is nothing less than a call to follow our Saviour. The continuing obligation of the great commission should be clearly set forth. The Christians here together all shared the same feeling, expressed in the watchword of the Convention: *all one in Christ Jesus*.³⁰¹

A great emphasis is always laid on the personal aspects of religion. This does not mean that Keswick teaching thinks that corporate religion is irrelevant, but the evangelicals treat personal faith as of primary importance. The 'mystical' body of Christ is the whole body of believers of every age and tongue and people. It is the church composed of all who are washed in the blood of Christ. The visible or denominational churches are the mixed bodies of Christians who God is using to carry out his mission in the world. It is said that Keswick:

[W]as solidly biblical, though rather narrow in its doctrinal range, and at that stage inclined to be too introspective. It did not help people to think doctrinally, but concentrated on devotional life and missionary stimulus.³⁰²

299. E.J. Sharpe, 'The Legacy of Amy Carmichael', *IBMR* [01 July 1996]: 2.

300. M.A.P. Wood, *TKW* [1962], 6.

301. This motto was buzzing around among evangelical circles, in universities and missionary societies. Cf. the St. Andrews Student's Club, with the St. Andrews Cross for their symbol. One of their mottos was 'One in Christ'. In J. Wells, *Stewart of Lovedale. The Life of James Stewart* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), 20.

302. In O. Barclay, *Evangelicalism in Britain 1935–1995* (Leicester: IVP, 1997), 32.

In C.A. Fox's 'Cleanse all today', we see what Keswick stands for:

Them, in the hush of this fair Tent,
And solemn stillness of this hour,
Three thousand souls before thee bent,
Break forth, O Holy Ghost, in power,
Sweep through, thou Wind of God, sweep through;
Once more cleanse, consecrate, renew!³⁰³

■ The Keswick Convention's outlook: Introspective and Christian service

Frequent Keswick Convention goers know it; for several years the first song in the big tent has been:

Full salvation! Full salvation!
Lo, the fountain opened wide,
From the Saviour's wounded side. Full salvation!
Streams and endless crimson tide.³⁰⁴

One of the most outstanding preachers at the end of the 19th century was Rev. F.B. Meyer (1847–1929). He belonged to the inner circle of the BMS, supported the LMS and had an intimate friendship with Hudson Taylor of the CIM. The Keswick trustees, always open-eyed for men with a message, heard of the new uprising of spiritual influence and invited Dr Meyer to the convention. He went first as a visitor and the next year, in 1887, he was one of the speakers. Meyer came to Keswick and although he was well prepared, he felt spiritually empty. In his own words:³⁰⁵

Before I first spoke on the platform, I had my own deeper experience, on a memorable night when I left the little town with its dazzling lamps, and climbed the neighbouring hill. As I write the summer night is again casting its spell on me. The light clouds veil the stars and pass. The breath of the mountains leads me to yearn for a fresh intake of God's Spirit. May we not count on the Anointing Spirit to grant us a fresh infilling when we are led to seek it? May we not dare to believe that we have received, even when there is no answering emotion? Do we not receive by faith? These were the questions which a few of us had debated far into the night, at a prayer meeting convened at which a number of men were agonizing for the Spirit. I was too tired to agonize, so I left that prayer meeting and as I walked I said, 'My Father, if there is one soul more than another within the circle of these hills that needs the gift of Pentecost it is I: I want the Holy Spirit but I do not know how to receive Him and I am too weary to think, or feel, or pray intensely'. Then a Voice said to me, 'As you took forgiveness from the hand of the dying Christ, take the Holy Ghost from the hand of the living Christ, and reckon that gift is thine by a faith that is utterly indifferent to the presence or absence of resultant joy. According to thy faith so shall it be unto thee'. So I turned to Christ and said, 'Lord, as I breathe in this whiff of warm night air, so I breathe into every part of me Thy blessed Spirit'. I felt no hand laid on my head, there was no lambent flame, there was no rushing sound from heaven: but by faith, without emotion, without excitement, I took, and took for the first time, and I have kept on taking ever since. I turned to leave the mountain side, and as I went down the tempter said I had nothing, that it was all imagination, but I answered, 'Though I do not feel it, I reckon that God is faithful.'

303. C.A. Fox 'Cleanse All Today!' *TKW* [1930]: 34.

304. Composed by Francis Bottome [1823–1894]. In *The Keswick Hymn Book*, no. 167, 61.

305. In W.Y. Fullerton, *F.B. Meyer: A Biography* (London: Morgan & Scott, 1929), 65–66.

Dr Meyer was one of the oldest and most trusted speakers the convention ever had. For many years he was a member of its council.

In the biography of one of the founders of the Keswick Convention, Canon Harford-Battersby, is an analysis of his defining of the Keswick Convention's distinctive characteristics: 'its wide heartedness and catholicity of constitution, its sobriety of tone, its freedom from extremes, its genial spirit of brotherly love, its definiteness of purpose, and its missionary zeal'.³⁰⁶

Keswick's testimony is that the Living Christ, received by faith as the Saviour, can also by faith give instant and constant deliverance from sin, the Holy Spirit making the truth, apprehended by faith, effective in experience and conduct – that and nothing beside.³⁰⁷

Keswick's teaching never was focused on self-realisation. It is always 'what the Lord said to me' and 'what I said to the Lord'. The fruit of the Spirit is the fruit of a total new disposition of Christ-realisation. Willing to obey the dictates of the Holy Spirit, who uses us as his instruments body, soul and mind. Instead of being in the centre yourself, there is sanctity, and spiritual reality, bringing forth fruit unto holiness. 'The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus; He makes us written epistles not only in living, but in thinking'.³⁰⁸ Some say Keswick is, puritan, mystical, aggressive, but that is the fruit of experience. A week at Keswick gives to those who attend a sense of God's working, a 'coming to grips' with spiritual issues. There is a unity in Jesus Christ, the one and only and irreplaceable object of the faith and baptism; at Keswick this 'essential, indestructible unity, transcending racial, social, denominational differences, is gloriously demonstrated'.³⁰⁹

The convention platform has been the scene of a great cloud of prophetic witnesses. It is difficult for those who attend to 'escape the searching, convicting power, and the healing grace of the Spirit of God in the midst'. 'A visit to the Convention [...] is a never-to-be-forgotten experience, which God willing, will make an indelible mark on your life.' The people will experience:

[T]hat if God meets with us there will come into our hearts the conviction that we are to face the necessity for the fullness of God in our own experience.

Is the ministry of Keswick far too introspective? There has to be a time and a place for careful, deliberate, unhurried and completely honest self-examination. Repentance is the bridge across which the mercy of God travels to the sinner. A season of refreshing starts with repentance.

There is always the appeal to look at the blessed Lord, exalted at the right hand of the most high. That will arise and create in our hearts 'a consciousness of sin'. We must begin with sin, and then we shall look upward and outward to the reality of the fullness of God. It is a thrilling thing to understand that truth is to understand the very essence of what is known as the Keswick message, 'Christ in you, the hope of glory'. Many feel they have come to Keswick because in this place the Lord wants to speak to them, so that they recognise him as their creator, their redeemer, and their indwelling Lord.

At the convention, the teaching order is first the introspective teaching of sin in the life of a Christian, but it does not end there and in the teaching they look upward and outward to the reality of the fullness of God: the promise, the possession, the purpose of God. This, because the purpose of God, is 'that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God'. Keswick-goers say: 'the Lord Jesus received is holiness

306. In D.A. Edwards 'T.D. Harford-Battersby (1822–1883), Co-founder of the Keswick Convention', in *Keswick Characters*, vol. 3, ed. E. Foot & P. Howell [Carlisle: Bookcase, 2012], 90.

307. Fullerton, *F.B. Meyer*, 194.

308. Chambers, *The Complete Works*, 123.

309. J.R.W. Stott, 'The Calling of the Church of God', *TKW* [1962], 36; 'The Christian life is a Christ-centred life' (p. 37). Paul sees his mission in Corinth as 'a testimony to Christ' (p. 37).

begun; the Lord Jesus cherished is holiness advancing; the Lord Jesus counted upon as never absent would be holiness complete'.³¹⁰ This meant to look up in life at him, a life of sanctification through identification with the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus as revealed in Romans 6 as a solid foundation to the faith. A life longing for a deeper experience of death to sin and a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire: hungry yet satisfied, it is possible to experience both. You are in the promised land with Jericho and Ai still to be taken.³¹¹ In the beginning of the Keswick Convention it was suggested that it could not escape the often one-sided aspect of the Higher Christian Life Movement that too much emphasis was put not on the regenerating power of the grace of God, but on individual consecration, individual fasting and prayer, individual devotion to God. Critics pointed out that the Keswick tone was pietistic, non-controversial, individualistic, and that the issues of social justice were ignored. However, the spiritual domain cannot be separated from the secular.³¹²

■ Pre-millennial: Focus on mission

The majority of those who had affinity with the Keswick Movement were also dispensationalists. The eschatological aspect of the Kingdom of God and the Parousia expectations have been an issue of continuing debate in the Christian church. From the days of the early church to today the real impact of these expectations is not spelled out. There is evidence that many leaders of the Keswick Movement favoured the pre-millennial approach in their view about the Second Coming of Christ or The Day of the Lord. That Day of the Lord was a day with ethical implications³¹³ and the importance of living without reproach to the end was emphasised; the expectations had a strong mission dimension. The consequence for the Christians is the awareness of living in the end of times and also of the call to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole world 'till Jesus comes'.³¹⁴ A.T. Pierson (1837–1911), the American mission advocate who visited Keswick for the first time in 1897, was also an advocate for pre-millennialism.³¹⁵ Pierson strongly believed that God instrumented faithful Christians to serve him. He used as an argument, that in Jesus' parable of the household servants, the servants were told to 'occupy until I come'.³¹⁶ This view he used in several of his speeches, also in Keswick, and many convention attendants got their inspirational focus through his enthusiastic talks for urban and foreign missions. Under Pierson's editorship of the *Missionary Review* the influence of pre-millennialist thought spread all over the world.

The Lord's return is an issue that appears several times throughout the years in the addresses delivered.³¹⁷ Since 1888, mission work has been in the focus at Keswick. The Keswick Convention Mission Minute Book (KCMMB) of 1892 has the following line at the end:

310. Missionary J. McCarthy, *TKW* [1962], 103.

311. Cf. Joshua 6 and 7.

312. Cf. D.W. Smith, *Transforming the World: The Social Impact of British Evangelicalism* (1988), 80.

313. 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20, 'For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing [boasting]? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy'; 1 Corinthians 1:8, 'Who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ'.

314. Report of Rev. F.B. Meyer on his visit to India: 'It burns in the heart of the missionaries to save, 'till Jesus comes' (*TKW* [1899]).

315. For more on his turn from postmillennialism to premillennialism, see Robert, *Occupy Until I Come*, 103–108.

316. See Luke 9:13. Amy says: 'There is a definite service of some sort prepared for them, and for this they must be prepared. The only time for preparation is during the interval before the Lord returns – that is, today, this hour, this minute' (*Fragments that Remain*, 24).

317. Cf. *TKW* [1947], 238–243.

May it be ours to yield ourselves entirely to His will, that we may be instruments in His hand for spreading the knowledge of our Master Lord – 'till He come.³¹⁸

Mrs Penn Lewis visited Keswick in 1892 and in 1896. She befriended many convention leaders, many of whom interpreted the 1000-year reign in pre-millennial terms. During the Llandrindod Convention in Wales, 1904, A.T. Pierson, preached on Romans 8:19–23 under these headings: 'return', 'reign', 'refreshing', 'revival', 'rest', 'resurrection', 'recompense', 'restitution', 'regeneration', and 'final redemption'.³¹⁹ All the events mentioned were to take place after the first Coming of Christ and before his final triumph. Another Keswick leader visited Cardiff in 1905 and prophesied in his address that the Second Coming of Christ would take place between 1910 and 1915.³²⁰

Not only at Keswick, for at the same time at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Conferences in America was this teaching dominant as it was with all the associates of the Toronto Mission Union.³²¹ One of the early speakers, Griffith Thomas, who frequently spoke at the Keswick Convention, strongly advocated that the Lord's coming is pre-millennial. This view is also the inspiration of Christian service. In one of Griffith's addresses, he mentioned Moody, Spurgeon, Hudson Taylor, George Müller, Arthur Pierson, 'whose work for world-wide missions is known everywhere'.³²² All those mentioned shared the same view more or less. Amy Carmichael rarely exposed her dogmatic views, but in her writings we see indications that she held this view about Christ's Second Coming. She closes the introduction of her book *From the Fight* with the words, 'Looking for the coming of the Conqueror', followed by her name.³²³ To anticipate the day of Christ's victory is also, and not least of all, an incentive to holiness:

Our primary task is to make clear from the Word of God how the child of God is to live a life of holiness in the midst of a world doomed to destruction, but in which he is called upon to make an effective witness to the saving truths of God's Word. The Christian life is taught here and which we seek to live and anything lower than that is not essentially Christian.³²⁴

At the 1966 convention it was asked:

What is Keswick for? Is it to declare the issues of the day? It is the purpose of the Keswick Convention to get away from the hurly-burly of life for just one week that we might meet with God.

To rest and to be with Christ, and when we leave we have to get involved in the needs of other people. Also that you might get a clearer view of yourself. Christ AND him crucified is the centre of the Keswick message. W.H. Aldis at the 1926 convention said:

We have not come to Keswick merely to attend the Convention meetings and to feel good, but we have got to deal with secret sins and let the searchlight of the living God go right through us.³²⁵

318. In *Keswick Convention Mission Book* (Carlisle Record Office, DSO 250/1/3/1, meeting 26 July 1892).

319. Cf. B.P. Jones, *The Spiritual History of Keswick in Wales* (Moab, UT: The Christian Literature Press, 1989), 13.

320. See N. Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar. A History and Evaluation of the 1904–05 Welsh Revival* (Wales: Bryntirion Press, 2005), 179.

321. Cf. R. Goforth, *Goforth of China* (Minneapolis, MN: Zondervan, 1937), 58.

322. G. Thomas, ed., *The Victorious Life. Messages from the Summer Conferences 1917 at Whittier, Princeton, and Cedar Lake, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, PA: Victorious Life Conference, 1918), 110: 'The lives of living exponents of Premillennialism testify to their remarkable interest, success, and blessing in evangelistic and missionary work.'

323. *From the Fight*, 5.

324. *TKE* (1958).

325. In A. MacBeath, *W.H. Aldis* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1949), 68.

Keswick aims at the following: sin must die in me. God does away with sin, and a wave of piety occurs 'which takes the form of devotion and sentimental religious activity while the real message of the Gospel is lost by obliteration'. These words of Oswald Chambers³²⁶ warn us against an emphasis on a second definite work of grace in which the pious man is in focus. What is important in sanctification is that the emphasis is on the regenerating power of God, and not on our individual consecration, fasting and prayers and our individual devotion to God. Jesus is Saviour and Sanctifier. The Keswick Convention and its close connection with non-denominational missions 'provided a model of spirituality'.³²⁷ Although the Keswick Convention accepted the Scriptures as infallible and redemption only by the blood of Christ, who died for the sins of man on the Cross, the leaders of the convention tended to be experience-centred. The result was that human methodology was characteristic in mission work, which was supported by the Keswick Convention. All have to admit that the Spirit of God used the Keswick Convention to set its mark on evangelistic enterprise by many who attended the convention and took home with them the torch of fire and that it influenced and contributed directly or indirectly to overseas mission work. The convention deepened the spiritual lives of many believers, and gave birth to the awareness for mission work in many countries where the British flag waved due to the many 'Keswick Conventions' that were started in those countries. The Keswick Convention branched out in the 20th century to wield worldwide influence, the benefits of which are enjoyed in our 21st century generation.

■ The Keswick Convention Mission Committee

Since the 1880s, the Keswick Convention had a deep impact on missions in Britain as well as overseas. The Church of England saw a threefold increase in numbers of missionaries in the 1890s; thousands were influenced by the doctrine of holiness.³²⁸ According to Dana Robert, Amy was 'one of the most famous Keswick-inspired missionaries'.³²⁹ She felt at home when she was with friends and Keswick songs were sung. In the final page of her Bible she affixed a photo of the big white tent taken during one of the yearly conventions in Keswick. Next to the photo she had written: 'Keswick, Praise Meeting, July 28, 1888', and the text from 2 Corinthians 12:9–10, where she had underlined verse 12:

But He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness. I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.³³⁰

It was in that year's convention, as we will see further on, that she saw 'a new committal' for her life.

The influence of Keswick's expectations on spiritual life can be seen in the life and ministry of Amy Carmichael. For many visitors to the convention, and the same applies to the majority of churchgoers in the second half of the 19th century, was holiness a major aspect of the spirituality of the time.³³¹ 'Holiness was intimately bound up with the spirit of the age' and faith missions sprung from the same source as the holiness movement.³³² It was the environment of experience over doctrine, which minimised ecclesiastical boundaries and downgraded doctrinal concerns.³³³

326. In Chambers, *The Complete Works*, 32.

327. In O. Barclay, *Evangelicalism in Britain*, 32.

328. See Robert, *Occupy Until I Come*, 254.

329. In Robert, *Occupy Until I Come*, 254.

330. In Amy's Bible [1895].

331. See D.W. Bebbington, *Holiness in Nineteenth-Century England* (Bel Air, CA: Send The Light, 2000), 2.

332. In Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 168.

333. In Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 179.

Keswick stands for piety that is stamped by the life in God. The life of Jesus manifested in lives of men and women, to bring glory to God. Men and women, saturated with the truth of God, who can go and speak to people in terms that appeal to our day. Living the life to which sanctification introduces us, the life of oneness with Christ Jesus, and a longing that that oneness is manifested in our practical life and is a sacramental element in his hands. To be abandoned to the love of God will leave the impression of the holiness and the power of God. Hearing Christ's personal call to obedience, and experiencing Christ's personal provision for victory, has opened up the way for many to receive Christ's personal commission for service. Practical holiness is the only holiness of any value in this world, Keswick members have thought, because this is the only kind the Spirit of God will endorse. When the Word of God takes root in the heart and life and teaching and planning of someone, God has a weapon forged in his hand for world evangelism. Visitors felt that over the convention was a wave of missionary enthusiasm.

'God is Working His Purpose Out' was a hymn affirming a quite widespread belief that the time was drawing 'nearer and nearer' when 'from utmost East to utmost West' the earth would be filled with his glory. The hymn was written by an Eton schoolmaster for a festival of the CMS in 1894. Christians liked to sing this hymn and found it easy because for a number of years their world mission spirit seemed part of their destiny of a world empire. They saw Christ working – and they were the vehicles – in areas until now without the Gospel, to establish his dominion before his coming. The Keswick Convention Mission Committee streamed the wish of many to be involved in mission work. In the autumn of 1883 Moody came to Cambridge and held an historic eight-day mission which influenced a large number of undergraduates so greatly that their lives affected Church, state and mission field over the next 50 years. Many students every year came to Keswick and they offered their lives for service overseas. At Keswick, many gave the convincing answer and made unconditional surrender to the Lord, and a great number serving on many mission fields responded to his call at a Keswick missionary meeting.

There is a strong link between Keswick and the Buxton family. The family worked in mission service in Japan and Africa as well as helping to found the InterVarsity Fellowship (IVF) and work among the students in England. Even All Nations Bible College had its origins in the Buxton family and is based at the former home of that family. The Japan Evangelistic Band came into being at Keswick in 1903. At that time Barclay Buxton and Paget Wilkes, who were ministering in Japan, were at the Keswick Convention. They met Miss Estelle Edmeads, who felt that she was called to Japan. Her passage money and support were fixed by the evening of that day. In October that same year she left for Japan and worked in the city of Kobe. Towards the end of the last century there were, according to Philip Hacking, 'still many echoes of Keswick in the evangelical ministry in that city and elsewhere in Japan'. The year 1911 saw the birth of a Keswick link with South America in the formation of the Evangelical Union of South America (EUSA). This was largely through the influence of Stuart Holden of the Keswick Convention Council.

Chairpersons of the Keswick Convention Council have included directors of the CIM/OMF and the Bible Churchman's Missionary Society. It was at Keswick where the vision of the IVF was born in the spirit of revival.³³⁴ The morning hours at the conventions were for the missionary prayer meetings. As usual, an attempt was made to cover the whole world in the course of five mornings. The general practice each morning of allotting a few minutes to enable a large number of people to be mentioned before the Lord individually by name led to the reciting of lists of names, often heard only by those in the immediate vicinity and almost without pause this went on for about 15 minutes. There was a special

334. Cf. D.D. Winter, ed., *My Dear C.U.M.B., Norman Grubb's Letters to the Cambridge University Missionary Band, 1922-1989* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2006), 61.

prayer in 1930 for churches in India where a dead formal Christianity existed. Wednesday afternoons were for the reception of all the missionaries and overseas visitors. Sometimes more than 60 different countries were represented at the receptions. For many it was a true experience of the reality of the Keswick motto 'all one in Christ Jesus' to mingle among fellow Christians from all parts of the globe, exchanging greetings and news concerning the work of the Lord in their respective lands. According to custom, Friday mornings were devoted to missionary meetings. With a bird's-eye view, many Christian witnesses from many parts of the world gave news about the way God was at work in their country, and the meeting closed with the singing of the doxology. Always the missionary meetings ended with a united communion service for the remembrance of his death 'until He come'. The service in 1947 opened with the hymn 'Thou Art Coming'.³³⁵ That year about 250 young men and women attested their willingness to go anywhere for Christ.

There was always a keen sense of the present opportunities for the fulfilling of our Lord's last commission. At the 1958 Convention Amy Carmichael and her work were mentioned 'at Dohnavur among children rescued from a life of shame and degradation in Hindu temples'. At several meetings parents were asked if they were willing to allow their children to go to a foreign field if the Lord asked for them. Young people present at these meetings were appealed to, those who were willing to give their lives to the Lord's service abroad were asked to rise. At the 1966 meeting between 400 and 450 sprang to their feet in response. Many of the dark places of the earth have received the Light as a result of these great missionary meetings.

■ The young lady in the big tent

Somewhere in the big tent sat a young woman, short of stature, with a lovely, kind face, conscious that the Holy Spirit was dealing with her; she prayed for rest from the 'cry' of thousands who had never heard of the name of Jesus. Here – it was the 1888 Keswick Convention – she was blessed by the Lord; 'it was an unforgettable time' and resulted in 'a new committal of one's whole life', and in 1895 she was bound for India. She knew that it was God's will for her to go there – and she went. Nowadays in India, there are some very old people who witness that they came to Christ through her service. This young woman was Amy Carmichael. Her thoughts at that time are captured in the following words: 'Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God'.³³⁶

At the conventions in Keswick and other places, Amy had seen that there is infinite wealth of grace in Christ Jesus. She presented her 'check' and it was cashed. By presenting 'the check-book of faith'³³⁷ she appropriated to herself everything she needed for time and eternity, for life and godliness, for mission service overseas. The connections she had with Keswick for several years became her springboard for the call to mission work. The Lord had used the challenge of the Keswick Convention to initiate new missionary endeavour.

Keswick always had a great place in Amy's thoughts and prayers. On a single day in Japan 1893 she writes in her letter home: 'July 23. Keswick Sunday!' She knew that on that day all the convention goers would attend the services in one of the Keswick churches.

335. Cf. *TKW* (1947): 228.

336. See the beginning of this chapter.

337. A Spurgeon phrase. Cf. also in G. Thomas, ed., *The Victorious Life*, 41, a visitor's comment on the Keswick Convention: 'I learned how to cash my checks'.

How I am with you in spirit, and sing even now, as you will on Saturday next,
 Set on fire our hearts' devotion with the love of Thy dear name,
 Till o'er every land and ocean, lips and lives Thy Cross proclaim!
 Fix our eyes on Thy returning, keeping watch till Thou shall come,
 Loins well girt, lamps brightly burning. Then, Lord, take Thy servants home.³³⁸

Writing further in her diary, she notices, 'It is almost time for your early Communion at St. John's, Keswick's Parish Church. This time last year we were together there.' She urges the people at home:

Will you not think of these far-away ones. [...] For my own part, I never ceased to rejoice that God has appointed me to such an office. People talk of the sacrifice... It is emphatically no sacrifice! So wrote Dr Livingstone, and, though very humbly, so write I.³³⁹

Even after Amy's death, the visitors to the Keswick Convention heard the news from Dohnavur. For example: it was in 1958 that Miss Wilkinson told of the ongoing work there and urged the people to pray for the work there, because:

[I]n India the dedication of girls for temple service is illegal now, the powers of evil represented by this system are not to be broken by the passing of a law. There is a great increase in the number of houses of ill-repute, and women in these houses even take girl babies, to bring them up to a life of prostitution.³⁴⁰

A distinguishing feature of the Keswick Convention was its idea of 'full surrender' and its promotion by female protagonists:

More concretely, the call to full surrender undoubtedly had attractions in an age when female submission was axiomatic. Frances Havergal liked thinking of Christ as 'Master'. 'It is perhaps my favourite title', she wrote, 'because it implies rule and submission; and this is what love craves. Men may feel differently, but a true woman's submission is inseparable from deep love'. [...] This form of female piety was almost certainly the root of the growing practice at the end of the century of addressing public prayer to the Lord Jesus rather than to the Father through Him. [...] Women were fashioning devotional practice through the holiness movement.³⁴¹

We will see that in Amy's thinking as well as in the development of the DF the emphasis is on the work of the Holy Spirit. It permeated her life, and also the way the DF operates. The influence of the holiness movement also broadly conceived to her missionary thought and practice. Especially around the time Amy arrived in India, British missionaries were sent by the CMS; their mission had increasingly become 'Keswickfied' or turned to non-perfectionist holiness expressions. The DF was on the same trajectory as those Keswick leaders whose articulation of moderate holiness piety would further help to shape what is understood now as Keswick piety. Since 1875, there has been controversy about whether sanctification was the result of a crisis of the movement, or a process of a lifetime. With her strong Presbyterian background and knowing the Reformed doctrine, together with to some extent Brethren teaching she received during her stay in Broughton Grange, Amy tended to their views, both advocating sanctification as a process. From its earliest days, Keswick stressed the combination of a crisis of personal surrender to Christ leading to the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and a process of growth in godliness. In practice, it was the stressing of missionary endeavour.³⁴² Next to Bishop Moule it was Rev. C.A. Fox

338. *From Sunrise Land*, 45.

339. *From Sunrise Land*, 46.

340. In *TKW* [1958]: 169.

341. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 175.

342. Cf. C.S. Price & I.M. Randall, *Transforming Keswick* [Carlisle: OM Publishing, 2000], 14–15.

who as a regular Keswick speaker influenced Amy in her spiritual search for God's intention with her. Rev. Fox and Miss Sophia Nugent 'agreed that she must obey God's call, even though the cost to Robert Wilson was so great'.³⁴³ Fox also wrote the introductory note for Amy's first book in which he called her 'my friend Amy Wilson Carmichael'.³⁴⁴

In the years surrounding the Great Indian Revival of 1905–1907 Keswick delegates visited India. The first delegation of Keswick missionaries came to south India in 1889 and conducted Keswick meetings. Several times Keswick delegates would visit Amy in India. In 1899 Dr F.B. Meyer came to Palamcottah, 'a delightful man in every way'. His message:

[L]eft a deep mark upon the few who responded to it in sincerity; and raised the standard for the Church at large whether it responded or not. [...] The flag of holiness was definitely raised, and may it never be taken down.³⁴⁵

It was Dr Ingwood³⁴⁶ who told Amy, after he had seen everything in Dohnavur, 'You ought to tell it. It is keeping back something that belongs to Him if you don't.' One and a half years later, in 1921, it resulted in Amy's writing *Nor Scrip*, a story about God's provision and guidance of the DF.³⁴⁷ Keswick influence and spirituality became widespread in British India. The Keswick inter-denominational influences in the first decade of the 20th century shaped the revival of that time and many missionaries thought and worked in their respective mission stations according to the Keswick holiness piety. No wonder that Keswick spirituality – as we will see – was so manifest in Amy Carmichael's Dohnavur Fellowship.

343. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 52.

344. C.A. Fox, 'Introductory Note', in *From Sunrise Land*, XI.

345. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 220.

346. About his visit to Dohnavur, see *Gold Cord*, 131–132. Two years later Amy wrote *Tables in the Wilderness* and after six more years, *Meal in a Barrel*.

347. *Nor Scrip*, 2–3. See also about the Keswick missionaries in Oconer, L.J. "'Keswickified' Methodism: Holiness Revivalism in Indian Methodism, 1870–1910," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 49(2) [2014]: 122–143.

**I have but one candle of life to burn, and I would rather
burn it out where men are dying in darkness
than in a land flooded with light.**

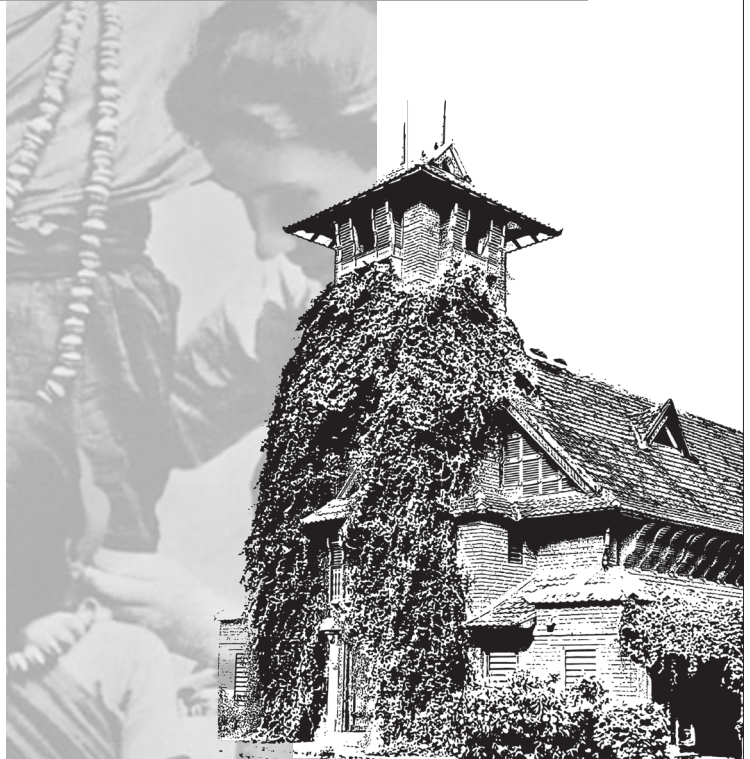
From the Fight, 59.

**Blessed are the far-seeing men and women of all ages, who
are always watching for great things, bending forward, and
listening for the prophetic voices, quick to see the great
light in heavens, when it first gilds the tops of the Eastern
hills.**

Sunrise Land, 7.

**The School of Divine Guidance by God's Sayings is one of
severe discipline. It will mean great heart – searching's,
great patience, and great simplicity to be guided.**

Chambers, *The Complete Works of Oswald Chambers* (Grand
Rapids, Discovery House Publishers, 2000), 272.



Always watching for great things

Called for mission work

In Amy Carmichael we will meet a missionary who intensely felt the cost of the Cross of Jesus Christ, and who had to learn to live by faith only. She believed that God dealt with her as he dealt with the Israelites, and that God would speak the counsels of his Word to her:

But how different it was on the second occasion,³⁴⁸ when God taught them to obey without, as it were, making it first of all impossible to disobey. The priests had to stand still in the water of the river. What a sight for men to scoff at, that standing still in the water! But it was not till they obeyed – and, without a particle of visible proof that they were doing right, went on to carry the ark right into the river – that the water rolled back before them. So, it seems to me, we may as we go on with God be called again and again to go right into our rivers, to wet our feet in them. We may be called to do what nobody understands but those to whom the word has come and the promise. But the word must come first and the promise too. We must be sure, with an inward conviction that absolutely nothing can shake. In my own case again and again I have had to wet my feet in the water. But when the Red Sea of guidance is given I am always very glad, for then others can see, and that does help. [...] Only God and those who have to walk in that path know how hard it can be. But He does know, and when the people about us don't hear the words of the voice, but only say 'It thunders', well, He comes near, and we know Him as we never knew Him before. At least it seems so to me.³⁴⁹

'It is only a sense of vocation that brings out from England women of the best type, intellectual, moral, and social, to take up the very trying work of a teacher in India'.³⁵⁰ Do not women's responses to

348. Here Amy refers to the Israelites after having crossed the Red Sea, having to cross the river Jordan. See Joshua 3.

349. *Candles in the Dark*, 51.

350. Quotation in Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 42.

the appeals for mission work reveal an awareness of the power of Christian religion and a compassion and a commitment, we, in our post secular age find so difficult to appreciate fully? The obedience to Christ's call, the 'lost ones' far away or the fate often so pitiful of the women and children were strong motivations for the 1600 single British women who by 1899 had been appointed overseas, of whom Amy was one.³⁵¹ She showed a strong sense of vocation for missionary service. In particular, the CIM looked for spiritual qualities in its aspirant missionaries, regardless of education, class, and gender. Hudson Taylor of the CIM sought missionaries from 'outside the usual social bracket'. He looked for 'willing, skilful labourers' from all classes for whom 'God has His own universities'.³⁵² Missionary service was for Amy a way of fully consecrating herself to God's purpose:

| | |
|---|---|
| Thy prayer shall be fulfilled; but how? His thoughts are not as thine, While thou wouldst only weep and bow, He said, 'Arise and shine!' Thy thoughts were all of grief and night, But His of boundless joy and light. | Thy Father reigns supreme above: Thy glory of His Name. Is Grace and Wisdom, Truth and Love, His Will must be the same. And thou hast asked all joy in one In whispering forth, 'Thy will be done'. ³⁵³ |
|---|---|

Parallel with the call is the power for the work. In her Bible she once wrote: 'First the Call. Then the Power, and between them, closeness to Jesus.'³⁵⁴ Amy Carmichael's life shows a pattern of spiritual biography in which her life ascended from the rational and she was personally accountable for the traced footsteps of her soul's path to God. The way she went in humility is the great characteristic of a true servant of Christ. Every time on the outlook, watching for great things.³⁵⁵

In the early 1890s, the face of the globe was scattered with the Christian missions that arose out of the evangelical revival in England and kindred movements in many other countries. Without exaggeration we can say that these years were turbulent for the young Irish lady. With only the Bible as her guide, she must have needed much strength of mind and fixity of purpose to be prepared to leave family, friends and the work she did in England and step out from Victorian comfort and luxury to the comparatively primitive life in Japan and India. Although she went out with the full blessing of her mother, of Mr Wilson and of the Keswick Mission Committee, she certainly had her inward battles. She recorded a glimpse of it, as the abundance of notes in the margin of her Bible show us how God in his Word sustained and led her to look forward in confidence.

■ Glasgow 1886: 'All means all'

In 1886 Amy received an invitation to attend a convention in Glasgow, a convention on Keswick lines. Here in Glasgow God spoke clear to her:

351. By 1899, more than 1600 single women went for mission work overseas; by 1916, there were around 2500. These numbers in Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 33.

352. G. Guinness, *The Story of the China Inland Mission* (vol. I; London: Morgan & Scott, 1893), 235. Cf. E. Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society, its environment, its men and its work* (vol. III; London: CMS, 1899), 627: 'God does not commit his work in the world to one class only. He can use persons of all classes.'

353. Frances Ridley Havergal (1836–1879).

354. In Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of Matthew 10:1.

355. In Shanghai, April 1893, she walked through the streets of the city. There Amy constantly recalled words she once read in her homeland: 'Blessed are the far-seeing men and women of all ages, who are always watching for great things, bending forward, and listening for the prophetic voices; quick to see the great light in heavens, when it first gilds the tops of the Eastern hills' (*From Sunrise Land*, 7).

A door was opened for me into a new life. [...] I had been longing for months, perhaps years, to know how one could live a holy life, and a life that would help others. I came to that meeting, half hoping, half fearing. Would there be anything for me? I don't remember feeling there was anything (my fault) in either of the two addresses. The fog in the hall seemed to soak into me. My soul was in fog. Then the chairman rose for the last prayer. Perhaps the previous address had been about Peter walking on the water, and perhaps it had closed with the words of Jude 24, for the one who prayed, began like this, –'O Lord, we know Thou art able to keep us from falling'. Those words found me. It was as if they were alight, and they shone for me.³⁵⁶

Later she wrote in her Bible about her Glasgow experience: 'In His quiver has He kept me close. Sep. 23. 1886. Glasgow Convention.'³⁵⁷ Full of wonder and exaltation she left the meeting with her friend to go to a restaurant for lunch:

The mutton chop wasn't properly cooked and somebody said so. I remembered wondering, 'Whatever does it matter about chops? O Lord, we know Thou art able to keep us from Falling'.

Weeks after she had heard, and for the first time understood and believed, that she could be kept from falling, she attended another meeting to get more insight in the Scriptures. At the Bridge of Allan Convention in Scotland, she heard Andrew Bonar, a man who was intimately acquainted with Jesus Christ. At that time Bonar was very old and it was difficult for her to understand what he said. The hall was full and Amy, sitting near the back, could not hear one single word, except the word *all*. Bonar read 2 Corinthians 9:8 and 'he put every bit of strength he had into it, so that the one word rang out – *all – always – all – all*'. This one word 'all' she never forgot throughout her life. And once, when in Dohnavur, writing her daily Bible thoughts for her fellow workers, this little word 'helps me fresh today'³⁵⁸ to face the day-to-day affairs within the Fellowship.

The revelation of God who was able to keep her from falling from him, and who could make it possible to stay in close connection with him and so to live in holiness at all times, was in line with the leading thought of the Keswick movement at that time.

Again one year later, a similar convention was held in Belfast. It was here that Amy, nearly 20, and her aunts met Mr Robert Wilson. Another leading exponent then present was the founder of the CIM, James Hudson Taylor. Here in Belfast she was on the course that determined her future. Mr Wilson became a 'life-long friend of the family'. That evening instead of answering some of their questions, he read to them from a card, which he carried in his pocket:

We Master, how I shall bless Thy name,
For love so great to me;
For sweet enablings of Thy Grace,
So sovereign, yet so free,
That taught me to obey Thy Word,
And cast my care on Thee?³⁵⁹

Robert Wilson, born at Kendal, owned several coal mines in Cumbria. In 1858 on the rising ground above the river Derwent, near Cockermouth, he built a house for his family, Broughton Grange. A Quaker, he worshipped at the Friends' Meeting House, where the Friends had worshipped since

356. *Scraps* no. 7; Cf. Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 99.

357. In Amy's Bible [1895] in the margin of Isaiah 49:2. 'In the shadow of His hand has He hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in His quiver has He hid me.'

358. See *Edges on His Ways*, 8.

359. In E.J. Young (ed.), *That in All Things He Might Have the Pre-eminence, Welcome Evangelical Church Centenary 1887-1987* (Belfast: Welcome Evangelical Church, 1987), 5.

1653, and often he attended the Baptist Chapel, erected in 1648. He also owned two seats in the local Anglican Church, where he often went on Sunday evenings. He liked the Anglican liturgy. Mr Wilson was very broadminded concerning churches and no wonder that here at Broughton Grange Amy learnt 'to drop all labels'. Amy participated in Sunday school work and after her death, Frank Houghton met someone who told him that she could remember that as a child Amy's brightness and cheerfulness impressed her and 'that we children used to enjoy her verbal messages in our meeting for worship'.³⁶⁰ He also heard memories from those who had attended the Mission Hall of the Scripture Union on Tuesday evenings.

Mr Wilson always had many visitors, many of them involved in mission work, like Hudson Taylor, Theodore Monod, F.B. Meyers and many others, and from them, Amy heard and learned a lot. She also joined in 1890 Hannah Govan, of the Faith Mission, in an evangelic tour along the villages up the Clyde. Hannah Govan invited her to write some articles in *Bright Words*, the organ of the Faith Mission.³⁶¹

■ 'I cannot be mistaken'

Throughout her whole life, for Amy there were three things that were very important to get true guidance: the Word, the inward voice, and the leading of circumstance. It meant for her to be close to God. God does not want us to rush:

Especially when we are meditating a 'leap in the dark', a 'venture of faith' – which are names for simple obedience – let us stand still in Jordan, then triumph shall come, but not till then. Until *after* they obeyed there were no 'circumstances' to guide, only His bare Word.³⁶²

It was here through contacts with the Keswick movement that the call came to her to become a missionary. She saw missionary service as a way of fully consecrating herself to the purpose of God. Amy knew exactly to the day when, on 13 January 1892, the Lord spoke to her. 'I cannot be mistaken, for I knew He spoke. He said "Go," I cannot stay.'³⁶³ God's message went through her heart. Later she would write in her Bible in the margin of Acts 8:54, 'Broughton. Jan. 92'.³⁶⁴

God pressed his finger very strongly on her and she had to give the evidence of her love to Christ. What was the proof of it? In just one word – Obedience! Obedience to his command. There is no shortcut here, and there is no way around it. She knew that if the heart is with God's heart, God will tell her and that she could count on him to do his own work.

Like Paul's Macedonian call, God's calling meant an intensification of religious experience for Amy, and that if she really did love him, she should go all the way in her obedience to him, at all costs. Amy, confused and surprised, took God at his Word, willing to go with, and for, the Lord Jesus, who out of love for her went all the way to the Cross of Calvary. She came in the presence of the King and on the flyleaf in her Bible we can still see in the corner of two sentences written on Tuesday 26 July at the Keswick Convention: 'Day the missionary committee met', and added the words from the *Daily Light* of that day: 'He shall choose our inheritance for us' (Ps 47:4). She could not resist writing and encircling in

360. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 38.

361. In 1891 a first article appeared, 'Fighting Sall' – the story of a 'Shawlie' converted at The Welcome in Belfast.

362. See *Fragments That Remain*, 129–130.

363. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, Chapter VI: The Call, 43–53.

364. In Amy's Bible (1895).

the corner 'Go ye', conveying these words to the Lord himself, in the quiet of her heart. For her, who had given up all life's ambition several years ago at Belfast's fountain, these two words here 'Go ye' reveal 'to me to live is Christ'. And it was Christ, and nothing but Christ, till the end of her life. In the light of that ambition, life and death lose their significance, and in life's darkest experience, there is a resounding note of victory. Christ was the source of life, her sustainer of life, the crown of her life.³⁶⁵ Arthur Helps says 'the mill-streams that turn the clappers of the world arise in solitary places'. This experience would be the source of a fruitful stream.

That time the Holy Spirit brought God's command in her heart and applied it to her particular circumstances. The point was would she obey? 'Whosoever ... heareth My sayings and doeth them.' That time when Jesus Christ brought his word home to her, she did not shirk. She would go in the armour of God. She did not oppose him in her own strength, but she stood with the strength and the courage of God, not giving anything that stood against her decision an inch. In unshaken faith she banked on the Word of Christ Jesus.

During the 1887 convention in Keswick she had already heard Hudson Taylor. She then felt strongly called for missionary work and it was renewed during the Glasgow experience, but now she was totally sure. Amy came to the turning of ways in her life, and was sorely perplexed, realising that to follow what she felt was God's call and will for her would be the breaking of most precious ties. The only option for her now was to obey God! Around this time she wrote to her mother:

Everything, everything seemed to be saying 'Go', through all sounds the cry seemed to rise, 'Come over and help us'. Every bit of pleasure of work, which has come to me, has had underlying in the thought of those people who have never, never heard of Jesus; before my eyes clearer than any lovely view has been the constant picture of those millions who have no chance, and never had one, of hearing of the love which makes our lives so bright.

Having received the Holy Spirit turned her into a passionate follower of Jesus Christ. Out of her life would flow those rivers of living water that heal and bless, and she spent and suffered in patience all because of one and the one only.

In the following year, 1888, a Keswick mission committee, chaired by Robert Wilson, was formed with a view to send out and support Keswick 'missioners', for which cause funds had begun to be made available. In the event, Amy became the first Keswick missionary, though not at once, and not without conflict. Here Amy got preparation:

[F]or something out of sight. For if ever I was to do the things 'before prepared',³⁶⁶ certain great lessons not learned yet had to be learned, and Broughton Grange was the appointed school.³⁶⁷

Vocation is a word that has gone out of fashion. When we use it, it normally refers simply to our chosen career or line of work. In this regard, the meaning has slipped from earlier usage of the word, especially by Christians. Originally, when Christians spoke of their vocation, the word had great depth and breadth. Vocation is 'experiencing and living by a calling' in such a way 'that it provides a fundamental orientation to every day's life'. All the ramifications of God's calling are in view: tasks, practices, attitudes, perspectives, beliefs, vows. God's call in Christ orients and governs the choices we make, which then become more like discernments of calling than that they are personal preferences. That Wednesday evening on 13 January 1892, Amy, at Broughton Grange, very clearly heard the Lord saying to her, 'Go ye'.

365. Cf. A. Redpath, 'Triumphant Assurance', TKW [1953]: 19–21.

366. See Ephesians 2, 10 (RV).

367. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 35.

In such a genuine way Amy wrote to her mother about how she had heard God's call. This 'Macedonian type' call is authentic and nicely she describes her anxious feelings, her empathy for her mother and Mr Wilson, and yet so sure of what she had heard from God that there was no way back. Her letter and her mother's answer show such a deep insight in both their motives that I decided to copy them here fully.³⁶⁸ To her mother Amy wrote 14 January 1892:

MY PRECIOUS MOTHER,

Have you given your child unreservedly to the Lord for whatever He wills? Oh may He strengthen you to say 'Yes' to Him if He asks something which costs. Darling mother, for a long time as you know the thought of those dying in the dark – 50,000 of them every day, while we at home live in the midst of blazing light – has been very present to me, and the longing to go to them, and tell them of Jesus, have been strong upon me. Everything, everything seemed to be saying 'Go', through all sounds the cry seemed to rise, 'Come over and help us'. Every bit of pleasure or work which has come to me, has had underlying in the thought of those people who have never, never heard of Jesus; before my eyes clearer than any lovely view has been the constant picture of those millions who have no chance, and never had one, of hearing of the love which makes our lives so bright. But home claims seemed to say 'Stay', and I thought it was His will; it was perhaps till yesterday. I can't explain it, but lately the need seems to have come closer, and I wrote down a few days ago, just to have it in black and white, why I am not going.

(1) Your need of me, my mother.

(2) The great loneliness it would mean to my dear second Father.

(3) The thought that by staying I might make it easier for the others to go if He called.

(4) My not being strong. But in His sight are these four things worth staying from those poor heathen for? You have given me three-quarters up as it is. My dear old Fatherie in the Lord's wholly, he would not let me be kept up for him. The other two things surely I could trust about. Still they seemed to say 'Stay'. Yesterday suddenly the impulse came to have a good talk with my dear Fatherie – I can't call him 'Mr. Wilson', he is too close for that now – at any rate to you, Mother, and after it I went to my own room and just asked the Lord what it all meant, what did He wish me to do, and Mother, as clearly as I ever heard you speak, I heard Him say 'GO YE'

I never heard it just so plainly before: I cannot be mistaken, for I know He spoke. He says 'Go', I cannot stay. Mother, I feel as if I had been stabbing someone I loved. It is Friday now, I could not finish this yesterday, and through all the keen sharp pain which has come since Wednesday, the certainty that it was His voice I heard has never wavered; though all my heart has shrunk from what it means, though I seem torn in two, and just feel one big ache all over, yet the certainty is there – He said to me 'Go'. Oh, nothing but that sure word, His word, could make it possible to do it, for until He spoke, and I answered, 'Yes, Lord', I never knew what it would cost. These are the verses He gave to me, when He spoke to me, - 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me'. 'For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it'. 'He that loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me'. 'To obey is better than sacrifice'. Many difficulties have risen in my mind, they seem very great, the 'crooked places' seem very crooked, but it seems to me that all He asks is that we should take the one step He shows us, and in the simplest, most practical trust leave all results to Him. Mother, I know that very Few of our friends will think I am right. Those who don't know the Shepherd's Voice themselves will be quite sure I am very wrong and mistaken, but He has said, 'Walk before Me, and be thou perfect'. He knows, and He won't let me dishonour Him by making a mistake, and following my own fancy instead of Him. If it is so, He will show it to me, but if it is His Will, I must do it. There isn't much of gladness in this letter, I'm afraid, but I don't feel anything except sore at the pain this must bring my loved ones.

Goodbye, my mother. May He come very near to you and strengthen and comfort you. Your own Amy.

368. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 44–47.

Some of these things may cross your mind as they have mine. What about leaving my God-given Father who does seem to need me a little? Cannot I trust Him to care for Him? If He tells me to leave Him, He won't let him suffer. Clara Bradshaw met Hudson Taylor once, and he prayed, 'Show this child of Thine what blessing she is keeping from her own father' – by staying when He had called her. If I stayed, might I not keep those dearest to me from God's richest blessing? But this is a very hard bit to think of, I can hardly face it steadily yet. Then as to 'the children'. [*And here she discusses the future of the three who were still in England*]. God knows what it means, but 'The Lord is able to give much more than this'. He gave Himself for us, is anything too great to give to Him? 'Health' you will think of. He won't let that hinder if He has said 'Go'. Then as to the money – I don't see clearly, but I believe He will show us about that. If He does not, I will take it that that means 'stay', for He could not mean me to let you suffer wrongly. But I think soon the boys will be able to help.

Two days later, her mother wrote back. The letter opens with a poem by Frances R. Havergal. Amy was very glad for her mother's letter, and marked on the back, 'First letter received – praise the Lord!'

My own precious child,

He Who hath led will lead
 All through the wilderness,
 He who hath fed will surely feed...
 He Who hath heard thy cry
 Will never close His ear,
 He Who has marked thy faintest sigh
 Will not forget thy tear.
 He loves always, fails never,
 So rest on Him today- forever.

Yes, dearest Amy, He has lent you to me all these years. He only knows what a strength, comfort and joy you have been to me. In sorrow He made you my staff and solace, in loneliness my more than child companion, and in gladness my bright and merry-hearted sympathizer. So, darling, when He asks you now to go away from within my reach, can I say nay? No, no, Amy, He is yours – you are His – to take you where He pleases and to use you as He pleases. I can trust you to Him, and I do – and I thank Him for letting you hear His voice as you have done. I shall not speak of your dear loving letter or my feelings. How weak we are. But He knows our frame, and remembers. 'Go ye'- my heart echoes. 'O send forth Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead me – let them bring me into Thy holy hill and to Thy tabernacles', met my eye as I opened my Bible – do you see what the holy hill and tabernacles mean to me in this connection? I never saw it before – and then in the next page comes, 'Therefore God hath blessed thee forever'.

All day He has helped me, and my heart unflinchingly says, 'Go ye'. He only knows what this means and will mean to me – to you – to us all. I dare not think – but His grace is sufficient, Amy. Let us keep our eye on Him – and then no wave will swamp us – and He will bear us up in His arms. Oh, isn't it strange we are not more cheerfully willing followers – to think of his wonderful everlasting love to us, and how little He ever asks in return. Amy, darling, today I got a moments glimpse of it all, and how small this life seemed. When we are dying, how very little will it seem that He has asked us to give up for Him. So, my precious Child, I give you back into His loving arms, saying from the depths of my being, 'Take her, dear Lord – Thou wilt take the most loving care of her, use her in Thy service, and for Thy glory now and where thou pleases, for Christ's sake. Amen'.

For dear Mr. Wilson I feel so much, perhaps more than for myself, but God has His in His keeping. He cannot and will not make a mistake. All other points are minor and must wait – the one thought has been enough today. One step is all that I am equal to – all else will clear. 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want'. 'Goodness and mercy shall follow me' – and we shall all gather from the north, south, east and west in His home above, and will cast our crowns at His feet, saying, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing'. Till then may we each be found faithful. Ever my darling child's loving Mother.

For days, it seems to me now the Lord has been preparing the way, Amy, for your letter.

The sight of what Jesus did on the Cross, and to have heard him say, 'Go ye', makes a missionary. Amy in a conflict of loyalties obeyed Jesus at all costs. Her letter suggests that she had been deeply influenced by the appeals for missionaries to go to those living 'in darkness' made by Hudson Taylor and which frequently appeared in the works of Frances Ridley Havergal and others. In 1892 she was again in Keswick, now as a single missionary candidate. A year later in Japan she remembered the deep Keswick word about vocation, that 'God sends us to the heathen for two purposes, to do them good, and to find a grave for a good self', and with that word in mind she sighted: 'May he make our self-funeral the greatest fact in our existence'.³⁶⁹ Years later she would write:

There is the Cross. He emptied Himself. The death of the cross. If I am going after Him I must deny myself. He went all the way to the cross. If I am going to be His disciple I must accept the cross as the principle of all life and service. That is what He meant here. He says: 'If men are coming after Me, they must go My way'. Discipleship does not merely mean the salvation of the soul. It means fellowship with Him in the travail, and then the triumph. Unless we are prepared for that, He says we cannot be His disciples.³⁷⁰

She always kept in mind this 'Keswick experience', having lifelong in her room a piece of wood on which was written: *Go Ye*. Connected with God's commission is our obedience. 'He just said, "Go ye," and as we obey He gives us all we need to lead them (the people) to Him'.³⁷¹ Being 25 years old now, this young woman put her hand to Christ's plough; never looking back, she continued to plough in the field of heathenism, till when the last call came, it found her in the great field of her lifelong great labours in that tiny south Indian village. Her whole confidence was in God and his work of grace, while her emotions became the beautiful ornament of her life, not the source of it.

■ 'The rudder set'

In India Amy had told Sherwood Eddy – in his eyes she was the ideal Keswick missionary – what the real secret of her dedicated life was. In a meeting, someone had prayed, 'We thank Thee, Lord, that Thou art *able*', and a new meaning leaped from the context of the prayer to her immediate need. If God was able to make all grace abound, able to make a weak brother stand, able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, able and willing to supply all her need, moment by moment, hour by hour, day by day, and if the living Christ could say, 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end', then what had she to fear for the rest of her life? She then took a bold step in faith.³⁷² She was open to everyone about her call to the mission field, and never hiding even her own anxieties, she could keep hidden in her heart what she communed with her God. Once in India she wrote, 'It is good to learn to keep secrets with God'.³⁷³

'The rudder of her will was set' towards God's purpose.³⁷⁴ He had called her to go. Called, but go where? Amy simply did not know. For her it was a thrilling experience to be called by God, who would put this daughter of former mill owners through mills she had never dreamed of. To learn the ABC of

369. *From Sunrise Land*, 119.

370. In *Whispers of His Power*, Amy's thoughts about Philippians 2:5–8, 25 August, 181–182.

371. *Candles in the Dark*, 120.

372. In S. Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade* (New York, NY: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945), 124. 'All the promises of God she continuously claimed; all the triumph of the life consistently taught for so many decades at the Keswick Convention, that meant so much to evangelicals of both Anglican and the free churches in Britain and India, were hers.'

373. This she wrote in the margin of H. Streeter & A.J. Appasamy, *The Sadhu* (London: MacMillan & Co, 1921), 144.

374. A Hanna Whitall Smith expression. See Huffmann Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible*, 61.

God, day by day, and to sacrifice herself to the will of Jesus. Gone was all self-realisation and Christ-realisation made its entrance. She had found her niche in life and spirituality after having received her ministry from God. ‘This one thing I do’, to set her face towards the purpose of God, eyes fixed upon Jesus, going steadfastly on with the sacrifice of herself for Jesus as he sacrificed himself for his father. In close relation with God, she learned the secret of discipleship, viz. the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and commissioned to lift up Jesus Christ.³⁷⁵ On 18 January, she wrote to her mother:

You will wonder what place I think of. Ceylon seems to be much upon my mind, but of course I cannot tell yet. I think He is guiding me to go there, but we are waiting unto Him to be sure. China and Africa are somehow not as strong upon my mind as they used to be, and Ceylon, a place I never knew of, is constantly before me. He will choose.³⁷⁶

Mr Wilson and Amy visited the Stewarts of Fukien (China), in Bedford. For Amy a very special place, because one of her favourite books, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, was written there. It was decided Amy would travel to China with the Stewarts in autumn, under the CEZMS. However, the journey for the Stewarts changed, because they first had to go to Australia.³⁷⁷ Eventually the Mission Committee agreed she would go to China under the Keswick Mission Committee.

Several spiritual milestones could be seen in her life until then: faithful parents leading their little daughter to Jesus and teaching her to love and trust him, the Harrogate experience of receiving assurance of salvation – ‘the one watered moment in an arid three years’ – the encounter at the fountain in Belfast where the eternal values became a reality for her, and the assurance that her Saviour is trustworthy and was able to keep her from falling. These were the ‘spiritual milestones of Amy Carmichael’s awakening and preparation for her long and fruitful service for the Lord Jesus’.³⁷⁸ Life changing ‘stones’. Amy, in all her work, never came to the forefront, always it was God first! This she showed in her life and in her writings that all was focused on the glory of her Saviour. Years later in Dohnavur, Amy would write about Joshua 4:8–9, about the heap of stones Joshua had to set up in the river:

Have you passed through some new experience of the power and the love of our Lord? The children you look after, the sick you tend, the people you meet, will notice something that will make them ask questions. Take them in confidence. Tell them what has been done for you, [...] Set up your heap of stones to the glory of your Lord, so that all will see that He is indeed a God of Deliverances, a splendid, loving, joy-giving Lord whom to serve is the greatest joy in all the world.³⁷⁹

The Lord had prepared her for her true vocation: a life of service to others, in the name of Christ.³⁸⁰ Amy’s life is an illustration of unreserved surrender to God, and of God’s full possession of this child of his for his own highest end. Obedience to the effective call of God and the unreserved resignation to God. Living in glad submission to God’s will, her spiritual muscles developed. She writes:

375. Cf. Galatians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 2:2; John 12:32. See also Oswald Chambers: ‘God can never make us wine if we object the fingers He uses to crush us with’ [*The Complete Works*, 250].

376. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 50.

377. On 01 August 1895, the Rev. Stewart, his wife and several unmarried women missionaries were murdered at Kucheng, Fukien Province. Amy would have been certainly among these women if she had joined the Stewarts’ journey to China.

378. ‘Amy Carmichael, the Radiant Life’, in V.R. Edman, *They Found the Secret* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984 [1960]), 45.

379. See *Whispers of His Power*, 248–249.

380. As L. Trotter says: ‘We ourselves are “saved to save” – we are made to give – to let everything go if only we may have more to give. The pebble takes in the rays of light that fall on it, but the diamond flashes them out again: every little facet is means, not simply of drinking more in, but of giving more out’ [*Parables of the Cross* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott and Algiers Mission Band, 1947), 18].

I had thought that the plan was for me to stay with the D.O.M. till he went to Heaven. But crashing through that thought came a word I could not mistake and dare nor resist. It came on a snowy evening, 13 January 1892.³⁸¹

Immediately she realised it would cost a lot, and she strongly felt the devil was trying to withhold her from obeying this call. Mr Wilson, after 'long wrestling with himself' gave his consent to her going to China. That was the country Amy believed the Lord had called her to that night. She had to go, even when it meant leaving her mother, family and a lot of friends:

But I had no choice and he had no choice. If any man say unto you, why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him, he [*Mr Wilson*] used to quote the words half to himself.³⁸²

In the things of competition in loyalty, she was challenged between that which is good, nice and beautiful in itself and loyalty to him. 'We must trample across our own hearts and go after Him, without any compromise and any questionings.'³⁸³

At that time Amy met Hudson Taylor's future daughter-in-law Geraldine Guinness. In Geraldine she found someone who understood her questions, doubts and uncertainties about going into mission work. Geraldine herself was also comforted by Amy. Until the end of her life Amy kept in her Bible a letter Geraldine gave her. On the outside of the envelope, Geraldine had written: 'Love and deepest sympathy, my dear Amy, and MANY thanks for your precious helpful words yesterday.' Inside were the words:

| | |
|--|--|
| Can ye? (Mark 10:28) | Can God? (Ps 78:19) |
| Can ye drink the cup that I drink of – and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with? | Ye shall indeed ... For with God all things are possible. |

Now is my soul troubled – and what shall I say?

Father, Save Me... Father, GLORIFY THY NAME. For this cause I came into this hour. (Jn 12:24–28).³⁸⁴

In 1948 Amy wrote of Geraldine Guinness:

I don't think an older girl could have helped a younger girl more. There was no weakening that was what helped so much. There was just the steadfast look towards Gethsemane and Calvary.³⁸⁵

A Quaker friend, Mrs Bell, and several others were very enthusiastic hearing of Amy's call, but she also encountered a lot of opposition. Not only from ordinary Christians, but also from well-known and respected Christian leaders. Their words 'cut like knives'.³⁸⁶ Others she gratefully named, like Rev. C.A. Fox, Miss Soltau³⁸⁷ and Miss Sophia Nugent, because they stood with her.

381. *Amma's Book*, 24.

382. *Amma's Book*, 24.

383. *Whispers of His Power*, 23 August, 180.

384. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 53.

385. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 53.

386. *Amma's Book*, 24. One said to her about Mr Wilson: 'He will be dead before you are through the Mediterranean', 24.

387. See M. Cable & F. French, *The Woman Who Laughed* (London: CIM, 1934), 154–155, for more on what Miss Soltau did for Amy.

■ Doubtful experiences and preparation

Here this young lady was before her God, saved and sanctified and sent, a pilgrim to eternity; trusting God that he would engineer circumstances and thrust her out, she volunteered to the CIM for mission work in China. She would experience that doors to mission work that seem to be ajar can be very stiff on their hinges. The Lord had another destination for her instead of joining the ranks of the CIM. In the KCMMB of 26 July 1892, we read:

A letter was read by Mr Wilson to the committee in which Miss Amy B Carmichael's call to mission work was detailed and her service offered, to go to China as a missionary in connection with the Keswick Convention Mission (KCM). Mr. Wilson stated his intention of providing her outfit and passage money to China and suggested that the KCM should then take charge. Mr Wilson and Miss C. withdrew and after a short time Mr. Wilson was called in to unite in the consideration and it was unanimously agreed to accept her. A sum of P.100 per annum was agreed, as a medium between the highest and lowest accounts usually provided. To which missionary Society she would be connected was left over. Mr Wilson had communicated with the CEZM Society, and the CMS as to their accepting Keswick Missionaries, as associates not in full membership, and they will gladly welcome Keswick missionaries as full members, subject in all things to the rules of their societies.³⁸⁸

For missionary preparation at that time it was important that the candidate had extensive experience of practical Christian work such as Sunday school teaching, district visiting, working in girls clubs, nursing the sick and it was an advantage if the candidate had some knowledge of distributing medicines. For those who lacked these requirements some mission training institutes were available.³⁸⁹

Prior to acceptance, female applicants of the CIM were first received and assessed at the Women's Candidates Home in Pyrland Road, London, 'where their characters and missionary vocation were tested'.³⁹⁰ On 10 September 1892, Amy travelled to London, to be in the care of Miss Soltau, the superintendent, for the first courses. At that time male CIM missionary recruits attended Harley House in Bow and the women were located in Doric Lodge. A 50 yards' walk from Pyrland Road was the Mildmay Conference Centre, which at that time had become a centre of evangelical activity. In London Amy met and Miss Geraldine Guinness – who encouraged her to pursue missionary work – and especially by Miss Henrietta Soltau³⁹¹ who oversaw this department. Asked personally by Hudson Taylor, Miss Soltau was appointed to this work in 1889 and in the short time Amy was there, she had a big influence upon her. Later on from India Amy wrote:

When I had to make the final decision about going abroad I was torn in two. Many were saying that I was wrong to dream of leaving home, for there was one there who wanted me and, as it seemed, needed me. His friends, leaders of the Convention, were utterly opposed to my leaving him. Some even told me that if I left him his death would be at my door. Because those who said these things were the very saints of the earth, their words had weight. On one side there were many voices and on the other the One compelling voice. Miss Soltau, perhaps seeing or feeling my distress, came to me that night in my little bedroom at the old Pyrland Road house. The window had been open and the white dressing table cover was powdered with smuts. We stood beside it, and as a tortured heart does always notice trifles, so I noticed those smuts. The words broke from me: 'They say

388. KCMMB (PRONI DSO 250/1/3/1), Mission Committee meeting report, 25 July 1892.

389. Mentioned in Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 42–47.

390. Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 45.

391. Henrietta Eliza Soltau, Plymouth, 08 December 1843–05 February 1934. In charge of the Women Candidates' Department of the CIM. During the period that she was in charge, 547 of the young women who passed through her hands went to China.

that if I leave him he will die – even so am I right to go?’ She did not answer for a moment, then said solemnly, ‘Yes, I think even so, that you are right to go’. It was a tremendous answer. She must have added something about trusting our father to deal tenderly with His servant who had truly given me to Him, though his heart still clung to me. But all I remember of the next few minutes is, that with her arms around me I entered into peace. Often, through the many years that have passed since that night, I have been helped by the memory of her courage in the ways of God, to strengthen a younger soul who was being torn as I was then.³⁹²

At Pyrland Road the characters and missionary vocation of the women were tested, and their training requirements assessed. At that time many women missionaries were either wholly or partly self-supporting, and those entering the CIM could expect no salary at all:

A combination of obedience to Christ’s teaching, a desire to engage in a “mission of sisterhood” to heathen women, and an awareness of the nobility and self-sacrifice of a calling seemed to have been the strongest motivations.³⁹³

It was a shock for her that the medical adviser of the CIM was not willing to pass her for China. The risk in sending her to the East was too big. In many ways she was an unlikely candidate for missionary work. She suffered neuralgia and this nerve disease made her whole body rather weak and achy and often put her in bed for weeks on end. January 1893 Hudson Taylor wrote a letter to John Stevenson in China, in which he, next to some other CIM issues, reported to Stevenson that:

[A] Keswick missionary, Amy Carmichael, had not been accepted as a candidate, on grounds of health and temperament, but was to sail with a CIM party to join Richard Buxton in Japan.³⁹⁴

Health issues of aspiring missionaries have always been an important consideration. The hot climate in the tropics is trying to Europeans; next to the anxiety, fatigue and exposure to several seen and unseen dangers, it proves a serious strain on physical health and strength. Great emphasis was placed on age. Medical opinion took the view that women were less able to adjust to difficult climate conditions after the age of 30.³⁹⁵ The Scottish Free Church considered ‘the best age for going to India’ to be ‘about 25 years of age, after the character and constitution are formed, and before either the power of languages and the capacity for acclimatization are lost’.³⁹⁶ The CIM was more relaxed about age restrictions.

Amy was only in Miss Soltau’s care for a couple of months. She travelled back from London to the Lake District and by 13 January 1893, the anniversary of her call, she was back as the talks confirmed her going about the lanes of Broughton again with her pony.³⁹⁷ ‘He has given me back my Isaac! Praise Him’, these words from Mr Wilson’s lips were heard when a medical difficulty seemed to shut the door for Amy.³⁹⁸ For her entertainment Mr Wilson had given her the pony and a dog, a terrier called Scamp, and the days were filled with ‘Convention writing’ and taking the ‘Convention women’s meetings’, but always, every day’ this

392. In M. Cable & F. French, *A Woman Who Laughed*. Henrietta Soltau who laughed at impossibilities and cried: ‘It shall be done’, 154–155.

393. In Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 34.

394. See Broomhall, *It is not Death to Die!*, 182. Here Broomhall adds: ‘The same Amy Carmichael was to become the “Amma” of Dohnavur, the lifelong friend of the CIM.’

395. See more about these issues in Kommers, ‘A flame of sacred love’.

396. Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 36.

397. Some details of her stay in London I received 25 September 2013 from Marion Osgood, archivist of the OMF International in London.

398. *Amma’s Book*, 25.

thought was with her, ‘This is not your rest’. She knew she had to go to the mission field, but to where? Afterwards she explained to the Dohnavur children that God’s plan for her was for the children in India: ‘I was guarded and kept for you, my children’.³⁹⁹

Amy kept a steady head and an unmoved conviction that her call to mission work was a divine commission, not fully dependent on the opinion of either a medical adviser or a mission council. She postponed her missionary career with the CIM and, on 13 January 1893, for the first time the thought of Japan came as the place of the Lord’s choice. A letter was written to Barclay Buxton, who with a party of young missionaries was in Matsuye on the west coast of Japan. Mr Wilson and Amy decided not to wait for the reply but that she should go on in faith. On 03 March 1893, she sailed with a party of CIM missionaries to Shanghai:

Never, I think, not even in Heaven shall I forget that parting. It was such a rending thing that I never wanted to repeat it. I wondered then how people went through it every five or six years. Even now my heart winces at the thought of it.

Fellow passengers asked her where her station was. ‘I found Genesis 12:1 comforting then: “unto a land that I will show thee”.’⁴⁰⁰ Without proper contact having been established, and with a little mission training in London, in March 1893 the 25-year-old Amy simply set off. She sailed for Japan as the first Keswick missionary to join the CMS work led by Barclay Buxton.⁴⁰¹

She packed her outfit and arranged for departure and actually sailed on 03 March 1893 in the *Valetta* for Japan, ‘following the Gleam’. There she ‘received a hearty⁴⁰² welcome and a cordial invitation was given by Mr Buxton for more Keswick missionaries to join him in that large promising field’. By reading Hebrews 11:8 where Abraham when he was called ‘obeyed ... and went out not knowing whither he went’, she found rest. For Amy to go to the mission field in this way was a great lesson in the walk of faith. The journey to Shanghai lasted three months, but ‘some lessons of faith are much longer than that’. In Shanghai she learned the lesson of the lantern, showing just that part of the road directly before you. Towards the end of April, a letter came from Mr Buxton asking her to come to Japan.

In that same year the Mission Committee received an application from Mrs Carmichael for her daughter Eva, ‘who has been in missionary training with Mrs Mergoes, in Liverpool for about two years in the Deaconess House, to go out as a Keswick Missionary’.⁴⁰³ Many women recruits from the CIM had also had their training there before being definitely accepted for mission work.⁴⁰⁴ The way Mrs Carmichael gave two daughters to the mission without any restriction is evidence of great faith.

God’s calling now oriented Amy to the Orient. The Keswick holiness movement set little store by denominationalism. Though brought up a solid Presbyterian, Amy had learned in Wilson’s company ‘to

399. *Amma’s Book*, 25.

400. *Amma’s Book*, 25.

401. ‘Miss T. was followed to the mission field in 1893 by Miss Amy Wilson Carmichael, who sailed in March to join the Rev. Barclay F. Buxton’s mission party at Matsuye, in Japan. She was the first missionary to go out at the charges of the Keswick Mission Committee’ [C.F. Harford, ed., *The Keswick Convention. Its Message, its Method and its Men* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1907), 149].

402. *Amma’s Book*, 25.

403. In KCMMB, Mission Committee meeting report, 09 October 1893.

404. See M. Cable & E. French, *Something Happened*, 33: ‘Deaconess House had a reputation for being the most strenuous of the training-schools.’

drop labels, and to think only of the one true visible Church, to which all who truly love the Lord belong'.⁴⁰⁵ Amy was and remained a true Presbyterian; however, the width of her sympathies made her approve of the interdenominational character of the mission, and she rejoiced in its spiritual standards and evangelistic methods.

Departure is always painful; 'it is a stabbing pain', as she once wrote. To say goodbye is 'like being torn in pieces without chloroform'. To leave her mother, family, friends and Mr Wilson; the thought of their pain could break her. Those moments she thought of the wounded hands of Christ, with one of them on those who stayed behind, the other on her. The Lord would not leave them comfortless and for her it was enough to know: she was going for his sake and that carried her through.⁴⁰⁶ The ocean voyage to Asia, first around the Cape of Good Hope and later on, after the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869 via the Mediterranean Sea, was often more dreaded than the final destination.

■ The Japanese Evangelistic Band

'God first' was the wedding motto of Barclay Buxton and Margaret Railton when they were married on 22 July 1886. As the founders of the Japanese Evangelistic Band (JEB), the couple lived this motto throughout all their married life. They would have a great influence upon Amy when she joined them in 1893. Barclay,⁴⁰⁷ born in 1860 and nurtured in the lap of luxury, was a powerful man with red hair and a healthy complexion. A member of one of the well-known families in the eastern counties, he came of a line of godly men and women. The Buxton family related with William Wilberforce (1759–1833), the well-known fighter for the liberation of slaves. The stately family home in Easneye (Hertfordshire) was the centre for all kinds of missionary enterprise. Bishop Crowther (1807–1891) the first black bishop of west Africa and Rev. Andrew Murray of South Africa, and many others, used to visit there. Barclay was a real sportsman, who played for Cambridge against Oxford in royal tennis and in lawn tennis matches. Ordained deacon in 1884 and priest in 1885, he became curate to the prebendary H.W. Peplow – one of the leading Keswick speakers – and was involved in the work of St Matthew's Mission Hall. Here 80 people from many churches regularly came together at a meeting for Christian workers, to pray for the great truths of the purifying of the heart by faith in Christ, and of the coming of the Holy Spirit in power to the individual believer. Barclay was a bosom friend of C.T. Studd, one of the famous 'Cambridge Seven'.

Having collected a carpenter, two housemaids, his wife and his four small children, Buxton left his estate and on 01 October 1890, though he himself was a CMS missionary, sailed for Japan as an independent missionary. He went with the British Church Missionary Society (BCMS) to become the leader of the JEB. The CMS had accepted the Buxtons as independent missionaries of the society, whereas for their work they were accountable to the CMS. The CMS commission to him was a most striking document:⁴⁰⁸

405. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 37. This 'Evangelical Alliance' approach to Christian diversity owes much to John Wesley, but the Evangelical Alliance dates from 1846. It affirmed unity in essentials, freedom in un-essentials, and love in all things. Initially it aimed more at individuals than at churches or denominations. See R. Rouse & St. C. Neill (eds.), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517–1948* (London: SPCK, 1954), 318–324.

406. Cf. *Candles in the Dark*, 18.

407. See his biography by B.G. Buxton, *The Reward of Faith in the Life of Barclay Fowell Buxton 1860–1946* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1949).

408. Buxton, *The Reward of Faith*, 58.

1. Your primary work is to make known Christ by making known the Gospel. Ask yourself at the close of every week: 'How many hours have I spent this week in actually setting forth Christ to the heathen?'
2. Remember it is God's work. Nothing can be done except in the power of the Holy Ghost.
3. Do not think that missionary activity of itself keeps down the flesh or keeps far from temper. Rather the reverse. You challenge the prince of darkness by invading his realms.

Of Barclay it has been said that 'his life was transparent, his character pure gold, his love unailing, and his message scriptural, dispensing the deep things of God'. In Japan and afterwards he emphasised that in mission work missionaries have to experience being filled with the Holy Spirit.⁴⁰⁹ In his booklet *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit*, Barclay described his personal view about the work of the Holy Spirit. He also included in his mission work several workers from denominations outside CMS as evidence that Christ, and not Western denominations, was being brought to Japan. Formally the JEB was launched at the Keswick Convention in 1903, where Buxton and Wilkes were joined by a small group of friends who shared their concern for evangelism in Japan. In Japan the band was known as 'Kyodan Nihon Dendo Tai'.⁴¹⁰ In 1910, his second son, Alfred, accompanied the still famous C.T. Studd on his journey to the heart of Africa. Eventually Edith followed her father, reluctantly, to the Congo. Alfred, like his father was a Quaker at heart. Just before the journey, Alfred and Studd's daughter Edith fell in love, and he and Edith were married in 1916, the first white wedding ever performed in the heart of Africa.

C.T. Studd after having been sent as a CIM missionary to China in 1885, later felt that the Lord was directing him to India where in 1900 he settled with his family in Ootacamund, south India. Here he became pastor of the independent church under the auspices of the Anglo-Indian Evangelization Society. It was there that Amy frequently met the Studd family; after six years the time to leave India (1906) came in sight and Studd's four daughters – Edith was the third – were baptised by their father in a self-made baptismal place in the garden. Studd describes this unique baptismal service: 'We had a good crowd up to our house. [...] Amongst the company was [...] Miss Amy Carmichael, and sundry other missionaries.'⁴¹¹

Their mutual love was shown in the letters, which were sent from Dohnavur to Africa and England where Edith lived for a while, being for some time separated from Alfred who was then exploring the north-eastern part of Africa. Amy followed the news of Studd and Alfred's work in central Africa and certainly prayed for the work and for Edith. In October 1940, Alfred and his brother Murray were killed in London when an air raid took place and a highly explosive bomb exploded just outside the room where they were. With some others they were compiling the shorter Moffat Bible.⁴¹² Edith's heart, torn in deep grief, was comforted by a letter from her old friend Amy Carmichael, which pierced the dark cloud of sorrow:

Truly your Treasure is in heaven now; and where your Treasure is, there more and more will your heart be also. You have had many anxious hours, as your soldier paid out the price of hard battle in the battle wounds. All that is over now. Never, never will he be anything but strong and well and vigorous with the glorious vigour

409. 'The true holiness preacher is one whose experience has led him to know that he is charged with the oracles of God, and backed by Jehovah, an awful woe is on him if he preaches not the Gospel' (Chambers, *The Complete Works*, 319).

410. For more details of the JEB, see the SOAS Library: Japan Evangelistic Band (<http://www.mundus.ac.uk/cats/4/1066.htm>, accessed 15 September 2014).

411. In N.P. Grubb, *C.T. Studd, Cricketer and Pioneer* (Chennai, India: Evangelical Lit. Service, 1999), 120.

412. The Moffat Bible was published by Hodder & Stoughton, 1942, with an inscription to the two brothers on the title page.

of eternity. I am glad that the miles are divided into furlongs and round the last turn of the road the lights of the Homeland are shining. How delighted your father must have been to welcome Alfred, and many more must have gathered round the door as he and Murray entered in. What a welcome. What utter joy.⁴¹³

Amy respected Mr Buxton very much:

Our leader, Mr. Buxton lived in the clear light of the Lord's Presence. But that was not no say that no shadows crossed his path. A shadow always was with him. It might easily have darkened his whole life and witness. But it did not. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord: He lived in the spirit of that command. Over and over again his 'Good for the flesh' comes to mind even now and the smile which sweetened the words. For he had the charm 'Which sets all one's acts and words in diamonds', as a book I am reading now, puts it. This lovely charm was the gift of his Lord to him.⁴¹⁴

Fifty years after Barclay Buxton left Japan, he paid a visit to his former first mission field. There he found that his converts now were leaders in most of the denominations and missions and that their children and grandchildren had already taken up the torch of the work of God.⁴¹⁵ In 1946 in his home in Wimbledon, Barclay Buxton passed over into the presence of Jesus Christ. His last days were spent like all the other days, in Bible study and prayers. Prayers:

[F]or Japan: for individual Japanese: for relations of friends now serving God in different parts of the world. [...] Again and again he prayed that we all might be fully surrendered to God and trust Him.

The secret of Barclay Buxton's life as George Ingram – CMS missionary in Etinadpur (India) – declares is that 'there is a halo of holiness around his name'.⁴¹⁶

413. In N.P. Grubb, *Alfred Buxton of Abyssinia and Congo* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1942), 167.

414. *Amma's Book*, 29.

415. Buxton, *The Reward of Faith*, 79–80.

416. In Buxton, *The Reward of Faith*, 266, 269–270.

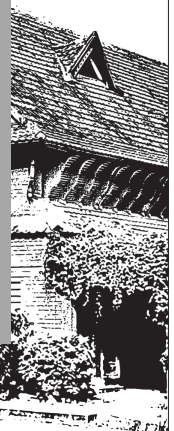
Can you make out what this is meant for? A family party, their goods and chattels, and their god, drifting slowly down the river, drifting slowly, who knows whither? For as I stood on the bank, and watched the little sampan and its strange sad burden, passing down and on, till it slipped round a wooden curve, and was lost to view, it seemed to me that the Idol in its gilded shrine was the moving influence, the active principle there – and no one dreamed that it was so. Those people, the man sculling in the stern, the women sitting in the bows – the thought they were taking their god to a new home somewhere beyond, but was it not rather that it, or the Power of Darkness it stood for, was bearing them swiftly down the river of life, and out to the sea of Eternity? Poor sleeping souls – one longed to send a cry of recall ringing across the water, to spring somehow from bank to boat, and hurl that painted thing overboard! To say anything, do anything to shock them into wakefulness and life! But one could do nothing. And so it is day after day, month after month, year after year.

They are passing out of the world, they are coming into the world faster than we can reach them. This century has seen 60 times as many births as baptisms. Four millions won for Christ, and the heathen population has increased by two hundred and fifty millions. Ten hundred and thirty millions are all drifting thus. We stand on the shores of an infinite ocean, we stretch our arms to them. Some seem to pass us closely that we almost touch them, but we strain to reach them all in vain – they have glided past. Some are away and away beyond our ken. Fifty thousand of that spirit-fleet will touch their horizon tonight. Oh one turns from the thought with almost despair! And yet not so – for His Word abides. The time shall come when the seventh Angel shall sound, and the great voices say – ‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’

From Sunrise Land, 115–116.

These beautiful islands, these gems of the sea, are opened before our delighted vision. [...] I do not yet know all about Japan, but I am greatly astonished by what I have seen thus far. [...] Shall Christianity keep pace with the march of Western civilisation in this empire?

Lucy Ing, missionary, 1875.



He goes before

At the age of 26 Amy set off to the East. It was 1893. The preceding years were excellent preparation for her future work. The spiritual resources from her Irish Presbyterian upbringing, combined with Keswick influences, the deep love to make the Lord Jesus known to those living in an ignorant state, the sense of the 'Kairos moment', provided the ideal ingredients for her venture.

One prayer filled Amy's heart: that doors, hearts and heavens might be opened. She was not bothered by the fact that her going was unconventional as she was found not fit to pass the medical exam for any mission society, nor that the whole enterprise was funded by one donor; the assurance of the call was enough to go. We see her going as something natural, spontaneous, so full of heavenly approval, in a word it is the outcome of the indwelling love of Christ. In peace with God she was prepared to go anywhere the 'Pillar of Fire might lead her'.⁴¹⁷ On 25 July 1893 it was written in the KCMMB:

The first Keswick missionary, Miss Amy Wilson Carmichael sailed with the S.S. Valetta for Japan on March 1893, to join the Rev. Barclay Buxton's mission at Matsuye because the medical adviser of the CIM was not willing to pass her for China.

And in the annual report is written:

On the 3rd of March last Miss Amy Wilson Carmichael left England as a Keswick Missionary, to join the Revd Barclay Buxton's Mission at Matsuye, Japan, where she received a hearty welcome and a cordial invitation was given by Mr Buxton for more Keswick missionaries to join him in that large promising field.⁴¹⁸

417. *Though the Mountains Shake*, 112.

418. KCMMB, 25 July 1893: The Keswick Missionary Committee decided on 09 October that the initial expenses for a missionary would be: 'Outfit 40-0-0; Passage 35-0-0; Excess baggage 3-16-11; Voyage expenses a/c 7-0-0; Yearly salary \$ 600.'

■ 'He does the parting'

No missionary can ever forget the first impressions of a new country of adoption. Think of the farewell meetings 100 years ago, the packing, the last embraces, the last words, the wiping away of the tears. And then the journey of several months in often rat-infested ships, and then the first impressions of the new land, the first trying struggle to speak the new language, the first visits to the people and the first attempts to talk about Jesus. And also the first experience with the heat, the mosquitoes, sickness and defeat, the first disappointments and opposition, and to know that so much remains to be accomplished. To have faith in God and have the grace to realise that each of the people you meet needs Christ and not to rest until salvation has entered their hearts – all these are things that will never cease to touch us with a touch that makes all servants of God akin:

Oh could I tell, ye surely would believe it!
Oh could I only say what I have seen!
How should I tell, or how ye can receive it,
How, till He brings you where I have been?⁴¹⁹

The love of God in Christ and the devotion to the slain, yet conquering Lamb was Amy's very *raison d'être*. Motivation in mission work can be mixed. We want to serve the Lord, but temptations to self-interest and pride lurk darkly within. Amy, in the certainty that the Holy Spirit was leading her, was turned by the Spirit into a passionate lover of Christ. Out of her according to the promise of God would flow those rivers of living water that heal and bless. In the time to come she would spend, suffer and endure in patience all because of the One, and One only. The Lord would go with her a long, long trail, and as we will see, obedience as the outcome of being in the right relation with Jesus Christ was there until the end. A vivid account of her work in Japan is in one of her first books *From Sunrise Land, Letters from Japan*. Letters she wrote 'just for home', which appeared in 1895 with the purpose of 'showing His hand' in the work done in Japan. In loving memory of the Japanese brothers and sisters, she requests for prayer, knowing the love of God binding her to the people there, a love many waters cannot quench. The introduction mentions that these letters 'are marked by a holy vivacity and a happy glow and sparkle of colour'.⁴²⁰ She always tried to make it live for the people at home to whom she wrote. She longed for a 'fire-dipped pen', to write 'with one's own heart blood', so intensely did she desire for the people to be touched by the Gospel. These letters were written, as she herself explained in a New Year's letter with the words of William Carey, to those 'who hold the ropes', and she asks for prayers from those at home:

And my dear little Keswick watchword rang in my ear all the morning – 'He goes before'. And ask this too, that across every day of our new year in letters of light, 'He goes before', till He call, or till He come, 'very far better', glorious best of all. [...] He goes before you into, 'there shall ye see Him'.

At the time Amy went to Japan, that country was one of the most unnerving fields for mission work in this era, as Japan had metamorphosed into an imperialist power in its own right. Here missionaries were forced to rethink their assumptions about racial hierarchies and the superiority of 'Christian' civilisations. In 1872 the Japanese government issued a decree that all Japanese citizens should receive primary education, regardless of gender or class. Missionaries, especially after 1873, rushed to fill Japan's education void. Karen Seat observes that 'missionaries mistakenly believed Christianity would be adopted by Japan as enthusiastically as the country seemed to be embracing Western-style education'.⁴²¹ However in the 1880s and 1890s Japan's political climate and attitude reversed sharply; Amy came to

419. *From Sunrise Land*, 116.

420. *From Sunrise Land*, XI.

421. K.K. Seat, *Providence Has Freed Our Hands* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 13.

Japan when reactions against the West were heard and seen rather strongly. The country did not receive missionaries with open arms and because of the government's anti-Western attitude, Christian schools and other Christian activities were regulated according to government standard.⁴²² The day of saying farewell to her beloved was very hard for Amy:

Never, I think, not even in Heaven shall I forget that parting. It was a rending thing that I never wanted to repeat again. [...] Even now (1945) my heart winces at the thought of it. I never knew how tears could scald [*she wrote to her mother*], till the last wave of your handkerchief disappeared today.

The farewell meeting in London was honoured by the presence of Hudson Taylor (CIM) and through F.B. Meyer and C.A. Fox the Keswick Mission Council put in an appearance. Hymns were sung, many times 'Crown Him' was heard and words were spoken, of which Amy quoted one sentence: 'Jesus has two nail-pierced Hands. He lays one upon each and part us so – He does the parting'.⁴²³ If one thing was very hard for her, it was saying goodbye to family and friends. However, she bore it without making any trouble. 'Have you ever found yourself making a great deal of a small trouble? I have. Especially goodbyes'.

Just before she sailed for Japan someone told her that so many people were praying for her. She was grateful for that, but at that moment she realised that it must be terrible to live an ordinary life, to be busy with many things, but 'lose the thing committed to me'. During her whole life she lived with the knowledge that the Lord did not ask from her something she could offer, but that he asked her to be faithful in the work appointed. Amy's life is an illustration of unreserved surrender to God, and of God's complete possession of her for his own highest ends. She always was very committed to the cause of the Gospel and knew that each day and 'each hour in each day counted; what if one were to be lost?'⁴²⁴ Called to serve she laid her life unreservedly in the hands of Jesus Christ.

From Albert Docks she sailed on 03 March 1893 via Gibraltar across the Mediterranean, through the Suez Canal, Red Sea and the Indian Ocean to Colombo (Ceylon). 'Then I will go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy'; Miss Campell gave her these words from Psalm 43:4 as she departed.⁴²⁵ On board the middling steamer *Valetta*⁴²⁶ Amy and her friend Margaret day by day read the Bible with an old Indian man to save him:

Shall we meet again till the day 'when He makes up His jewels'? One night, standing by the ship rails, she looked at the long low coastline of Africa. There, under the sparkling stars, she thought of that land which lay still in the darkness of death, – the light-bearers so few and far between, that today millions and millions whom Jesus died to win are left to live and to die unwon.⁴²⁷

Especially the Strait of Messina must have impressed her. This strait separating Sicilia and Italy, and linking the Tyrrhenian and Ionian seas, was greatly feared by sailors in antiquity, mainly because of the rocks and whirlpools known as Scylla and Charybdis. In fact, the strait's currents do present considerable difficulties. When she was in Japan, she still remembered the passage through this strait and on one of the last pages of her Bible she made a nice watercolour painting of this strait and wrote 'Strait of Messina, Oct. 21, 1895'. Was she thinking of Paul's difficult sea journey through this same strait to Rome?⁴²⁸

422. See further in Seat, *Providence Has Freed Our Hands*, 13–17.

423. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 55–56.

424. See *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 122.

425. See in Amy's Bible (1895) written by her in the margin of Psalm 43:4.

426. She could not afford to buy a ticket for the luxurious Peninsula and Oriental line, even in second class.

427. *From Sunrise Land*, 3.

428. In Amy's Bible (1895), Paul's journey to Rome in Acts 27 and 28.

In Aden she was confronted with thousands of people – without Christ, without hope, without God in the world – and before the ship left she tried to convert some men there and for some she had good hope. ‘Shall we meet again till the day “when He makes up His jewels”?’⁴²⁹ She had to disembark in Colombo, because the SS *Valetta* was heading for India. Here she hoped to meet the missionary couple, the Lieschings, who were in correspondence with the Carmichael family. Seeing Ceylon, she felt God’s presence and the words of the *Daily Light* that day gave her joy in her heart. The text for that day was: ‘The joy of the Lord is your strength’:

As compared with joy in circumstances. Joy in health and strength – are natural joy whatsoever – This joy is something quite different. Ceylon. On board ship before landing. *Daily Light*. Aug. 14. 1893. Proved true.⁴³⁰

On 14 August 1893 she landed at Colombo and before a Mr Unwin came to meet her, she stood alone on the quay and remembered this poem: ‘I know not where God’s islands lift, their fronded palms in air. I only know, I cannot drift, beyond His love and care.’⁴³¹

The missionaries in Colombo warmly welcomed her. She was known as the ‘Keswick missionary’. All the missionaries in Colombo made much of Keswick, and with them Amy sang many Keswick hymns. They hoped that she would stay in Ceylon and join the Heneratgoda Village Mission. When boarding time came, Amy had to say farewell to her new friends. One of them said earnestly to her, ‘Perhaps the Lord will send you back again soon.’⁴³² How prophetic! She then did not know what the Lord had in stock for her. Leaving Colombo the party headed via Penang, Singapore and Hong Kong for Shanghai. On boarding the new ship, the *Sutlej*, which was inferior to the *Valetta*, they inspected their cabin: ‘cockroaches to begin with, rats to continue with, stuffiness and scents to finish up with’. First they ‘went and told Jesus’, and they went to the steward. Everything came right and at the end Amy hung a printed ‘In everything give thanks’ in the cabin ‘to act as gentle reminder’.⁴³³

Like before she sought the opportunity to tell the Good News of Jesus and she saw change in the life of the captain who was converted during that sea journey. In a letter home she wrote: ‘I am so happy about the Captain [...] my heart sings every time I think of him’.

On 20 April they reached Shanghai. Being at the CIM mission house for some days was in itself as she writes ‘an inspiration’,⁴³⁴ and there the party separated. The CIM members went to Yangchau and Amy waited for the steamer to take her to Japan. Walking with Miss Newcombe⁴³⁵ through the old city, she looked at the hands of a carpenter preparing a graven image from a tree. She watched how slowly the senseless features of Buddha were evolving out of that piece of wood. She wondered if the hand, now carving this image, ever would be raised in supplication to God. Praying for this carpenter it came into her thoughts: ‘They that make them are like unto them. But how can we leave them so?’⁴³⁶

429. *From Sunrise Land*, 5.

430. In Amy’s Bible [1895], in the margin of Nehemiah 8:10.

431. See Amy’s Bible [1895] in the margin of Psalm 65:5.

432. See Wellman, *Amy Carmichael*, 58.

433. *From Sunrise Land*, 6.

434. *From Sunrise Land*, 6.

435. Hessie Newcombe, CEZMS missionary from 1886 to 1895. Killed during the Huashun riots in August 1895.

436. *From Sunrise Land*, 7. Cf. Amy’s Bible [1895] in the margin of Isaiah 50:20 where she wrote: ‘Seen for the first time April 1893 in Shanghai City with Miss Newcombe’.

■ Matsue at last

Now very close to her work among those who did not know Jesus Christ she had one passion as can be seen in what she wrote 12 January 1894:⁴³⁷

O for a passionate passion for souls,
 O for a pity that yearns!
 O for the love that loves unto death,
 O for the fire that burns!
 O for the pure prayer-power that prevails,
 That pours itself out for the lost!
 Victorious prayer in the Conqueror's Name,
 O for a Pentecost!

Letters from Mr and Mrs Buxton reached her, saying that they were waiting for her in Japan and on 21 April we find her on the steamer *Yokohama Maru* en route to the port of Shimonoseki in Japan. A violent storm with floods of rain made the sea voyage through the Tsushima Strait rather exhausting. 'I was travelling alone, and, much against my will had been put in the first class.'⁴³⁸

Alone for the first time, and yet not lonely in spirit, for Thou hast made Thyself to me a living Reality. Who could be lonely with Jesus? He satisfies! We are steaming out into the dusk. Behind us lies the great dim shore of China. Before us a shore-line, more shadowy still. He knows what is in the darkness. I will trust and not be afraid.⁴³⁹

At the quay in Shimonoseki she stood, drenched by the rain, waiting for someone who would welcome her in Japan. Delayed by the storm the person appointed to meet her could not make it in time, 'but between plans, and their fulfilment, is many a slip'.⁴⁴⁰ Via Nagasaki by Buxton's arrangement, she met Miss Thompson at Shimonoseki, from where on a small coasting steamer she headed for Matsue, where she would live for the next 15 months.⁴⁴¹ After arrival she was directed to an American mission station, to wait for friends from Matsue.

Japan was still a land of mystery for Westerners in the middle of the 19th century when Christianity re-entered Japan and protestant missionaries began their evangelistic efforts. It is generally accepted that the Jesuit priest Francis Xavier introduced Christianity in Japan in 1549. Christianity, however, merged with Buddhism and Shintoism after several years. Persecutions were severe and thousands died. Japan banned Christianity in 1626; a few Christians remained and went 'underground' while others turned to Buddhism. In the mid-1800s, thanks to the Kanagawa Treaty, a shift occurred. By then Japan left its two-century-old isolationist foreign policy known as *Sakoku*. The treaty, signed 31 March 1854, opened the country's ports and after several years, missionaries were allowed to enter. In 1872 came the first Protestant church in Japan, in Yokohama, and began with 11 members. Foreigners were allowed to stay in the country and practice their own religion. Evangelistic work was difficult and at times the practice of Christian faith was even forbidden for Japanese by earlier Japanese rulers on penalty of

437. *From Sunrise Land*, 88.

438. *Gold Cord*, 6.

439. *From Sunrise Land*, 8.

440. *From Sunrise Land*, 8.

441. Present day Matsue (Matsue-shi) is a city located in Shimane Prefecture, of the Chagoku region on the main island Honshu. The city was originally established with the building of the castle – still to be seen today – from 1607 to 1611. On 01 April 1889 the place became a city. Due to the prominence of the lakes, the river and canals, the city is sometimes called the 'water city'. Nearby Izumo Taisha is recognised as one of the oldest Shinto shrines in Japan.

death. At the time of her arrival Amy was one of the 107 single women who worked in Japan. Often this going single was seen as 'voluntary going into exile'. There were 151 female missionaries in Japan, outnumbering the 140 male missionaries. Mostly female missionaries were involved in the basic education of a new generation of Japanese women. Missionaries in Japan had to lie low because many Japanese still despised foreigners and they were limited in what they were permitted to do. There was democracy in Japan, but the emperor and his advisers were still in full control.

Arriving in Nagasaki and making her first steps in the country Amy felt called to, she was overwhelmed by so many impressions and thoughts of what would lay before her; she prayed: 'Lord, I ask that I may be crucified to all but Thee, From all sin and self set free, ever, evermore.'⁴⁴²

It overwhelmed her she was now in a country where there were 'more than thirty million people in this lovely land who have never heard *even once* of Jesus'.⁴⁴³ Surrounded by the realities of heathendom she sighed: 'Think of His honour being given to another.' Quoting Livingstone, she writes:

Think, if you can, that you see it done. Would it not move you into feeling anything, anything we could give or do, just nothing, if only it could help to heal the 'open sore' of Heathendom?

From the very beginning she knew that to an encompassing heathendom one could never get accustomed. 'Certainly we are in a land where the Prince of Darkness has power.' 'This heartless, hopeless heathendom is awfully real', 'wholly given to idolatry'. 'Oh, it is awful! Awful! [...] The woe of it, the shame of it. Think of His honour being given to another.'⁴⁴⁴ Plunged into a silence among so many who did not know God and due to the language barrier, unable to speak to them, she felt utterly helpless:

The language seems very difficult, one cannot hope to know it usefully for a long time, but the mere presence of a difficulty is inspiring, especially when one can count on superhuman help in overcoming it. [...] Oh, that the gift of tongues were for us today! [...] Oh, to be able to speak freely.⁴⁴⁵

She did not want to have an easy missionary life:

[A]nd yet in every land it is possible to slip into that life. God hold us to that which drew us first, when the Cross was the attraction, and we wanted nothing else.⁴⁴⁶

She could rest in His plan, 'and that what is in His plan, is right'. On the wall in her small room she put the two words: *Yes Lord*, reminding her daily of her once given word of surrender to the will of God. Amy became Japanese minded, and liked the Japanese way of amazing politeness so much, that later on in India 'the Indian ways and manners felt almost rude'.⁴⁴⁷

She reached Matsue on 01 May 1893. The team of new missionaries, Amy together with Miss Hilda Spicer and Mrs Consterdine, were stationed in Matsue, then a town between two inland seas with about 50 000

442. *From Sunrise Land*, 8.

443. *From Sunrise Land*, 12.

444. *From Sunrise Land*, 15.

445. *From Sunrise Land*, 31. The Japanese language is very complex. The sounds of the Japanese language are only 5 vowels and 19 consonants. Some even have no English equivalents. Every circumstance has its own unique word, Amy found out. The grammar is head-breaking. No articles, no prepositions, the verb has no number, no person and no tense as understood in the British language. Amy tried to master the language, but finally she reluctantly gave in and worked on her evangelistic work in Japan with an interpreter. She saw it as the second best option.

446. *Gold Cord*, 6.

447. *Amma's Book*, 26.

inhabitants.⁴⁴⁸ In a distance rose Mount Daisen, still snow-tipped. With Matsue as their operating base, the team itinerated to the various villages around, and the days were filled with sowing the seed. This opened ‘a door into a new world, a World of Want’. Sometimes they had a stormy time when Buddhist agitators exited the people, and anti-foreign, anti-Christian sentiments prevailed. They were pelted with stones, their shoes were carried off. After reaching home safely, it was: ‘Praise Him for opposition. It shows us the devil sees something worth fighting for; anything is better than stagnation.’ Continually the party was reminded of living ‘in a shadowed land’. Never could one escape the ever-present darkness, which may be ‘felt’. Again she quoted Livingstone who once wrote that this work is a ‘sacrifice’. ‘It is emphatically no sacrifice.’⁴⁴⁹ In Japan she learned more about the ‘preciousness of souls’, and remembered her pastor in Belfast with whom, often late on Saturday evenings, she walked along the dark streets of the city, with the pastor who had just one desire.

‘When wilt Thou save the people? O God of mercy, when?’ Now she met thousands of people here with no God and no peace in Christ:

One night this distress over them and longing for them came to a head and yet we could do nothing whatever for the men on the other side of the paper wall but pray for them. It was then I realized in a new way the urgent need of being able to pray, not just pray summa, but truly pray, ‘storm the gates of heaven’ as someone put it.

When, at another time with her interpreter and language teacher Misaki San (Figure 7), she was preaching and nobody wanted to listen, a prayer was born to pray with ‘a passionate passion for souls’.⁴⁵⁰ She refers here to Mr Wilson who used to pray ‘for much incense of His merits’. Amy once gave a Bible to a student who said ‘It will be a seed’. Amy told of it in a letter home and an undergraduate from Oxford, Mr Paget Wilkes, read that letter and prayed every day ‘in five solid minutes prayer’ for this student. Later he went as a missionary to Japan and worked for a while in Matsue. One of the first he led to Jesus was the student who had received a Bible from Amy!⁴⁵¹

She tried to be as close with the Japanese as possible: ‘divested of hats and shoes, we sit on the floor, and are Japanese to the Japanese’.⁴⁵² Very early she put on a Japanese dress ‘to draw me closer to these strange new sisters, that they might be drawn to Him’.⁴⁵³ She noticed that her English clothes distracted people from the message she had for them. Once an old woman was on the brink of believing in Christ, when she saw Amy’s gloves and started to talk about the gloves. It startled Amy and from that moment, she dressed in the kimono ‘and never again, I trust, risked so very much for the sake of so very little’.⁴⁵⁴ No worry about clothes ‘sets free hundreds of pounds’, so ‘all extras of dress are cut off’ and this means

448. In the KCMMB for 24 July 1894 are the names of two persons as Keswick missionaries in Matsue, Japan: Miss Amy Wilson Carmichael and Miss Florence Fukgill.

449. *From Sunrise Land*, 46.

450. *Amma’s Book*, 29.

451. In *Amma’s Book*, 30.

452. *From Sunrise Land*, 12.

453. *From Sunrise Land*, 13.

454. *Amma’s Book*, 30. ‘We went to see an old lady who was very ill. She had not heard the Gospel before, but was willing and eager to listen. So I spoke and Misaki San translated, and our hearts prayed most earnestly. “Lord Jesus, help her. O help her to understand and open her heart to Thee now.” She seemed to be just about to turn to Him in faith when she suddenly noticed my hands. It was cold weather and I had on fur gloves. “What are these?” she asked, stretching out her hands and touching mine. She was old and ill and easily distracted. I cannot remember whether or not we were able to recall her to what mattered so much more than gloves. But this I do remember. I went home, took off my English clothes, put on my Japanese kimono, and never again, I trust, risked so very much for the sake of so very little’ [*Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 59].

He goes before



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FIGURE 7: Amy with her colleague Miss San in Japan on a mission tour around Matsuye.

'just so much the more to give to Him who gave us all'.⁴⁵⁵ Wearing the local dress opened doors for Amy, which would have been closed if she had continued to wear English dress. Several times we can read the exclamation: 'Oh, to be able to speak freely'; 'Oh! to be able to explain'. Amy had embroidered on her dress 'God is love', so these were the forms for a text,⁴⁵⁶ for a few broken words. She prayed for love, real divine love, to love the unlovable, and loved on, always, through all: 'Give me a love like Thine! Give me a love like Thine! Should it lead me like Thee, unto dark Calvary, Give me a love like Thine!⁴⁵⁷ One of the first lessons she learned was that when her pride was offended, or when she was ignored, or when someone stopped her message, in the words of Mr Buxton, this was 'good for the flesh'. Later, in India when she was in Bangalore and had the same experiences she felt deep in her heart, 'See it as a chance to die', and again later on 'let it be: think of me'. 'These three sentences have peace making powers.'⁴⁵⁸

One day she was in Kyoto and her American friends showed her the city and its temples, 'beautiful works of art'. They took her to one of these temples and they went inside, 'but all the time we were in it, it seemed to me as though the master were looking down with such a surprise in His eyes. How could we care to see what grieved Him so?' By then, Amy decided, unless the Lord would send her to one, as his messenger, she would never again enter a heathen temple (09 November 1893):

It is evening. From the room below the scent of incense rises. We can hear them praying their powerless prayers. From our window we can see roofs, each covers a heathen house. On our way thither we pass many an idol shrine. I counted nearly fifty and then stopped, sick at heart. Just outside this heathen village stands a tall stone Buddha. We looked at it and thought of Gideon.⁴⁵⁹

She felt being surrounded by idols. In her letters sent home, particularly the one written on 10 February 1894, she wrote about the 'toss-and-tumble' of itinerating work, 'passing the graves of those who had never heard'. 'These Satan-bound people will they ever believe at all?' It was a custom among the missionaries in the preaching of the Gospel to show pictures of Jesus Christ. One day she heard a little girl talking about magic lantern pictures. The girl said: 'They will show their God.' A little bit later, she read in a magazine an article by Prof. Wallace from Dublin, in which he wrote that to make a picture of Lord Jesus was showing something that was untrue. Amy remembered that as a child she had treated such pictures with reverence and thought of Zinzendorf and the picture of the Crucifixion. When a child said: 'They will show their God tonight', she asked herself: was this the place to use such pictures? 'And my heart answered, No, I cannot use them.' When she was in India she saw many missionaries were also using these pictures. She did not say anything, 'only I did not use them myself. Rev. Walker at that time started to have the same view, and Amy told her children then: 'But I know that as we trust the Spirit He does not fail us'.⁴⁶⁰

The strain of the daily travelling under the hot sun, the camping in odd places wrung out her strength and the first signs of her sickness asserted themselves as she described herself as 'being possessed of a nervous system, ganglionic and cerebrospinal quite complete'. And she went on: 'O, that we may be quick and sure in buying up the opportunities'. 'Opportunities are not toys to be played with as we will.' Life was serious, and every moment of every day has to be accounted for – a

455. *Amma's Book*, 30.

456. *Amma's Book*, 30.

457. *From Sunrise Land*, 13.

458. *Amma's Book*, 29.

459. *From Sunrise Land*, 69.

460. For Amy's use of pictures in preaching, cf. *Roots*, 31. When others have a different opinion on this issue, Amy says: 'Judge not, is our Lord's command. Unfortunately, if you are led in at all an unusual way, people who are not led in that way do often take it for granted that you are judging them though truly you are not. What can we do about it? Leave it. Show love if you have a chance; avoid argument' ['Let it be, think of Me', in *Roots*, 31].

theme captured in Frances Havergal's hymn 'Take my life, and let it be, Consecrated, Lord, to Thee. Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise'. As is seen in the holidays Mrs Havergal undertook to Switzerland and France, time had to be used 'to be useful', 'to evangelize', and to 'do good'. Amy was of the same opinion concerning time.

■ Temptation and testing

The climate in Japan was trying for her: home, friends and ways of life are hard to do without. Trifles have the power to fret and chafe. Perhaps study and service force their way in and hinder her quiet time with him who says to 'be still and know'. It is both terrible and possible to get out of touch. At times Amy felt very strongly that she was out of touch with everyone.⁴⁶¹ She began to tackle the difficult Japanese language to be able to communicate with the people. Meeting the people she was aware of the difficulty and resistance ahead. The longer she was in Japan the more she saw more the urgency to direct evangelisation. 'There are more than thirty million in this lovely land who have never heard *even once* of Jesus.'⁴⁶²

In her eyes, Japan was becoming the 'Britain' of the East and with all the changes, the opportunities to bring the Gospel would diminish. It could overwhelm her when she was thinking of this century that had seen 60 times as many births as baptisms. One evening, sitting alone in a quiet room, and too tired to sleep, Amy felt the shadow of a darker darkness and she says about it:

Japan, with its thirty millions unreached as yet. God's islands of the sea. [...] We know them on our map. But do we know them in our heart! Think of them all: dishonouring Him tonight, full of sorrow and sin tonight: wrapped in the death-gloom tonight. How can we be so cool about it?⁴⁶³

The answer people gave when they were asked:

Are you ready for the next life? [*was*] we are not ready for this life, how then can we be ready for the next?⁴⁶⁴ Is it nothing to you, O ye Christians? Will ye pass by and say 'It is nothing, we cannot aid them'. You can give – or go – or pray; You can save your soul from blood-guiltiness. For in lands you never trod, the heathen are dying every day, and dying without God.

Mr Buxton accompanied the team in her first year and with him she was singing choruses, rather joyfully, while going along the road.⁴⁶⁵ She used all her time to visit all the nearby villages. To reach the people was difficult. In us is nothing, but she knew, in the life-seed of the living Word is everything. Not only forgiveness but also cleansing. This is full salvation. 'Thine is the mighty ordination of the pierced hands.' There were times she exclaimed: 'It is very difficult to get people's souls. Very difficult indeed. But the battle is not ours but God's.'⁴⁶⁶ Amy was always been keen to 'see' what was beyond the surface. She 'saw' more than others sometimes see. While in Japan she saw the beauty of nature, and enjoyed the flowers, birds and the great views. Then she could say one day: '*On the surface*, beauty everywhere – the wooded hills fair already with early blossom, villages nestling beneath them, bright with busy life: *under the surface* – death, death, death.'

461. Cf. in *From Sunrise Land*, 34.

462. *From Sunrise Land*, 12.

463. *From Sunrise Land*, 165.

464. *From Sunrise Land*, 141.

465. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 183.

466. *From Sunrise Land*, 107.

We might have been walking in a living graveyard. “*Dead in trespasses and sins*”, those words mean something now.⁴⁶⁷ The people gave more reference to their flowers ‘than many a Christian bestows upon his Christ’. ‘The winning of a single soul is a tremendous miracle.’ People do not know ‘the language of love’. In December 1893 at Hiroshi she saw how some converts wanted to keep their idols as curios. Some drew back. The work seemed going to be a failure. ‘But first: utter humbling of the flesh, then manifestation of the Spirit. Souls were saved. Hallelujah.’ Some days later back in Matsue she knew she needed words straight from the Lord, not via others.⁴⁶⁸

She expressed her love for these people in this way: ‘but to the native all around, is the goal of my ambition’. After that day in Kyoto, she kept far away from places like temples, but ‘unless when consciously sent’, she went, to save one individual. She felt as if she were standing on the shores of an infinite ocean. Most of them just pass. ‘Fifty thousand of that spirit fleet will touch their horizon tonight.’ Amy was of the opinion, as she distinctly writes on 05 April 1894, that she was in Japan to strengthen rather than extend the work. The Christians had to learn to wait upon God to do the next step:

People liked to get more Christians and go to many places to get followers for Christ, but it is not so much *where* we are, as *whether* we are where our Lord wants us to be.

She thought of, and prayed for, Africa, China, Japan and India, ‘with their twenty million widows’. That alone was enough to touch any woman’s heart surely.

The place she really liked in Japan was Hiroshi, an almost purely Buddhist village. Before she started work there, she was alone with God for one day. She read Julian of Norwich and found that Julian had discovered what she was groping for:

And all this brought our Lord suddenly to my mind, and showed these words and said: I am Ground of thy beseeching: to will it: and after, first it is my will that thou have it: and after, I make thee to beseech it and thou beseechest it. How should it then be that thou shouldst not have thy beseeching?⁴⁶⁹

She then asked for one soul and then for other ones, one, two, four and eight. And the Lord opened the hearts of all these people:

These four were the first birthday gifts I ever had from heathendom. That was 16 December 1893. [...] It would take too long to tell how the eight were given. It was like watching an invisible Hand at work.⁴⁷⁰

In India she often thought of Hiroshi and:

[L]onged with a great longing to have an Indian Hiroshi. But it was never given. Perhaps it is that the Lord does not repeat Himself. Does He ever repeat the creation of a single blade of grass? He had other plans for me here. [...] But I do not think that is a thing to talk about. At most, what did I know then, what do I know now of what St. Paul meant when he said, ‘My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be fully formed in you?’ There are some words in the Bible that make us ashamed.⁴⁷¹

She never could forget the blessings in Hiroshi; in this way this experience was never repeated in her later ministry, but she knew to be content with the way the Holy Spirit would work, where, when and of his choosing. And that he used her in a different and unforgettable way will be shown later on.

467. *From Sunrise Land*, 117.

468. See in Amy’s Bible (1895) in the margin of Jeremiah 23:31–32.

469. *Amma’s Book*, 33.

470. *Amma’s Book*, 34–35.

471. *Amma’s Book*, 35. Cf. too *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 69.

■ Skies not always blue

‘Without hope in the world’. Oh! if but one drop from the ocean of heathendom, as it is, undiluted, un-idealised, could be microscoped, caught in some great lantern slide, and flung in all its loathsome vividness upon the sheet, if but one note from the grief-chorus could rise day and night – ‘for half the world is Macedon’ – and could be telephoned across, and could sound through the hall, while with bated breath you listened, I think you would hardly leave that missionary meeting, saying ‘how nice it was’ and how much you had enjoyed it! Oh, one longs for anyone to disturb the peaceful slumbers of His daughters who are at ease, anything to waken up His soldiers who are off duty, to the intensity, the urgency of the need. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Our Master, our King may soon be here, and what will He say when He comes?⁴⁷²

There were times that she:

[H]ad no harvest songs. And the sower’s songs are tears. For you must not paint our skies blue always. There are cloudy days too and days when the heavens above us seem brass – deaf, dumb, pitiless; and days when all seems lost in the horror of a great darkness, and we can only look blindly upward, and hold on, and lean hard, and know that through all He loves. ‘I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not’, comes to one then with a power unknown before.⁴⁷³

Think of all these people, dishonouring him tonight, full of sorrow and sin tonight; wrapped in the death-gloom tonight How can we be so cool about it? But believe: ‘That God is on the field when He is most invisible’. [...] To doubt would be disloyal, to falter would be sin.

Daily Bible classes progressed, but sometimes she felt handicapped that first year away from friends and books. She met some Japanese who could speak a little English and with her broken Japanese she sometimes could go on without interpreter.⁴⁷⁴ It remained an obstacle for Amy all that time in Japan not having enough knowledge of the language. How precious in this situation was every ‘atom’ of Bible knowledge but she also realised how very little she still possessed of the abundance of what the Lord has given us in the Bible. Samuel Rutherford was another author she had at hand.

The Japanese know how to decorate a garden, to order flowers in a vase for special delectation. ‘How these Japanese will enjoy Heaven.’ Amy saw in flowers ‘the beautiful smiles of God’. She quotes Faust: ‘We are weaving for God the garment, *the only garment*, they may ever see Him by.’ ‘Will you not ask that we may be saved from ever, by word or look or gesture, pushing a soul back into the dark?’⁴⁷⁵ She was on the lookout for men and women filled with the Spirit of God, and who would be used mightily:

That is Japan’s need today.⁴⁷⁶ Prophets of her own, figures like Elijah who dare to stand and face the crowd, and dare to bear the after silence of the desert; for marked out for a life-long loneliness is the man who is the ‘Voice’.

How glad she was when 10 new-born people were preparing for baptism. She exclaimed, ‘My heaven will be ten heavens in Immanuel’s land.’ In *From Sunrise Land* we see that she did all the work with her eye on the Coming of Jesus Christ:

We had a happy time over our Lord’s Second Coming. These men and women have literally turned from idols, to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven’. This is a splendid reality to them.

472. *From Sunrise Land*, 52–53.

473. *From Sunrise Land*, 119.

474. *From Sunrise Land*, 142.

475. *From Sunrise Land*, 149.

476. *From Sunrise Land*, 152.

Therefore, 'buy up the opportunity'. In the fight against the awful force of the 'principalities and powers marshalling their unseen array', there was the certainty, as the glorious CIM motto says, 'Christ IS Conqueror'. But it will 'cost much if they follow in the cross-marked path of Jesus'. 'Pray that this small story may be life-crowned, light-crowned, love-crowned through the glad eternal ages'.

Always she was afraid that so many did not fully understand what the Lord wanted his people to do in this world:

Oh, for a trumpet peal which should alarm, arouse, awaken; but the heavens above are dumb, and no thunders shake the mountains. The beautiful slumbering world sleeps on, and we – oh what can we do? So few, to such a need!

She wonders:

How can anyone to whom our dear Lord Christ is precious hold aloof from service true!
Oh, who this day will rejoicingly say,
With a joyful heart and free:
Oh, King Divine, my life shall be Thine,
I consecrate all to Thee?

In August 1893 she went to a Missionary Conference in Kyoto, where all the participants were longing for a fuller consecration and filling with the Holy Spirit. This was for them a Keswick experience in faraway Japan. What the missionaries needed was 'truth in the inward parts, and fearless truth-speaking – *that is our today*'.⁴⁷⁷

■ Arima: 'Crucified with Christ'

In a letter to her mother, Amy writes:

I never knew, that such need for real consecration meetings could exist on the Mission field. But we are here just what we are at home – not one bit better – and the devil is awfully busy. [...] There are missionary shipwrecks of once fair vessels.⁴⁷⁸

Amy had seen that even on the mission field people bring their own hearts with all personal wishes and grievances. How easily differences of opinions could cause frictions and disturb friendships among fellow workers.

Loneliness often marks God's child. Was not the content of discipline of Amy's sanctified mission life the suffering, loneliness, patience and prayer? From Yokohama on 29 November she honestly writes, 'a homesick day'. When she looked around she saw some roses in a vase on the table, 'their scent was the scent of home' and when in the afternoon a parcel arrived from one of her teammates, she was surprised by a motto worked in white letters on bright Turkey red: 'FAITH IS THE VICTORY'.⁴⁷⁹

This meant much to her, we can understand. Really, loneliness for God's servant is no small thing. Loneliness calls us to move more deeply into the realm of faith, where we discover that there is a presence, which is the ultimate fulfilment of our emptiness and which grounds us in what is real

477. See *From Sunrise Land*, 48 and 49.

478. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 61.

479. *From the Fight*, 74.

and unchanging. Loneliness also can overcome us when the workload is so much that we cannot find a safe place for our own soul. When this is going on for a time, the burden can take its toll. When someone or something intervenes with our intimacy with God, the manna he sends daily is then difficult to see.

It was at Arima that Amy faced a personal question. To that mountain one day she had gone – it was 20 August 1893 – to be all alone with her God and talk with him. Alone in the presence of God decisions may be taken which determine a whole life. She was in fear about her future. She wanted to be alone with God. It was there the devil terribly attacked her: ‘It is all right now, but what about afterwards? You are going to be very lonely.’ We scarcely read anything of her own feelings toward the opposite sex or if she for herself longed to be married. In one of her letters,⁴⁸⁰ she reveals something upon this matter in a very obscure way, but here in Arima we get a bit more insight into her heart and about her feelings. Getting older, the thoughts of marrying or not became more urgent for her. She saw fellow CIM missionaries in the field – she had met many of them in Shanghai – who after some years of service married another missionary. She worked in a team in which some of her colleagues were married and had children. And what would be her future? Some men wanted to propose to her, but she had declined them. What was the will of God for her? Never to marry? Never to experience the physical love of a husband? Never to become a mother? These questions the devil pressed into her heart. Ever being lonely. Here at Arima she brought all her entangled thoughts to the Lord. ‘Lord, what can I do? How can I go on to the end?’ He said to her, ‘None of them that trust in me shall be desolate’ (Ps 34:22). That word never left her, and ‘it has been fulfilled to me’. Life is full of paths with its unexplained sorrow, and her path:

[W]ith its unexplained sharp flints and briers, and with its unexplained perplexity of guidance, its sheer mystery, is just loving kindness, nothing less. I am resting my heart on that word.

She remembered Tersteegen’s line:

Am I not enough, Mine own?
Enough Mine own for thee?
Am I not enough Mine own?
I forever and alone,
I, needing thee?

‘It was a long time before I could honestly say “Yes” to that question. [...] but at last, the rest, for in acceptance lieth peace.’⁴⁸¹ To love him only and to trust him. He would take care of her, and he did! Did she not become a ‘mother’, Amma, for hundreds of children for whom she was a loving mother who gave them abundant love, care and tenderness?

The future would not always be bright. There alone with God the words ‘not only but also’ were given her. She would also experience sorrow, ‘but in the end’, ‘we shall see His face’. In 1899 she again read Psalm 34:22 and then she wrote in the margin:

Arima – Japan, August 20. 93. Lonely day. Trusted this. Not only love but also loneliness – yes even so what so the costing. None may ever know, save Thee and me – Thy choice is best. In Thy dear will I rest and lay. By Thou shall I satisfy – satisfied. S. India, 1899.⁴⁸²

480. *Candles in the Dark*, 27.

481. *Candles in the Dark*, 56.

482. In Amy’s Bible (1895) in the margin of Psalm 34:22.

This loneliness of determined decision-making and staying faithful to a calling that seems impossible wears us down. The shattering of the pillars of her refuge had come, but God left his mighty, winning, peacekeeping Spirit with her. Here she learned the definite personal experience: 'I am crucified with Christ'. Abiding in Christ in the way of the fatherhood of God discerned the truth of the promises of God in the moments that passed there. She was fit now for flying, for fighting, for following and for the time ahead of her. Many bridges had to be crossed before she would 'see' God's ultimate purpose for her life. God always gives his servants tests. Tests everyday, tests of patience, tests of courage and of humility:

The tests of the Spirit may try us; let us welcome them. They show us what God would have us to be. They show us what He will help us to be. And there is a secret discipline appointed for every man and woman whose life is lived for others. No one escapes that discipline, nor would wish to escape it; nor can any shelter another from it. And just as we have seen the bud of a flower close round the treasure within, folding its secret up, petal by petal, so we have seen the soul that is chosen to serve, fold round its secret and hold it fast and cover it from the eyes of man. The petals of the soul are silence.⁴⁸³

'Deep down in me a voice seemed to be saying, "No, no, no, I have something different for you to do".' So the 'other life' pulled. Arima was the place of full surrender, where the Lord explored down to the deepest springs of her spirit where his Spirit worked, and read her deepest prayers she could not even express. More than 40 years later, on 20 August, she wrote to her 'Dohnavur children':

On this day many years ago I went away alone to a cave in a mountain called Arima. I had feelings of fear about the future. That was why I went there – to be alone with God. The devil kept on whispering, 'It's all right now, but what about afterwards? You are going to be very lonely'. And he painted pictures of loneliness – I can see them still. And I turned to my God in a kind of desperation and said, 'Lord, what can I do? How can I go on to the end?' And He said, 'None of them that trust in Me shall be desolate'. That word has been with me ever since. It has been fulfilled to me. It will be fulfilled to you.⁴⁸⁴

Here she gave up marriage,⁴⁸⁵ and the fear of loneliness; she prayed the Lord to touch her body as being his temple, to shine out in and through it, and to fit in with his plans for her to enable her more and more to manifest the life hidden with Christ in God. In her Bible she wrote: 'Thy choice is best, in Thy dear will I rest, And by and by thou'lt satisfy.'

Amy never in her life took celibacy as a command of God. This even was impossible for her, for then God would contradict himself.⁴⁸⁶ Amy was a God sent messenger, not an ascetic. During her life she wrote some 36 books, and nowhere was the idea of celibacy exalted in her writing; after having settled in Dohnavur, she never prevented the girls from marrying. Often she sent girls who had grown up in the Fellowship and who found it hard to adjust themselves to life to an ordinary Indian town or village and in this way prepared them for a married life. About one of the Dohnavur girls she wrote:

She would have been a perfect wife and mother, but unfortunately in our district the Christians keep caste in marriage and there was not a bridegroom of Suhinie's caste. So the Church lost the greatest gift we could have helped to give it, a new true Christian home set up in her midst.

483. *Kohila*, 111.

484. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 62.

485. Amy's brothers once in *Scraps* wrote that Amy candidly predicted she would never be a wife. See Wellman, *Amy Carmichael*, 39.

486. See here Chambers, 'Notes on Jeremiah', in *The Complete Works*: 'Whenever celibacy or poverty are enjoined in the Bible they are enjoined because God wants to express in that crisis a particular message in a particular age. This command is not a principle laid down but a command from God to a prophet [...] because I am under a superior command, viz.: a relationship to God' [1417].

Amy never thought about marriage as God's second best. Seen from a purely practical point of view, she had experienced that for married women, when sickness entered the house, there was a risk that valuable workers were forced to leave the mission field. Often when the woman had to go, the couple with the children had to leave and then two workers were lost for the mission. For the rest, she enjoyed it when she saw married couples happy and she knew that the best the DF could give to India was good, stable Christian families and she never would prevent this. Her mother had asked her in one of her letters if she loved 'anybody very much'.

She had to guess, because she never received a clear answer from Amy and for us, it is the same. But never, neither in India nor Japan, did she give the impression that she was indifferent to marriage. For her, marriage was a God-given alliance: 'Marriage is important, inevitable, imperative, but more so ten thousand times is the keeping of the caste. Still, marriage is the goal of life.'⁴⁸⁷ All her feelings she expressed in 'Not Only ... But Also'. Next to this song she wrote: 'In the cave. Arima. August 20, 1893'. And: 'Sengelteri. Sept. 1914. Thinking of one whose lover had been slain in the war'.⁴⁸⁸

Not only love but also loneliness- Yea, even so
What though the nearest man not ever know. All that in this must be,
That being a secret between Thee and me, Thou knows.
And it cannot work me ill, Being Thy will; And by and by Thou wilt satisfy.
But unknown years stand up and stare at me
The sun beats hot; I look around for shelter, find it not.
Companion me; Be shelter, Lord, to me!
O let Thy shadow be as the cool starlit night-in noontday-unto me.

I think that Amy, with her deep and caring love, knew what it meant if she would not marry. Never to become a mother herself, never to feel little loving arms around her neck. In her own words in India:

I remember waking up to the knowledge that there had been a very empty corner somewhere in me that the work had never filled; and I remember, too, thanking God that it was not wrong to be comforted by the love of a child.⁴⁸⁹

And children's love she had during her life, abundantly!

■ Leaving Japan

Shuppatsu (Japanese for: 'depart' or 'take off') came to mind when, earlier than was expected, Amy had to say farewell to friends and new converts in Japan. We now enter a painful episode in Amy's life, which she used to form her character and inculcate greater humility. Many missionary biographies gloss over personal difficulties, but one of Amy's most endearing characteristics was her transparent honesty, which made her write about her own shortcomings and lack of faith. A story in the 'Life of Faith'⁴⁹⁰ at the end of 1894 showed how wonderfully God had led the missionaries, 'especially in the connection with the work of Miss Amy Wilson Carmichael'. In the KMC meeting of 09 April 1895, it was reported:

[T]hat Miss Amy Wilson Carmichael, invalided and went to Shanghai, and hence to Ceylon, where she worked with the Heneratgoda Mission till November, when she returned to England and hoped to go out again in the Autumn of this year.⁴⁹¹

487. *From the Forest*, 68 and 69.

488. *Made in the Pans*, 79.

489. *Ponnamal*, 33.

490. A Keswick Convention periodical.

491. In KCMMB, 12 January 1895, 52.

On 04 May 1894 she writes to her mother:

Perhaps you had better address my letters c/o the CIM, Shanghai, as the doctor wants me to go to China for a complete change this summer. [...] Don't imagine I am ill because I am ordered off. It is only that change of thought is a good thing sometime, and one dare not risk head trouble here. The climate is dreadful upon brain and eyes especially.⁴⁹²

In Japan Amy had used unconventional methods to reach the people. She used the method of preaching, talking to the people, wearing the same clothes as the Japanese women and avoiding all pictures of the Lord. After you had used some pictures the reaction of the people afterwards was that, now they had seen 'a picture of the foreigner's honourable God'. 'From that time doubts as to this mode of work in heathen lands, came to me.' She describes the disappointment of a child who saw a picture of Jesus Christ:

I never tried to influence anyone in this matter, only I did not use them myself. But soon several others began to feel the same, and among them was Walker Iyer. And when converts were given, we found that unless they were taught to do so, they did not want pictures of the Lord Jesus Christ. [...] I shall never forget the disappointment of one of you when someone sent you a lovely little picture of our Lord as a Child in the Temple. I remember the tears of disappointment when the string was untied, and the wrappings taken off, and the picture taken out of its box – 'I thought He was far more beautiful than that'.⁴⁹³

On 03 July, 'a hot, hot afternoon', suddenly came a collapse. On 22 January 1894, on one of her preaching tours she suddenly could not go on. 'Within half an hour I could hardly think, with acute neuralgia.'⁴⁹⁴ She had developed a neurotic disease (an affliction of the nerves) that could only be contracted by foreigners called 'Japanese Head'. This sickness was extremely painful; Amy had succumbed, and was ordered to get total rest. Her plans for itinerary work were interrupted and she felt so useless, as still so much had to be done.

Sometimes she had to stay in bed for some days due to the neuralgia, in her case due to sunstroke. As her physical weakness did not diminish, it was decided for her that she must leave the country. All this happened rather abruptly. In her letter of 24 June she writes a lot about the itinerary work around Matsue and Yonago, and on 03 July she is already en route for Shanghai via Imaichi where she would preach for a day. It was a bright and busy Sunday, when suddenly a collapse came. On a steamer her umbrella was whipped overboard by a gust of wind. After arriving at the hotel, she took a bath, 'and for the first time in my life I collapsed'. That evening there was a Bible study at 10 o'clock. She took Isaiah's word literally: 'they shall walk and not faint'. She went to that meeting and a woman was saved:

On Sunday I collapsed [...] a terrible comedown, for I always declared nothing could make me faint. [...] But this time over I went and before I came back all the humiliating attentions attendant upon such departures had been showered upon me, [...] and I find myself environed by wet towels, doleful faces, and a general sense of blurs. [...] This Imaichi work ended Japan for me.⁴⁹⁵

She was advised by the medical adviser to go a healthy place in China, Chefoo. The preaching band went back to Matsue and there it was decided for her to go away for a time of rest. Before her leaving, there was a communion at Matsue: 'side by side we kneel, Japanese and English sisters together, one in Him'. At that moment, Amy was:

[L]ifted to the land [where] lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred's, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.⁴⁹⁶

492. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 73.

493. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 61.

494. *From Sunrise Land*, 92.

495. *Amma's Book*, 38–39.

496. *From Sunrise Land*, 180.

This was for her the perfect union and she found peace with God's dealings with her and her future.

The parting from friends in Matsue, and especially in Hirose, was a sad one for her. So difficult it was for her to leave the Japanese friends and the people, who had mostly heard the Gospel just once. 'When will they hear again? How is it there is no one to spare to continue this poor little weak beginning? Why, oh why, are the hands so few?'

'The CIM must have thought me a very bad penny to turn up like that.'⁴⁹⁷ Chefoo was full. War was threatening between Japan and Russia. She waited 'perplexed but not troubled. And then one day suddenly and clearly the word, as I believed, was spoken: "Go to Ceylon". Ceylon! Why to Ceylon?'

She told the others; even she herself did not know why she had to go to Ceylon. She only knew that she had to obey:⁴⁹⁸

When shall we have done 'playing with missions'? [...] There are two great realities in heathendom. The reality of the presence and power of the devil; the reality of the presence and power of the Lord. The more awfully the one presses, the more gloriously the other shines.⁴⁹⁹

Some days before her departure she witnessed the baptism of some of her converts and after the ceremony they took a photo together with Amy. She was always very reluctant to have her photo taken, but she consented. What did it mean when she later erased her own face from that picture? She always felt that only one was important: Christ only. But was this action a sense of humility that went too far? Today we can be glad we have at least a few photographs, representing various stages of her work and life in Dohnavur.

Together with Amy, four other women missionaries had to leave the country in 1894.⁵⁰⁰ She left, praying and asking for prayer for those who would stay behind:

Will you pray for them, that they may be kept from the danger which lingers near blessing? Let us ask that this child – church so weak as yet, may through the exceeding greatness of His power, according to the energy of the strength of His might grow strong in Him, and become a crown of glory, a royal diadem in the hand of our God.⁵⁰¹

'Saryonara, saryonara, good-bye'. Then the last embraces, the last words and the last wishes. She left with deep gratitude and at the same time eager to know what the Lord had next in store for her. She had had a very remarkable year. With God's grace, she had seen men and women coming to faith in Christ. A missionary who visited the place where Amy, and her Japanese fellow worker who interpreted for her, had worked found that a group of new believers had stood firm in their Christian faith.⁵⁰² She must have thought a lot during those days about her going to the mission field without the support of a recognised missionary society. Whereas in Japan she had seen that a well-organised society could perhaps have done more to prepare some roads, she now had to discover them herself. She had met with obstacles, which could have been avoided or monitored earlier. In a letter to her mother she had written

497. *Amma's Book*, 38.

498. *Amma's Book*, 38.

499. *From Sunrise Land*, 177.

500. The remark on the site of the GFA Missions that she left Japan because 'the missionary community was not the picture of harmony she had envisioned' is difficult to verify. Cf. <http://www.gfamissions.org/missionary-biographies/carmichael-amy-1867-1951.html>.

501. *From Sunrise Land*, 179.

502. In Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 20.

at that time: 'Unless God guides definitely to an unlinked coming out, such as ---'s and mine, I never would advise it. In more ways than one it is trying.'⁵⁰³

In Shanghai Amy wondered about the foreigners, and also the representatives of her own country, whom did not much adorn the doctrine to their closely watching heathen observers. Their way of life upset her. 'As drunk as a Christian', is a proverb in the ports, and when in the interior a native preacher wanted to describe the far country of the parable, he said: 'it was just like Shanghai, the Shanghai the foreigners have made'.⁵⁰⁴

We read in *Roots* her answers to questions about the way God was dealing with her destination in life. 'Afterwards thoughts came up, like "Do you understand why God took you to Japan if He wanted you in India?" "Why were you led in such a round-about way?"' For her the answer came from the epistle to the Ephesians. She put signs in the margin for the present, the past and for the future:

[A]nd I found that the marks for the past and for the future never stand by themselves. They are always related to the present. The past leads forward, the future leads back. You will see what I mean if you read Ch.1, 4 (there the past leads on), and verses 10–12 (there the future leads back). It is as if the present, our today is sandwiched between the far, far past before time was, and the future, the fullness of time, when time will cease to be. In Ch. 3, 9–13 twice over the past leads on to the present – and what a present!

Amy wanted to say: 'If only it wants to lead us into such an understanding of the ways of your heavenly Father that you will never be perplexed by anything He does'.⁵⁰⁵ Here she quotes the Spanish mystic Theresa of Avila:

Is it not a thing most wonderful that the great God – His majesty, or ever He had formed the earth and the world, – should think of one who is less than the least, and should plan the very things that should be done; and should prepare a way wherein the feet that so easily stumble, should walk, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.⁵⁰⁶

Amy's mission work in Japan was short, but very intense. She left, certainly with many questions, but also in the assurance that her work had not been in vain. 'Fulfilled – thank God', when later on she thought about the work in Hiroshi. These words we can read in the margin of Matthew 28:7:

Then go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead, and behold, He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him. Lo, I have told you.⁵⁰⁷

■ 'Just following' – 'He goes before'

In due course, the boat arrived in Hong Kong, where the bishop's wife, Mrs Burdon, welcomed her. Amy, very tired, needed a rest and was cared for by Mrs Burdon, who treated her as if she were her own mother. She stayed for some days at the bishop's house. The bishop himself lived in his library among his many books. Mrs Burdon was very motherly to her and after some days Amy went with her to the

503. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 59.

504. *Scraps*, [no. 15, 16 July 1894].

505. *Roots*, 25. 'Known to God are all His works from the beginning of the world, so it follows that all that happens to us, His children, is not only foreknown but planned beforehand; and every influence brought to bear upon us helps us the better to fulfil His loving purposes.'

506. *Amma's Book*, 28.

507. In *Amy's Bible* [1895].

hospital, to visit patients and to read with them. Amy taught many of them the song 'Cleansing For Me'. 'Wasn't it good of Him to guide me even such a tiny bit of seed sowing to do?' The short stay in Hong Kong was an 'unexpected Elim' for Amy. She added these words in her letter:

One little thing I must tell you to the story of His love. I had rather dreaded any talk as to my journey or destination, fearing at last kindly – I don't know what word to use, you know what I mean – and when Mrs Buxton asked me (a natural question of course) about it, I was tempted to say as little as possible – but that would have been dishonouring so I simply told her how I was going forth at my Master's Word, not knowing why – just following – that was all. For a while she said nothing, and afterwards we had a very earnest talk and prayer. Not one word of expostulation or misunderstanding, or blame. How foolishly I had feared it – oh one need fear nothing – nothing.

Amy was not well and got a chill:

And for the next few days I had a new lesson to learn. He brought me to the very end of myself. Self strength – self energy – everything. [...] What if I never reach Ceylon at all – or what if my work there, His work for me, is to give up all and go home by the next boat. [...] It would be a grand failure in the eyes of everybody. My belief that He was calling me to do something, would seem proved false. It would seem as if I misread His will, and missed His voice altogether – was I ready for that? And then He drew near – walking upon the waters Himself. My precious Saviour, and he spoke peace. [...] Yes I was ready for that – even that. And then came rest – oh such a rest. After this I was very weak for days, but the rest lasted. It was rest that 'remains'.

'Go to Ceylon', was the word Amy had heard from God. The CIM people and the Burdons urged her to stay a little longer, but Amy felt someone was waiting for her in Colombo and had no rest before she was again on deck of the ship that would bring her there. 'Just following – He goes before.' These words Amy wrote on 18 July 1894 sailing on the SS *Clyde* to Ceylon.⁵⁰⁸

The Lord drew very near to me. He told me to go to Ceylon. Today I sail thither, knowing only He is going before. [...] And only Heaven is better than to walk with Christ at midnight over moonless seas.

A CMS missionary *en route* to the Middle East escorted her as far as Colombo, where a member of a little village mission would meet her. In the margin of her *Daily Light* for 02 August she wrote 'Very ill – fever – alone – kept – comforted'. She wondered if God would have sent her to Ceylon in 1892, if she had been quite ready. 'But I needed to learn some lessons first, so He sent me for training to Japan',⁵⁰⁹ she cheerfully wrote to her mother on 08 August. Without notifying the Keswick Convention, she sailed on 28 July for Ceylon. She had written earlier to a group of the Heneratgoda Village Mission, but had not received a reply, and it was a great comfort to her to see on arrival that she was expected. To her grief, she heard that both the Lieschings had succumbed to malaria. In Colombo the remaining three young women had prayed for someone to help them and Amy's coming was seen by them and as God's answer to their prayers for help.

Why this sudden move? And done without consultation with those who had sent her. Was it an impulsive move? Amy herself reckoned also with questions others might ask her and wrote:

I cannot attempt to explain this. Only those who so has felt the Spirit of the Highest in this most solemn way, will understand at all, and I am prepared for much blame, or at best understanding, but I cannot help it. One dare not anything but obey, when that Voice speaks, as I can speak. And all one can do then, is shut our eyes, close one ears – ye as blindly, deafly, but with ones and all eye and ear, follow in the Way be it – as now in the sea, a path in the great waters footsteps all unknown.

508. *Scraps*, [no. 15, 16 July 1894].

509. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 76.

And for those who seriously fear about this new step into the unknown, she gives us three remarks of guidance, and these three remarks have 'been given clearly enough to rest the hearts of dear friends here':

1. His Word given with great power straight to one of it, inward by the Spirit.
2. The other to unanswerable force, the other the inward leading of the Spirit.
3. The promise of circumstances.

For the last remarks she did not have a word from the Scriptures. 'Though as to the last, O, I do not see infallible warrant for it in the Bible.' She then refers to the old Bible saints who appeared sometimes to have gone in what seemed direct opposition to existing facts. 'His Word was all they had to go upon.' For her it was enough to be sure that the circumstances act as 'confirmatory witnesses, and comfort the minds of loving observers who care enough to be concerned'.⁵¹⁰ From Whittier she quotes:

Nothing before, nothing behind - The steps of faith.
 Fall on the seeming void, and find the Rock beneath.
 And only Heaven is better than to walk
 With Christ at midnight over moonless seas.

After the ship called at Singapore and Penang where the passengers had been in quarantine for some days, the ship headed to Ceylon. Again she questioned herself if this undertaking really was in God's approval:

When we got within sight of Ceylon, things got real and Satan came with terrible power. I cannot write about that now. At last I went to bed and slept, knowing the everlasting arms were underneath, it was all peace and I thought the worst was over, but at dawn it woke again and once more, oh just awfully the devil came with thoughts and fears. I had just to throw myself as it were, upon my invisible and for the moment, unrealized Lord. Then I went on deck, still tortured, still weak, feeling oh light - The joy of the Lord is your strength. Lord it shall be, yea it is. A flood of sunshine fell across the mists and they were gone.

While still not sure about God's approval, she prayed that 'the thick veil of sense may be made thin' by the 'lightest touches of the Blessed Spirit':

What if nobody meets me? What if I and stranger after all? It will be only being stranded upon Him - My Rock - My All. I have lost my balance on His side. Fallen right into His very arms. I will trust and not be afraid. [...] Just as it had come to this, just as He was softly talking to me, just as every fear had gone, someone passed along the deck, returned, saw me and said, 'Welcome to Ceylon'.⁵¹¹

She arrived safely in Ceylon where several friends, including Mr Cooper and Jessie Nicolas, gave her a warm welcome. 'Such kindness, wasn't it? How He plans when He is leading, one may literally fear no evil - none.'

■ Heneratgoda, Ceylon and back to Broughton Grange

Weak, tired, not knowing what lay before her, Amy arrived in Colombo. 'A moth could have crushed me,' she said. A look in her *Daily Light* encouraged her when she read the text for that day: 'The joy of the Lord is your strength'.⁵¹² We meet her inner conflict about going to Ceylon and follow her puzzled

510. *Scraps* [no. 9, Colombo].

511. *Scraps* [no. 21, 25 November 1894], 10-12.

512. Nehemiah 8:10.

heart in her letter home.⁵¹³ 'And now you will wonder if I yet know why I am here. I do not quite yet.' She goes back to 18 July, 'the day He came so near and told me to come'. Among her home mail that day was a letter from Mr Gregson, dated January, with at the end a note dated March; in it he said: 'We are asking the Lord to send another worker, who will be a leader, sent from the Holy Ghost to witness for the Master in the villages of Ceylon':

As I read those words – utterly unexpectedly the Master's 'Go' was flashed on me. My first thought was that He meant me to go to this little Village Mission, and to be to it what those lines spoke of.

Was this the Lord's direction for her? She doubted and had much fear of being misled in any way, 'that I dare not face it':

Still I knew I was to go, even should it be in blind faith, not knowing for what, and he made it plain that I might rest without asking Him further as to His purpose, so, as you know, I went. [...] And as we neared Ceylon the thought returned – perhaps that is why he is sending me – but, oh, such a rush of fears and I felt as if every particle of my being rose into one cry – 'I cannot'.

When Amy heard in Heneratgoda that the missionaries saw her coming as an answer to their prayers, 'they almost seem to have accepted me by faith there and then'.⁵¹⁴ At first the group had prayed for one to be sent from England, but the missionary due to go to Ceylon had been stopped. Now she was the answer to their prayers. Amy still was between hope and fear:

A lifetime seems to be packing itself away into these few hours. [...] Oh what a whirl one would be in if one were not kept. I think He will show me what He means soon. These lines comfort me, 'When over dizzy heights I go, one soft hand veils my eyes, the other leads me safe and slow – o Love of God most wise!'

The day after she arrived and was heartedly received by several missionaries who worked in Ceylon, 'I was well welcomed and I long more than ever to buy up the swiftly passing never returning opportunities, and yet to remember and to live on'.

Who serve the Lord must hold in view
They need Him, more than needeth He,
Who serve Him best, in Him too, Rest.

This little poem is underlined in her letter. 'I wonder, everybody welcomed me. I was in the circle before I knew it.' The many new friends around her overwhelmed her so, that 'I longed for quiet alone with the Master. A day away from the kindest voice, a time when one could just wait, this was my felt need.'

Last night I was kept awake with many thoughts, and fears as distressing as ever, just swarmed. [...] It was true, I could not, dare not touch it – I could not, but He in me could. Two years ago I should not have been half so much afraid – perhaps because I did not know myself so well then. I had not got to the end of myself, and I felt fairly strong – but now – oh the shrinking back – And yet if indeed He was leading on, to draw back would mean 'Lord I cannot trust Thee for the Power'.

The little village mission was linked more than to anyone else to Mr Gregson. Amy also was afraid of what he would think to see her now with all her questions and weak body, vulnerable to collapse under the heat of the day. 'To all these thoughts there was but one answer. And at last I could let go all, and say, "Yes Lord".' The long day of being alone with God for prayer and fasting was not anymore necessary for her, for, 'it was so simple. A few minutes with Him made all things plain.'

513. *Scraps* (no. 21, 25 November 1894, Shanghai), 13–15.

514. *Amma's Book*, 39.

Here, too, the Bible had for Amy the last word. In *Daily Light* that day it was that little that gave her a straight message from God, 'our sufficiency is of God'. This strengthened her:

O yes, All of God. There is no room for self here. Perhaps the very keenness with which the feeling of helplessness pierces and presses, may show one all the more upon Him who is sufficient.

When she boarded the SS *Clyde* for Ceylon, friends in China had given her a word: 'El Shaddai, the Lord which is enough'. 'How I needed it then, how I needed it now.' Here in Heneratgoda she felt the companionship of people who feared the Lord. She wrote: 'This was the Psalm – (119:63) – for the day the friends came to see me at Heneratgoda, Ceylon. Nov. 1894'.⁵¹⁵

People at home, still wondering and fearing for her very physical weakness that caused her to leave Japan, were set at ease when they read:

Perhaps I should tell you that on the day He gave me the command to come here, He gave me for the just time the faith to claim the deliverance from the head-pain. Often Florence used to say, why don't you pray and believe for it to be taken away? But I never could and did, till that day. At Hong Kong and afterwards it was worse again. It was as if satan were let loose upon one for a season. Since then I had not had it once. It is quite well now. To His glory I tell this. Himself has done this. Even in the un-ability to pray for removal, I see His hand now. His time had not yet come. May He use every bit of the strength restored to His own great glory. Oh that He may have all His purchased possession the uttermost of His inheritance. he is very near. He is very dear. Our last words must be of Him, the beloved, the Altogether Lovely – or to Him – our own Master. [...]

And now once more, goodbye – oh flee – follow – fight – called – chosen – faithful, till He come, our precious and glorious King. With love to you all, and a very earnest please, please pray, Your Amy.⁵¹⁶

After having travelled so much she did not give us the impression of being worn out or very fatigued. For her it was not the end of her missionary career. She started to learn Singhalese for when on a preaching tour she felt the difficulty of speaking through interpretation. The whole of her life was in the grip of God for 'This one Thing'. On the one hand it gave her the opportunity – she writes home from Heneratgoda⁵¹⁷ – to have 'a prayer behind each sentence', but on the other hand she adds between brackets 'but– I hope I won't have to do it always'. She did not intend to give up. It overwhelmed her 'seeing many, oh so many of this Blood-bought loved – unto the death ones who seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's'. Those people who are seeking their own, 'should they not have the chance'? Amy stresses the role of the missionaries in bringing the lost ones to Christ:

And remembering that this is as possible, perhaps, more so, to us who are here, as to you who are at home. [...] May we be true to our Christ. [...] O dear ones who have laid some loved one down to help to bridge that gulf – is it not well worth-while?

She never met any rudeness during her work, although mission work 'perhaps is the most seemingly resultless of all work. A very literal casting the bread on the water.'

Glad she was when Mrs Pollock spent some time with her. 'You don't know what it is to have somebody even for half an hour, who can be motherly – sisterly'.⁵¹⁸ She also had the delight there of having a friend again in Clare, a cousin of Mr Buxton. This was for Amy a time for reflection on her own motivation.

515. In Amy's Bible (1895) in the margin of Psalm 119:63. 'I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.'

516. *Scraps* [no. 21, 25 November 1894, Heneratgoda, Ceylon].

517. *Scraps* [no. 21, 25 November 1894, Heneratgoda, Ceylon].

518. *Scraps* [no. 21, 25 November 1894, Heneratgoda, Ceylon].

'I ask you once more to pray that we may be true to our Christ. [...] Pray that we may be apt through and through. True as steel.'⁵¹⁹

Amy still was a bit confused, about the way God was leading her, but she enjoyed the work and her time 'was full of love'. 'If love could have kept me there I should be there today.'⁵²⁰ The workers there were Burghers, descendants of the Dutch who had intermarried with the Singhalese. They were soul winners, fearless in their witness.

Amy attracted children. She writes that the children were very fond of her and called her the Mal Nona, the flower woman, because of her fondness for all kinds of little weeds and flowers. One day the children brought her a lily. She tried to explain to the children that God is the creator of all these tiny nice flowers and he takes care of them. He too cares for little children:

They cannot see what I see in them. I tell them they are bits of God's handiwork, straight from His fingers – but they do not see it at all. I wonder if we, His dear children, for whom He prepared all these lovely things, do not think it worthwhile to care.⁵²¹

She also could practise here the care of babies for she paid numerous visits to Mrs Besant, who had a three-week-old baby. She said she became an expert in caring for babies. 'I think I could bath her safely and I know to hold her without letting her head drop off, to her ayah's supreme satisfaction.'⁵²²

One evening some friends came from Colombo asking her to join them in their work. Amy was inclined to do so, but one moment she thought, 'What about Bishop Moule? He doesn't see with you.' They answered her, and it shocked her: 'He is a shining lamp of disobedience.' 'And so mentally I called a halt.' That evening after the friends were away she read in Psalm 119:63: 'I am a companion of all them that fear Thee and keep Thy commandments'. That settled the matter for me:

Suppose things had been different I would never have been one of this dear company of fellow-lovers. So you see how even there, in that jungle village in Ceylon, there was thought of you, or at least of my being yours; is it not wonderful?⁵²³

She heard the doctor's verdict that she could never return to Japan, due to 'brain exhaustion', so she decided to stay in Ceylon.

Far away in England many were wondering about Amy's move to Ceylon: what about their 'Keswick child'? A cable, sent to Amy from the DOM in which he strongly advised her not to join any mission in Ceylon, made her wonder if she had done something wrong and, a little later, a letter came to her from his hand in which he wrote that he was seriously concerned. We can understand Mr Wilson's point of view: Amy was a Keswick missionary, and he was responsible to the Keswick Mission Committee. Now one of them was just leaving the field, without any notice to them and not having been given any approval for this move; we understand it was difficult for him to reprove and to back her up whom he loved so dearly. To her mother she wrote:

Something told me you would rejoice in my being here [...] but oh my heart ache and aches for the DOM. [...] Oh mother, this was of Him. How could I wait and hesitate, when He said: 'Go forward'? But I should have

519. *Scraps* (no. 21, 25 November 1894, Heneratgoda, Ceylon).

520. *Amy's Book*, 39.

521. *Amy's Book*, 39.

522. *Scraps* (no. 6).

523. *Amy's Book*, 40.

waited in letting it be known, until all was clear at the home end. I so trusted He would show it there as here – but it has not been so, and I see my wrongness and cannot be sorry enough. [...] I think there will be puzzling muddles if anything but the real truth is said at home, as everybody here knows it, and before I heard what was ‘to be said’ I had both said and written naturally and not forcedly or half-truthfully. I simply say that I left Japan for rest and change, that when at Shanghai I believed the Lord told me to follow Him down to Ceylon, and so I came.⁵²⁴

It was not her intention to stay permanently in Ceylon. She saw it as a soldier’s duty to fill the gaps. ‘One must as willingly be nothing, as something’, but coming home, as her mother wanted, she called off. For ‘did ever a soldier, worth calling one, run away at the first shot! Praise Him – the pain is over now, and I am strong for the battle again.’ At the time she left Japan, Mr and Mrs Buxton had been on furlough. After having heard of her move and read the letter she had written to them, he replied at once:

I do thank God for His precious gift to us of having you with us for one year, and for all you have been in the work, and as an influence of love and union in our party. You have been, to us all, more than I should like to tell you. [...] If you have any word from the Lord about it for me, do not be afraid to tell it plainly. I only want that we should be in the line of the work of the Holy Ghost.⁵²⁵

Others saw it differently and noticed that physically she was very weak. She was advised by a friend of the DOM to see a doctor and the response was the same as she got in Japan. Have a long rest. She felt she needed guidance. ‘I did not feel guidance comes from doctors’, for what about Japan? Weymouth’s translation of Colossians 3:15 says:

Let the peace which Christ give settle all questionings in your heart, so in peace I waited, meanwhile learning what I could of Singhalese, till suddenly I knew why I had been told to go to Ceylon.⁵²⁶

After having heard of Mr Wilson had had a stroke, and that he was seriously ill, she immediately packed her few belongings and sailed back home. On 27 November 1894 she left Colombo, a long journey and one long nightmare. In the margin of *Daily Light* of 01 December, she wrote ‘Indian Ocean, on the way home. In much fear, ill, and alone’, but two days later, she wrote ‘Is anything too hard for the Lord?’ The marginal note reads ‘Realising this’. Of the journey from Colombo to icy cold Naples, it was early December, 1894, she could hardly remember all that had happened. Friendly people – ‘I blessed that Roman angel’⁵²⁷ – routed her out of the train in Rome and put her on the train for Paris. Via Calais she reached London where her mother met her. She felt sick, but to all around her she said she was fine: ‘I must be well, for I must go to Broughton Grange’.⁵²⁸ She was puzzled about what people would say in Keswick about her move from one country to another without consulting them. She had not thought of asking them permission, for ‘I belonged first to the Lord and had gone to Japan in obedience to His word, not the word of man’. Amy thus wondered at their:

[K]indness and patience for they too were a good deal puzzled by this calm walk from land to land. But they said nothing of it, though afterwards the Committee made a rule that anyone sent out from Keswick should henceforth belong properly to a Missionary Society and be subject to its rules.⁵²⁹

524. *Scraps* (no. 21, 25 November 1894, Heneratgoda, Ceylon).

525. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 77–78 and 79.

526. *Amma’s Book*, 41.

527. *Amma’s Book*, 41.

528. *Amma’s Book*, 41.

529. *Amma’s Book*, 41.

The Mission Committee had some consideration with her, being the protégé of their chairman Mr Wilson.

She could not have written them first asking for permission, but 'I was all the time listening to Another Voice'. She felt she had an unusual training for an unusual kind of service. Later on in Dohnavur she would say:

No single thread of the web (I trust) the Great Weaver is weaving, can be touched without that touch affecting other threads and so none of us acts apart from the others. [...] I think it is all part of the preparation for something elsewhere.⁵³⁰

Back in Broughton Grange she prepared some account of her work in Japan in connection with the Keswick Mission in a book entitled *From Sunrise Land*. The book is a collection of letters from Japan, illustrated by Amy and William, one of Mr Wilson's sons. From the very beginning she was not happy to gather the letters – they were just for 'home' – but at last could not withstand the pressure others put on her to publish them. In her own copy of the book, she wrote: 'Bad rhymes in parts, bad writing all through'.

Really, it had been a whirlwind, only to be described as a 'chaotic' missionary career.⁵³¹ What a list of difficulties: application to the CIM, for reasons of health this option barred by the London office; back to Cumbria at Broughton Grange; through Mr Buxton to Japan, and she just sailed off. And there, difficulty in mastering the language, long walks on hot sunny days causing many sufferings, often severe headaches until she came to the brink of exhaustion. In July 1894 on her way to Shanghai, for recuperation in China. Believing God called her to Ceylon – later on as we have seen she explained this move in a letter home from Heneratgoda – she sailed via Hong Kong, Singapore and Penang to that island. After just a few months there, news arrived from Broughton Grange about the sickness of Mr Wilson, and she returned at once. From a very cold Brindisi (Italy), 'angels' were sent by the Lord to direct her to Rome, and to rouse her from sleep on one train, and direct her onto the right train to Paris. Travelling overland, via Paris to Calais, and after a rough crossing her mother met her on 15 December 1894, just one day before her 27th birthday. Years later, remembering this Channel crossing, reading 2 Corinthians 4:18, she wrote in the margin Keble's thought: 'When the shore is won at last, Who will count the billows past?' and added 'Crossing from Calais to Dover alone in the gale. Dec.15. 1894'.⁵³² She stayed a few days in a house she knew from Keswick, and then we see her back just before Christmas 1894 in Broughton Grange. Did it not ever cross her mind that people at home would be worried about her, even stronger that they would oppose this precipitate solo action of hers, or at least would not be amused? Others did not see that actual moment when she followed the Gleam, which for her was stronger than the rules of a committee and concerned family and friends at home.

She left Colombo, where the spending of her life was clear duty. Not knowing what the Lord had in store for her, she went back to England and she felt: this is well, as everything was well for her that was within the will of God. God can break or mould, just as he chooses. There were things in her heavenly Father's dealings with her, which had no immediate explanation. Being in this situation she did not know why he was doing it; he did it for one purpose only that he is able to say: 'This is my woman, for whom I have a special purpose'. Amy knew for sure that God's Word, his truth and his promises are not dependent

530. *Amy's Book*, 41.

531. Sharpe, 'The Legacy of Amy Carmichael'.

532. In Amy's Bible [1895], in the margin of 2 Corinthians 4:18: 'Because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.'

on our calendar. 'It is not what a man does that is of final importance, but what he is in what he does.'⁵³³ During the years behind her, faith was schooled through many trying experiences and small beginnings. Amy persisted in prayer, and as she would write many years later:

[I]t does not matter how many questions fill the deep places of prayer we shall know the answers tomorrow. Today is enough that we may prove our God by the humble, the far-reaching energies of prayer.⁵³⁴

She was still remembered in Ceylon long after she had left the country. The CEZMS village mission work had school and dispensary work. In 1910, more than 600 women and girls were under instruction in schools and in their homes. There was an increasing missionary interest among the workers and the girls. They often met at noon to pray for special cases or countries and, years later when Amy was in India, they collected nearly five pounds to send to Miss Wilson Carmichael for her nurseries.⁵³⁵

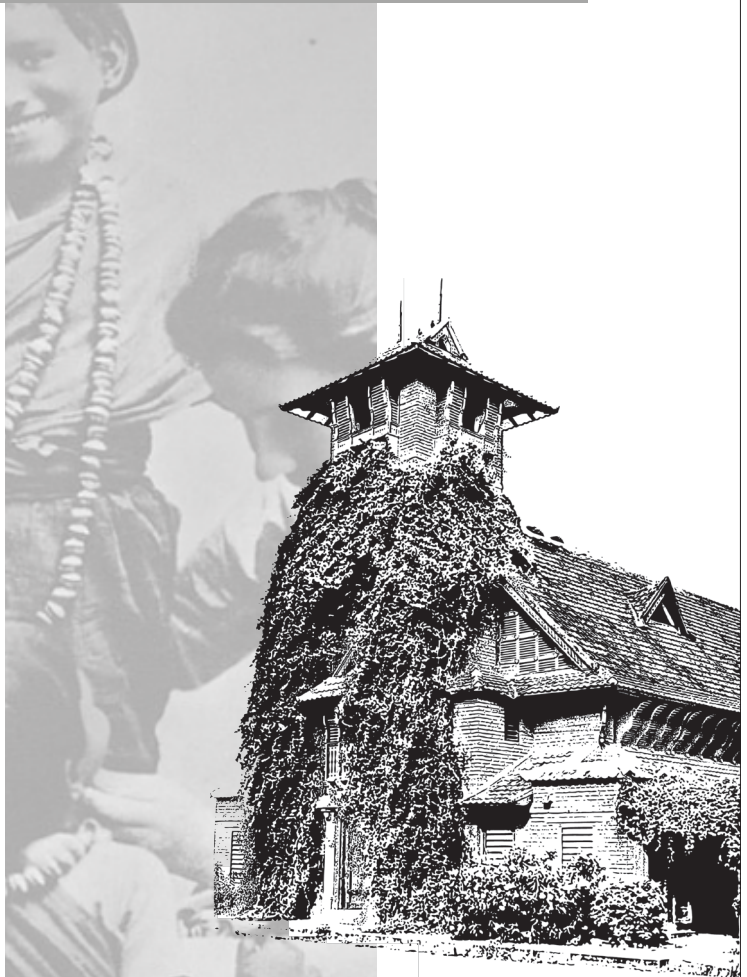
533. Chambers, *The Complete Works*, 51.

534. *Raj, Brigand Chief*, 309.

535. In A.D., *Until The Shadows Flee Away. The Story of the CEZMS Work in India and Ceylon* (London: CEZMS, 1912), 232.

Shall we not each say, God must be all in all; I will sacrifice everything for Him? May God help us tonight to make a consecration afresh of our whole being to the furtherance of Christ's kingdom. And whether it be in mission work far away, or in Christian work near at home, or whether it be that we do not know how to work, that we are poor weak worms – whatever it be, let everyone yield himself a willing sacrifice, and then Christ can and will use the very weakest for the glory of God.

A.C. Murray, 'That God May Be All In All', final address at the 1895 Keswick Convention. In H.F. Stevenson, ed., *Keswick's Authentic Voice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1959), 434.



India at last: God's chosen heritage

■ The growth of a missionary

“He goeth before”, 03 March 1896. Sailed for India “There you will see Him”.⁵³⁶ Amy knew that her future was in God's hand, but what direction would her life take? Could she ever settle somewhere? Where would be her fatherland? She saw the years behind her passing like a film, when she wrote: ‘God stirs up our nests, to keep us from nestling in them. Millisle, Belmont, Millisle, Harrogate, Belfast, Manchester, Broughton, Japan, S. India.’⁵³⁷ Back in England, her brief and turbulent missionary career seemed to be over – and she was still not yet 30 years old! God's plans, however, cross human thoughts and plans; in fact, her missionary career had barely begun!

Mr Wilson enjoyed having her back in Broughton Grange, but by then she had already set her mind on going out for a second time. ‘She hopes, if the Lord will, to go abroad again in the autumn.’⁵³⁸ From what we have seen of the short time she was in Colombo, we saw an Amy prepared by the Lord for her future work. Not knowing at that time it would be in India, she learned about the Singhalese and Tamil way of life; the urgency for mission strengthened and not being a mother herself, she learned to deal with babies and motherly care. We meet the same Amy ready to fight the good fight, looking forward towards the coming of the Lord and to be gathered with all who love him. She writes home after a church service:

536. These words Amy wrote in the margin of John 10:4. In Amy's Bible [1895].

537. In Amy's Bible [1895], in the margin of Hebrews 10:34.

538. KCMMB, Mission Committee meeting annual report, 24 July 1895. In the mission report of 05 August 1896, we read: ‘Miss Wilson-Carmichael, being unable to resume work in Japan, has been sent to Bangalore. Accounts of her arrival, and impressions of work there have from time to time appeared in the *Life of Faith*. Constant prayer is asked that the many opportunities allowed her many result in blessing, not only to the heathen, but to native Christians also, and that health may be preserved in this new climate.’

Caught up together with them [*the 'them' of the church universal*], in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord – wherefore comfort one another with these words. [...] And may each one find us fighting shoulder to shoulder against a common day for our coming Lord and Captain – or better still, may the next one, if not this one – think of it – it might be this one – find us in His presence – seeing His grace, serving Him in the beauty of holiness forever and forever.⁵³⁹

■ 'Launch out into the deep'

The last decade of the 19th century, according to C.A. Fox, was marked out for 'aggressive missionary enterprise'. There is a 'rapid rising tidal wave of Pentecostal grace'. 'Definite and personal acts of faith must accompany and corroborate the great facts of faith. [...] Burning examples of this in the Mission field were never more conspicuous than today.' Fox further gives six special reasons for this missionary wave:

- There has been vouchsafed to the Church in these last times an exceptionally clear and simple presentation of Gospel truth as to immediate and personal salvation.
- The widespread and deepening sense of the commanding claims of the Risen Christ his Church has forced us the necessity of a fuller apprehension and appropriation the blessed peace and power of his indwelling presence. 'Go ye – I am with you'.
- The Church has of late become keenly alive to the fact that the best method of enforcing the claims of the Heathen is to bring home first to the conscience of her members the magnitude of their supernatural resources in Christ Jesus, and his consequent claims upon their gratitude. In short, that we must take before we give; and trust him with everything before we can trust him for everything.
- The Church begins to realise the intimate and inseparable connection between her own individual consecration and the evangelisation of the world.
- There has taken place within the Church a marvellous awakening to the greatness of the Person and office of the Holy Ghost; and consequently to the absolute necessity of her being baptised with the fullness of the Spirit for successful life-service.
- The growing signs everywhere of the speedy Return of the Master have so stirred the affections of the Bride with holy expectation, that she is increasingly eager to make herself ready.

The cry goes out: 'This is the Heir, come let us crown Him, and the inheritance shall be His!' Let each one of us, therefore, prepare in haste to crown Him with a priceless diadem of precious souls, which we have personally wrested for and won, yea Spirit-won, under the solemn light of Calvary's Cross. 'Behold I come quickly! – Go ye out therefore quickly!'⁵⁴⁰

■ 'Ye also helping'

These words Amy wrote on 13 July 1895, in a copy of *From Sunrise Land*,⁵⁴¹ which she presented to Mrs Hopkins. Two weeks later she would stand on the podium in the big tent at Keswick during a mission meeting of the convention. She had got a letter from a friend in Bangalore (India), who wrote that the climate there was healthy and delightful. Bound for India she was aware of the tremendous task and that

539. E.J. Sharpe in 'The Legacy of Amy Carmichael', in *IBMR*, July 01, 1996.

540. In 'Introductory Note', *From Sunrise Land*, XII.

541. In the library of Stanford University, California, USA.

prayer help from the others who would stay behind was essential. In her own words, 'England in 1894 was very good to me'.⁵⁴² The DOM recovered and after a while she was prepared to go out again:

Of the blistering days before I sailed and of the Goodbye I will say nothing. We shall all be together soon in the Father's Country. Such days will seem worth while There.⁵⁴³

In 1895, the notable year when winter was so severe that even the Thames froze, far north in Cumbria in the summer, Amy was for the second time accepted as a Keswick missionary, on 26 July. The 1895 Keswick Convention was a remarkable one, often mentioned in the annals. This was due to the presence of Andrew Murray from Wellington, South Africa. His final address caused his audience to feel 'beneath the opened heavens'.⁵⁴⁴ Now, more than 120 years later, this address in print brings us close to Keswick's 'morning glory'.⁵⁴⁵ Of that convention a lady wrote:

I cannot describe to you the deep heart-searching teaching of Mr Murray's evening addresses nor the power and authority with which they were delivered. Every word seemed to come straight from God with living power, and went right to the hearts of the people.⁵⁴⁶

Murray's words also captured Amy's attention and she heard him saying:

But understand that your God longs to rule the world, and your Christ is upon the throne, leading you on as His soldiers, and wanting to bless you with victory upon victory. [...] If you want to take a word as your motto and watchword, let it be, 'Sacrifice everything and anything for the glory of your God. [...] Anything that I can do for that glory, Lord, here I am'. Give yourself up to God.⁵⁴⁷

At that moment, it became her vision and dream to go out again into the mission field, completely woven into the texture of her life. She spoke the following day, 27 July, at the missionary meeting held in the big tent. Two days later the two sisters Amy and Eva Carmichael were both accepted by the KMC. Amy who had responded immediately when a fresh missionary opportunity presented itself, to go out for the second time, now was commissioned by the Anglican Church of England Zenana Missionary Society (CEZMS) to Bangalore (India) where she would stay for the rest of her life. Her sister Eva would go to South Africa to work for the South Africa General Mission in the Cape. The two years, 1893–1895, spent in England serving the Lord were fertile training for the next and final mission call of Amy's life. The work in Belfast, Manchester, Japan, Ceylon and at Broughton Grange was consciously no more than a prelude to the service God would give her in India.

In the last few decades of the 19th century, female missionary work expanded, especially by the work of the CEZMS, work done by women for women who otherwise could not be reached by their male counterparts:

In the work of the Zenana Mission they [*the women*] would find a noble vocation, a sphere that would give abundant scope for all their powers [...] the best that the Christian church has is needed for our work.⁵⁴⁸

542. *Amma's Book*, 41.

543. *Amma's Book*, 41.

544. Murray, 'That God May Be All In All', 404. See also Murray, *Andrew Murray at Keswick. Three Unrevised Talks Given in 1895* [Wamboin, Australia: Clairview House, 2014].

545. See Murray, *Andrew Murray at Keswick*.

546. In W.M. Douglas, *Andrew Murray and His Message* [Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1981], 163.

547. Murray, 'That God May Be All In All', 433 and 434.

548. Quoted in Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 32.

A *zenana* was a separate apartment where upper-class Hindu and Muslim women were confined within each household. Missionaries could speak to lower-class women who were often more outside the house, but such women were powerless within the family structure. Upper-class women had the power to veto or approve conversion of the whole family to Christianity.⁵⁴⁹ This Zenana work had an important impact on the effectiveness of mission work and was feared by Hindus as the following statement reveals:

We do not greatly fear your schools; we need not send our children. We do not fear your books, for we need not read them. We do not much fear your preaching; we need not listen. But we dread your women and dread your doctors, for your doctors are winning our hearts and your women are winning our homes, and when our hearts and homes are won, what is there left of us?⁵⁵⁰

Amy was commissioned by the CEZMS⁵⁵¹ to India, where she would stay for the rest of her life. Remarkable years, not only for the work she did, but years spent without a furlough. For Amy, a non-Anglican, to go out via the CEZMS was possible, because earlier Mr Wilson had communicated with the CEZMS and the CMS about their accepting Keswick missionaries. This proposal was accepted and the outcome was that Keswick missionaries were accepted as associates and that CMS and CEZMS gladly welcomed the Keswick missionaries as full members, subject to the rules of their societies.⁵⁵²

For Amy with the chaotic and turbulent years behind her, new far-reaching challenges were waiting for her. Now she would go with a lot of missionary experience and gradually she would develop into a deeply respected missionary, who by her life and love had earned the right to be heard. Her physical weakness was made perfect in divine strength, and she fulfilled her task continually looking to Christ with gratitude and love.

The *Keswick Convention Year Book* of 1895 gives it vivid account of what happened at the yearly Keswick Convention week. Three new recruits would be sent: two to India – Ethel Jacob for Amritsar (India) and Amy Wilson-Carmichael for Bangalore (India) – and one to South Africa, Miss Eva Carmichael. After Ethel and Eva had said a word of farewell to the people, it was finally Amy's turn to say a word. She held up a red scroll, on which was written: 'Nothing Too Precious for Jesus'. She urged:

Let these words come home to the mothers and the fathers. Are they cherishing something – a son or a daughter, too precious for Jesus? He counted nothing too precious for us. If He calls any to leave all and follow Him, may

549. See also C.F. Hayward, *Women Missionaries* (London: Collins, n.d.), 226–230.

550. Quoted in West, 'The Role of the Woman Missionary', 7. Original in R. Lovett, *A History of The London Missionary Society* (vol. 2, London: LMS, 1899), 235–236.

551. The CEZMS seceded in 1880 from the Interdenominational Female Normal School and Instruction Society (IFNS). The IFNS, since 1861, undertook mission work to women in India. Education in the homes and particularly in the secluded area of the house set aside for women, the *zenana*, became in the second part of the 19th century an important feature of women's missionary work. Within the IFNS Anglican influence grew stronger and most supporters were from the CMS. The interdenominational character was strongly protected by Lady Mary Kinnaerd who campaigned against growing Anglican dominance on the society's local committees in India. In 1880, an Anglican faction of nine committee members, three officeholders, many supporters, and many of its Indian workers seceded to become the CEZMS. By 1899 it had 234 missionaries, working in India, China, Japan and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). See 'The Birth of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society', in Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 93–95. The *Missionary Review of the World*, 1895, declares that the first real zenana teaching ever attempted was given to the 30 wives and royal sisters of the King of Siam (H. Barrett Montgomery, *Western Women in Eastern Lands. Fifty Years of Woman's Work in Foreign Missions* (New York, NY: The Macmillan Co., 1910), 109.

552. In KCMMB, mission report, 26 July 1892.

it be in the power of His resurrection and in the fellowship of His sufferings. Whatever He calls us to do, let us do it in His might and for His Glory.⁵⁵³

On the same platform with Amy were the CIM missionaries Cassals and Beauchamp together with Dr H. Lankester, medical secretary of the CMS.⁵⁵⁴ The latter must have had no objection to Amy going to the mission field again, despite her weak health. The CMS must have seen in Amy her strong persistent character, also seen in her an attitude against sickness, described by herself as 'to be strengthened to ignore or tread under foot bodily ills'.⁵⁵⁵ The Keswick missionaries were given from the convention the words from Revelation 22:1: 'Then He showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God, and of the Lamb' (RSV).⁵⁵⁶ In *Keswick from Within* the Rev. J.B. Figgis refers to this gathering:

Who can forget Miss Amy Wilson-Carmichael's farewell address, ere she left for her life of sacrifice in India, as she unrolled a 'ribband of blue' with the golden words, *Nothing Too Precious for Jesus*.

She took leave of the Keswick Convention on 27 July 1895, and of Mr Wilson on 11 October. In her Bible she wrote: 'Oct. 11. He saw a hand they could not see, which beckoned him away. He heard a voice they could not hear, which would not let him stay.' And some months later:

Lord give me this new year a burning heart.

For souls immortal; make me plead with such earnestness intense, love strong as death, and faith God given. With the worlds' cry 'mad?'

Such madness be my joy!

We also read there these words: 'And His servant shall serve Him. And they shall see His face. And His Name shall be in their foreheads.'⁵⁵⁷ She left for India, never to set foot again on British soil. From her arrival in India until the day she died, 56 years later, she remained in India, eventually also obtaining Indian citizenship.

Eva's departure was postponed on health grounds and the waiting months were spent in Dublin where she evangelised among Roman Catholics, 'access having been granted to many hitherto closed doors'. She sailed in April 1897 for Durban, 'full of joy that she has not only been "called" but "sent"'.⁵⁵⁸ In due time mother Catherine would see several of her children sailing away from England's shore and living far away. Through her children, her mission field expanded from Belfast to the world. She saw doors closed while others swung open. And Catherine just thanked God! Wholeheartedly she gave her assent allowing her children to follow their calling.

■ 'My life shall be Thine: I consecrate all to Thee'

My goal is God Himself, not joy, not peace.

Nor even blessing, but Himself, my God;

T' is His to lead me there, not mine, but His-

At any cost, dear Lord, by any road!

553. *TKW* [1895]: 46 and 110. This motto 'Nothing Too Precious for Jesus' she had also fixed on the wall in her room in the Bangalore hospital. See *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 90.

554. See Broomhall, *It is not Death to Die!*, 250.

555. See *Rose from Brier*, 19.

556. See Amy's Bible [1895], in the margin of Revelation 22:1.

557. In Amy's Bible, 1895.

558. KCMMB, mission report, 05 August 1896.

One thing I know, I cannot say Him nay;
One thing I do, I press towards my Lord;
My God my glory here, from day to day,
And in the glory there my Great Reward.⁵⁵⁹

‘It is very wonderful and very solemn to know that the next turn will be the last.’ These words she wrote in her autobiography, some years before her death.⁵⁶⁰ Many sentiments mingled with heavenly thoughts. Emotions which melted as she faced the reality of the departure. But for God’s sake, for his glory, she shut the door of that stately home in the Lake District and left Broughton Grange – that lovely old house⁵⁶¹ – closing the front door, never to enter it again. All for him, who had called her. She then must have known the song which closes with the words written above this section:⁵⁶² ‘For Thee I consecrate all’. So she went, still not able to tell where the Pillar of Fire might lead her.

Many have come to say farewell; the bell rings ... and again ... and again. Slowly the ship moves from the shore and the gap between the people and those on board is becomes wider and wider. ‘God bless you all’ – the words ring out and are echoed fervently by hearts and voices on board. Then from the crowd on shore the sweet refrain goes up: ‘Crown Him, Crown Him, Crown Him Lord of All’. More and more, slowly, the coastline, the city, the people, the mountains became more vague. Amy lifted up her eyes, not to the mountains, but to the God who had made the mountains. ‘I have set the Lord always before me.’ This forward look is the look that sees everything in God’s perspective whereby his wonderful distance is put on the things that are near.

Bound for India! Is not the Lord choosing the inheritance for her? When God’s time was there, she found her lifelong vocation in India and knew the answer why she had to go to that country. She was ready for a larger challenge to her faith that would confront her in India, only looking to God and banking on the reality of Jesus Christ. Leaving family, home, where her feet left, but her heart stayed, Broughton Grange, Keswick friends, to serve the Lord wholeheartedly. She went, often she stood in the midst of the most appalling personal controversy: the controversy between natural love and faith, physically fragile, and on the other hand her trust in God, who never makes mistakes. She might not understand everything, but her God did. So she understood his will, although it was sometimes difficult to understand his paths. She took a step in faith in God and fulfilled his behests. Saying goodbye to all, but she bore it without making any trouble:

Have you ever found yourself making a great deal of a small trouble? I have. Especially goodbyes. But what of the goodbye of this story? [Amy refers to Lk 9:30–31, 33 (RV)]. Elijah and Moses had been talking with our Lord Jesus of the agonizing death which He had soon to ‘accomplish’. They must have felt it far more acutely than we can imagine. What must that minute of parting have been to them and to Him? [...] But we read of no fuss. They went away so quietly that as they were parting Peter could speak to our Lord, just as if He and they were not even then going through this tremendous goodbye. It makes us feel ashamed of ever making much of any trouble. The heavenly people don’t Our Lord never did.⁵⁶³

559. Frances Brook (1870), daughter of the Rev. James Brook of Helme Edge, Meltham, Huddersfield, was born in Bath in 1870. Her interest in missions was deep, and delicate health alone prevented her from giving her services in the foreign field where two of her sisters were labouring. Her first hymn leaflet was ‘There is Singing in the Homeland’. One of her famous hymns is ‘My Goal is God Himself, Not Joy, Not Peace’.

560. *Amy’s Book*, 41.

561. *Windows*, 227.

562. *From Sunrise Land*, 172.

563. In *Whispers of His Power*, 27 April, 93.

More than 30 years later, when Godfrey Webb-Peploe went for leave to England and many waited to see him off, she still felt the pain of departing from loved ones:

I can hear their voices as I write, but I am not going to say goodbye to Godfrey. Goodbyes are devastating. [...] The very keenness of the pang of a parting for a few months makes one realize all the more what has been given to this dear family.⁵⁶⁴

She went through the discipline of transferring her thoughts to God and left her life, body and soul in his care. She gave up everything for the sake of the only thing worth having, viz. life with him. This would be the golden thread throughout her eventful life. The day she died 56 years later, the bells in Dohnavur continuously played:

One thing have I desired, my God, of Thee,
That I will seek – Thine house be home to me.
Thou with Thy child, Thy child at home with Thee,
O Lord my God, I love, I worship Thee.⁵⁶⁵

564. See *Though The Mountains Shake*, 31.

565. In *Dohnavur Songs*, no. 171, 140.

It is easy to turn our religious life into a cathedral for beautiful memories, but there are feet to be washed, hard flints to be walked over, people to be fed. Very few of us go there, but that is the way the Son of God went.

O. Chambers, 'Run Today's Race. A Word from Oswald Chambers for Every Day of the Year, 06 January'
in The Complete Works.

A great 'without' has been written on heathenism. Men and women are toiling without a Bible, without a Sunday, without prayer, without songs of praise. They have rulers without justice and without righteousness; homes without peace, marriage without sanctity, young men and girls without ideals and enthusiasm; little children without purity, without innocence; mothers without wisdom or self-control; poverty without relief or sympathy; sickness without skilful help or tender care; sorrow and crime without a remedy; and worst of all, death without hope.

Mrs Whitfield Guinness, in Howard Taylor,
Guinness of Honan, 188.

'I will make the place of My feet glorious'.

Psalm 65:12.

'What is your special work'? It is the salvation and nurture of children who are in danger of being spoiled; and as outflow from the work, the care of the ill. How could we do either work if we were elsewhere. [...] We stand for the hallowing of the common things'.

The Starry Cluster, 14-15.



India at the time Amy arrived

■ Britain's 'rightful' empire

It is perhaps the most complex nation in the world: India with its unimaginable pluralism and contrasting diversities. There are often contrasts as well as affinities at various levels. In Amy's time, before the partition in 1947, hundreds (565) of princely states, also called native states, existed in India which were not fully and formally part of British India but enjoyed a British protectorate and indirect rule. These were the parts of the Indian subcontinent that had not been conquered or annexed by the British, often former vassals of the Mughal Pashah (Emperor).⁵⁶⁶ Nowadays, India consists of 29 states and today's population, living in a country nearly as large as a continent, is far more than one billion. 'The years 1900–1945 were tumultuous times in India. The massive British colonial enterprise in India was experiencing resistance in the various nationalisms that were developing during the period.'⁵⁶⁷ Amy, from 1895 in India, was caught up in all of this. However, though she was not directly involved in Indian politics, she was a part of a colonial power that over the course of time released its hold on the situation. India, since 1947 an independent nation, now in this 21st century is a country with economic power to reckon with and on a military scale one of the world's superpowers with nuclear capacity. Indian IT professionals are sought all over the world and in the last few years a successful space programme has been in operation. Amy lived in India during the first half of the 20th century. She knew the real India, she knew the habits of the people among whom she lived, she knew the Tamil language, and she saw deeper, she saw the real thinker. 'The thinker after the unknown God, with his wistful eyes [...] and we cannot help loving as we look.' She really loved the country and the Indian people. 'We see the spirit of the old land there; and it wins us and holds us, and makes it a joy to be here to live for India.'⁵⁶⁸

566. Cf. Wikipedia, *List of princely states of British India*, accessed 30 November 2016.

567. D.B. Daugherty, *Bishop Stephen Neill. From Edinburg to South India, American University Studies (AUS) series VII, vol. 267* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008), 1.

568. *Lotus Buds*, 89.

Just 200 years ago, it was the opposite way around. For many British government officials, traders and missionaries in the 19th century, all roads led to India. When in 1895 Amy arrived in India, the British Queen Victoria had as empress reigned over India since 1876.

India's history is a fascinating one, especially the history of Christianity in India, since, as many believe, the apostle Thomas set foot on its soil. 'For India is quick to recognize the footprints of the Divine.'⁵⁶⁹ The arrival of Vasco da Gama and the Portuguese in Calicut in 1498 and the conquest of Goa in 1510 inaugurated the Roman Catholic mission enterprise in India, under the royal patronage system.⁵⁷⁰ After the peace of Westphalia in 1648 the Protestant missionary obligation awakened. Lutheran missionaries under the patronage of the Danish King started in Tranquebar (Tarangambadi), in Tamil Nadu in 1706 and at the end of that century William Carey arrived in Serampore, a Danish settlement near Calcutta, in 1793.

India, on the brink of the 20th century, was at home in two worlds, a world of its own, where life was going on as it had for centuries, and at the same time a world open to the wider world in which situations were changing radically. Traders of the East India Company (EIC) discovered that there was a valuable market for high-quality opium in China and they transported it from Bengal (Bangladesh) to China and sold it at great profit. By the 1800s this trade had run so high that it became a problem in China and they started to stop the opium traders, which resulted in the first Opium War. Britain 'won' this war and under the Nanking Treaty, signed in 1842, China was forced to allow foreigners to live and work in five south-eastern cities. The EIC got the monopoly of English trade with the 'Indies' for the countries China, India and Indonesia in December 1599 from Queen Elizabeth I. The Anglicans did not have enough chaplains for the various settlements and then the Lutherans were ready to serve under the Anglican Church. With the arrival of Christian Friedrich Schwartz (1724–1798) the first Lutheran missionary entered India in Tranquebar.

Since the EIC had been granted royal charter in 1600 many British settled in India; the number increased when the British took over power in the whole country, and many soldiers and government officials with their families settled all over the country. After the ban on mission work was lifted in 1813, many missionaries from various denominations entered the country. In his second volume of *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, covering the period 1849–1872, Eugene Stock devotes full 232 pages to the work of the Gospel in India and Ceylon, and the remaining 217 pages to all other countries in the world.

The EIC opposed the missionaries whom they accused of imposing the Christian faith on the native population. Around 1793, William Wilberforce 'regarded the British abuse of the Indians as "next to the Slave Trade", the fullest blot of the moral character of our country'. Wilberforce 'referred tenderly to the East Indians as our fellow-subjects' (nay, they even stand towards us in the closer relation of our tenants). He denounced the EIC's reprehensible refusal to lift a finger 'to enlighten and reform them' while they suffered 'under the grossest, the darkest, and the most depraving system of idolatrous superstition that almost ever existed upon earth'.⁵⁷¹

At first, it was trade, and not territory, but gradually it changed and the EIC was chartered. It controlled and administered British territory in India up until 1857, the year of the Sepoy Mutiny. It was an entity organised around profit in trade and was originally much opposed to missionary work. British rule in India had originated in trade. 'The gentlemen of the EIC had not originally intended to

569. *Ploughed Under*, 158.

570. The *Patroado* was an arrangement between the Holy See in Rome and the Kingdom (later Republic) of Portugal.

571. Metaxas, *Amazing Grace*, 227.

govern India, but merely to make money there.⁵⁷² One of the most important chaplains sent out by the EIC was Henry Martyn, who arrived in Calcutta in 1787.⁵⁷³ The great break in British rule in India came with the mutiny of 1875. Although localised in the north of India, it shook the structures of British rule to their foundations, and resulted in the assumption of direct rule by the British government.

By the 1780s, Anglican evangelicals had begun to find their way to India as chaplains to the EIC. Especially the evangelical campaigner William Wilberforce sought government patronage for mission work.⁵⁷⁴ The British rule created a way of life among the Westerners. An air of superiority and self-assertiveness among the British grew with the years. Ladies affected the airs of grand dames. They had power, as Elliot records:

Power corrupts. It corrupted soldiers, officials, planters, and their wives and children. It corrupted missionaries. It was in this Britain's 'rightful' empire for nearly three hundred years – in its later phase Rudyard Kipling's romantic and picturesque India – that Amy Carmichael came.⁵⁷⁵

The missionaries were well cared for; the whole mission community was backed by the British government and its military. For missionaries there were still many challenges. Education and medical care was non-existent for the very poor. The Indian upper class had many prejudices, which prevented missionaries from associating with high-caste people. For men it was impossible to approach Indian women with either the gospel or medical care. Amy read and listened a lot when she was in India and often there was a prayer in her heart that once the Lord would reveal his glory in this country:

And the heart breaks into the old, old cry, Oh that Thou wouldst rend the heavens, that Thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence! Most righteous God, o God of Love, so let it be.⁵⁷⁶

■ Sorrow and sunshine

At the height of British rule in India, Amy, as one of 'the daughters of the ruling race', sailed to India. Physically frail, mentally alert and spiritually indomitable, with a serious head on her young shoulders, 22-year-old Amy arrived in Madras (Chennai) and crossed the threshold of India on 09 November 1895. She had gone with a heart of conviction, and – not foreseen at the time she went – a one-way ticket for making it reality, going in 1951 from India to heaven. Amy did not need a long answer when asked for what reason she was in this country. 'I am here on business for my King.'⁵⁷⁷ Soon after her arrival, she contracted dengue fever, a dangerous virus that causes a skin rash, joint pains, fever and headaches, which laid her low for a period of time. She was sent to a more healthful place to recuperate. One friend came to visit her there and said, 'You look fresh as a daisy.' It was just the opposite: her temperature was 105 and, in her own words, she felt 'wormly'.⁵⁷⁸ She had the inclination for self-pity, but in her own words:

572. See J. Morris, *Heavens Command* (Westminster: Penguin Books, 1979), 72.

573. Henry Martin (1781–1812). See B. Eaton, *Letters to Lydia* (Cornwall: Hypatia Publications Ltd, 2005).

574. See Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 3–6.

575. In *A Chance to Die*, 88.

576. *Ploughed Under*, 120.

577. This she wrote in W.Y. Fullerton, *At the Sixtieth Milestone. Incidents of the Journey* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1917). The book is in the Dohnavur library.

578. *Amma's Book*, 43.

[O]f all things on earth self-pity is, I think, the most insidious and most pernicious. God is to us a God of Deliverances. We need not to be consumed by self-pity.⁵⁷⁹ There is a feeling (I can only call it worminess) that can come especially in the night. All the fight seems to be drained out of you, and all power to endure. It is really a very horrid feeling, but the word of our wonderful God is equal to anything - even to this. Last night, through the sense of oppression and worminess, came this: Fear not, thou worm! Truly it was quite startling. It was so exactly right. There was no smooth pretence that things were not what they were. They were wormy. I was wormy. Well then, Fear not, thou worm! Our God meets us just there where we are. But He does not leave us there. There is a power in the word of a King to effects what it commands. In the Fear not of our God, repeated from Genesis to Revelation, there is power to give us just what we lack at that moment. Rotherham translates that verse: 'For I, thy God, am firmly grasping thy right hand ... am saying unto thee, Do not fear. I have become thy helper. Do not fear, thou worm'. Do not fear, but sing. Praise the Lord upon earth ... beasts and all cattle: WORMS (Ps 148:7-10, BCP).⁵⁸⁰

In the CMS house in Madras she heard a story of a Muslim girl who wanted to become a Christian. The story that girl wrote to her parents was very interesting and with a happy ending. For Amy this was toying with the truth:

Does God wish His people to be 'encouraged' in this way? [...] At that night I resolved that if ever I had to write a story I would not change one word to please anybody. I would not 'make - up' however much more interesting a made-up tale might be. God helping me I would be very careful about truth.⁵⁸¹

She also saw that there were few conversions. Was it because Muslims and unconverted Christians were used as teachers?:

This became a heavy burden to me. A word came to her from Ezra, 'Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted off? To men who were so much her seniors in goodness as in years, even they were not to be accounted of in comparison with Him who had long ago spoken so solemnly through the book of Ezra about the kind of builders who alone could build the temple.

This would not have happened in Japan. There, nobody would ask a Buddhist to build a house for the Lord. The truth was inescapable. 'At last I took courage and spoke.'⁵⁸² 'Pray that my life may be all Alleluia and obedience', a French missionary once said.⁵⁸³

She is known to have had a buoyant spirit, been a little bit headstrong and sure of the promises of God. For her God's grace was sufficient. It was here in India that she worked out her vision with determination, serving God and breaking fresh ground in reaching the lost through a wide-ranging and creative project. Where the millions were looking for the meaning of life, Amy would see them looking for the experience of being alive in Christ Jesus. She felt surrounded by millions living in darkness, but for her it was not a threat. She knew whom had sent her, and that in him she had victory and in the very end all will kneel before the king of kings. Christ would not be overcome by the darkness. For her it was to stand out from the darkness around to be noticed. The word 'impossible' had ceased to exist for her, for she saw barriers as surmountable objects for they had the divine promise to mount up with eagles. She would become the founder of the DF, located in the south of India. Her roles during the uninterrupted 55 years she would be in India were as Amma (mother), missionary, preacher, author and intercessor.

579. *Amma's Book*, 43.

580. *Whispers of His Power*, 05 June 124.

581. *Amma's Book*, 41.

582. *Amma's Book*, 43.

583. Charles Eugène de Foucauld (1859-1916).

Her great aim was to lift up Jesus Christ, and so winsomely did she do this that her influence extended far beyond the southern Indian hemisphere. She believed herself to have been commissioned for this work by the suffering Son of Man, kneeling in Gethsemane. Faithful to him she would stay the rest of her life in Dohnavur, where in 1951 she was laid to rest. The work in Dohnavur continues, and that gives us in this 21st century a deep appreciation of what Christian life really means.

■ A world of fashionable poses

'India is a complex land, and her people are not like the open page of a book, to be read at a glance.'⁵⁸⁴ It is home to the Indus Valley Civilisation and a region of historic trade routes and vast empires. The Indian subcontinent was identified with its commercial and cultural wealth for much of its long history. The first impressions India gave Amy were the hardship and discomfort of men and women. A country where all the energy of men and women was expended in the arduous business of keeping alive. The very deep problems of human society could be touched daily. The universal corruption and profligacy of times due to the sin of men has extended its baneful influence and destructive poison all through the religious system Amy met in India. The danger of famine and pestilence was never far away. There could never be remission for more than the briefest period from the daily drudgery of toil. In short, it was always a strange mixture of splendour and squalor. The poverty could strike the newcomer like a blow and another time the beauty of the flowers and the flowering trees burdening the air with fragrance captured the eye. She could see the elderly people and was shocked one day when she saw an old lady 'stripped of all'. 'God had meant her to have better when he made her,' she thought.

Missionaries often saw that some Indians were converted, but that they had no liberty and continuing power:

The secret of failure everywhere is the neglect of private communion with God. India lives too public a life to have a deep Christianity. Indian Christians will have to alter many of their customs before they get deeper.

These were the findings of the well-known Tinnevely missionary Thomas Walker.⁵⁸⁵ The necessity of living made man creative; joy in life spilled over and clothed the materials of living in beauty. However, this beauty persisted because it was functional, as having an inner relation to the needs of the people and to what they want to express. The scene at the village well in the early morning, as the women came out in their many-coloured saris, gracefully carrying their brass water pots on their hips, was one of scintillating beauty. The labour, however, was hard. Life was tolerable for the farmers and for those who had their own piece of land. The first year, she honestly writes, were not very easy for her. Deep a heavenly voice spoke in her heart: 'see in it a chance to die'.⁵⁸⁶

India is the seventh largest country by geographical area, the second most populous country, and the most populous liberal democracy in the world. Amy did not involve herself in political issues, but during her work she was confronted by the unscrupulous ways the court system functioned:

Nothing is more wretched than a Court case. The scales are weighted beforehand. Anything may happen. 'You haven't a chance in a thousand, for you have to fight with clean weapons and they are free to fight with poisoned weapons', said an Indian Christian lawyer to one who was forced to go to court in defence of a helpless girl.⁵⁸⁷

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584. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 12.

585. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 247.

586. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 179.

587. *This One Thing*, 92.

She underlined this sentence: 'The institution of the jury is wholly out of place in India, and is most noxious'.⁵⁸⁸ In Amy's time in India evidence in court was a thing bought and sold. The practice of 'himsa' (torture) was feared by all who came in the hands of the police:

Yet the word 'himsa' is a word which sends shivers of fear down the spine of those who hear it. To this day [Hopkins wrote the book in 1938], it is one of the hidden sores of India, forbidden by authority, yet carried on in secret. It is torture for the purpose of extracting false evidence, and takes many forms.⁵⁸⁹

Cursed by wicked devices a person was doomed to court life and the end was death. A lot of injustice was done to persons under 'himsa'. In the case of Raj, the brigand chief, Amy saw the destructive influence of 'himsa'. 'Surely, then, there is hope, that this wretched thing in all its forms, blackmail included, will soon be effectively dealt with, this cancer of the country wholly eradicated.'⁵⁹⁰

■ Religion: Carved in stone

Almost inextricably religion is woven into the cultural setting of India. The Hindu ideology as well as the social system affect every area of life and thought. Hinduism espouses the division of people into hierarchically placed groups, the 'castes'.⁵⁹¹ In Amy's time from the high castes, like the Brahmin, to the very low Dalits, 'the untouchables', everyone had to follow the ordained caste professions and marry only within their caste through arranged marriages. This kind of social structure has oppressed the Indian people for a very long time. 'Caste system really ruined India more than a thousand tsunamis could have done.'⁵⁹²

Amy had learned a lot about Hindu life from the work of Monier Williams (1819–1899), a professor in Sanskrit at Oxford University who studied, documented and published much about Asian languages. Before going to Oxford, he taught at the EIC College in Bombay. Several times in her work Amy refers to Williams.⁵⁹³ 'Each nation has its gift. India's is the gift of an intensely religious nature.'⁵⁹⁴ India is known as birthplace of many religions but Hinduism is the most significant one. We can say that India is Hindu and the south 'is manifestly religious. The huge temples attest the fact.'⁵⁹⁵ For more than 2000 years, Hinduism had held the heart of India. The first story has no word record. It lies carved in stone by

588. In A.L. Carhill, *The Company of Cain* (Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood, 1929). Amy got this book in 1929 and wrote on the front page: 'Many things which we read are true in this book'. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

589. Cf. H.A.E. Hopkins, *Raj The Dacoit* (London: Seeley, Service & Co. Ltd, 1938), 36. Henry Martin said as the inner world of India began to unfold before him: 'I shuddered as if in the dominions of the prince of darkness. The fiends of darkness seem to sit in sullen repose in this land' (Hopkins, *Raj The Dacoit*, 85).

590. *Raj, Brigand Chief*, 306.

591. A lot is written about the caste system in India. See G.S. Ghurye, *Caste and Race in India* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 2000); J. Keay, *India. A History: From the Earliest Civilisations to the Boom of the Twenty-first Century* (London: Harper Press, 2010), 52–55, 145, 189, 279, 432, 586–587.

592. In Y. Davuri, 'Caste and Christianity: A Study of Caste System in the Churches of Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh' (unpublished thesis, NTC, 2005), 1. See Matthews, 'The Theological Contributions of Amy Carmichael', note 13, 18.

593. In *Things As They Are*, 80, 92.

594. Lilavati Singh in her address at Allegheny College at Meadville, Pennsylvania, on the 50th anniversary of Bishop Thoburn's going to India in 1859. In Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 95.

595. *Overweights of Joy*, 202.

hands ages ago gone to dust. Sherwood Eddy, who knew Amy personally, came to the conclusion when speaking about Hinduism in his time that this religion contained many spiritual values; it had almost unlimited powers of assimilation, but it sadly lacked in the power of eliminating the grossest evils. Only Christianity can tear up the whole from the lowest depths.⁵⁹⁶ 'India is a cabinet of drawers, and secret drawers.'⁵⁹⁷

Now, in the second decade of the 21st century, the religious situation in India is as follows: the total population in India is 1 028 610 328 of which 85% follows the Hindu religion and tradition. In Tamil Nadu, the province where Dohnavur is situated, the Hindu population is even higher than the average, 88%.⁵⁹⁸ From about the 12th to the 18th century, a considerable part of India was subject to Muslim rule. With few exceptions, Muslim rulers were intolerant of Hinduism and they considered it their religious duty to encourage the conversion of large sections of their Hindu subjects to Islam. Often such change of faith was made at the point of the sword, and not always in consequence of a change of convictions. On the eve of Independence, they successfully split the subcontinent of India into the new state of Pakistan and what is known now as India. The division became effective on the principle of religion. Almost the first thing the national government did was to give up the principle of communal representation and actively discourage the growth of purely communal organisations and institutions. Free India sets for itself the ideal of a secular state, but as the greater majority professes Hinduism, it is still regarded as a Hindu state.

We write about these issues trying to look through the eyes of Amy, as she saw the things in south India in her time, as the present situation may be completely different.

Hindu leaders take the position that Christian evangelistic work may be tolerated if the intention is to convert and not to proselytise. According to Paul Devanandan, this concession is suggested and based on two assumptions: that genuine conversions are very few and far between and that proselytism is associated with unworthy motives and unfair methods.⁵⁹⁹ As we will see, Amy, like Thomas G. Ragland and Thomas Walker, always stressed a genuine conversion, which as a result often meant complete separation from family, home and living place. In *Overweights of Joy*, there are two pages of references to this issue, and the outcome is that 'no Hindu will ever be allowed to lead a consistent Christian life'. Christians are 'out-casted' from their Hindu homes and families. Someone said: 'If anything is impossible under the sun, it is this.'⁶⁰⁰ Amy wrote this above the chapter 'Entangled' and concludes: 'The seductive influence had worked. [...] A coma settles upon the soul that, however sorely pressed, disobeys, and goes on disobeying.' At the dawn of the 20th century, the time Amy started her work in India, caste feeling was very strong, especially in the kingdoms of Travancore and Cochin. So strong was the caste feeling that some said 'caste is the religion of south India'. To convert a Hindu was nearly impossible. 'Get his caste out of him? Can you? You would have to drain him of his life-blood first.'⁶⁰¹ Nobody is wanted as a Christian in a Hindu family. A woman told Amy:

596. Cf. Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 97.

597. *Ploughed Under*, 118.

598. These figures from 2012, in <http://www.indiaonlinepages.com/population/hinu-in-india.html>.

599. In P.D. Devanandan, 'The modern Hindu attitude toward Christian evangelism', in J. Wietzke (ed.), 1987, *P.D. Devanandan*, Volume II, United Theological College, Bangalore, 5.

600. *Overweights of Joy*, 116–117.

601. *Things As They Are*, 285.

I cannot live here and break my caste; if I break it I must go [...] unless you will compromise. Compromise is the one open door back into the old home.⁶⁰²

It 'may' be possible for a boy to return home after his conversion, but for a girl *never*, and this has happened: the girl will be a total 'wreck' after several years. Here in India we 'need more of Abraham's type of faith'.⁶⁰³

To become a Christian and to live the Christian life for a Hindu is really a 'fight' and the only thing that helped them through is that 'He endured as seeing Him who is invisible'. Amy talks about the 'snare' of Hinduism and refers to Pandita Rāmabai at Agra. People see only 'the dreams of delight', but now, show me the dungeons underneath! A single voice is speaking from the dungeon underneath:

I beg of my Western sisters not to be satisfied with looking on the outside beauty of the grand philosophies, and not to be charmed with hearing the long and interesting discourses of our educated men, but to open the trap doors of the great monument of Hindu intellect, and enter into the dark cellars where they will see the real working of the philosophies which they admire so much.⁶⁰⁴

When a Hindu boy or girl wants to become a Christian, the community will try to withhold them, then they will scourge them, then when seeing someone does not give up the intention to become a Christian, they will beat their breasts in an abandonment of dismay, disgust and horror. 'He has fallen into the pit.'⁶⁰⁵ If possible, they would punish in a severe way, locking up someone in a dark inner room, rubbing cayenne pepper into his or her eyes, etcetera.⁶⁰⁶ It was an open secret that many secret things were done in every village in India.⁶⁰⁷ When sin is exposed, it is drudged. 'Here, nothing is too unseemly to discuss, life holds no sanctuary.' Compared with a Christian country and expressed in Christian language, you cannot express what is really going on here. 'The blackest words are too pale to paint even the faint undefined shadow of that strong contrast's shape. [...] Can we sing on and not care?'

'Oh, if our brother's blood cry out to us, how shall we meet Thee who hast loved us all, Thee whom we never loved, not loving Him?'⁶⁰⁸ She underlined the words of S. Pierce Carey who quoted William Carey:

No people can have more surrendered their reason. In business, they are not deficient, but in religion, they seem without understanding. However, people can hardly be better than their gods. They have made themselves idols after their own hearts. Hindus have not the fierceness of American Indians, but this is abundantly made up for by cunning and deceit. Moral rectitude makes no part of their religious system: no wonder, therefore that they are immersed in impurity.

Here Pierce Carey adds: 'Perhaps, depression made him severe', but in the margin, Amy wrote 'No, he was merely being truthful'.⁶⁰⁹ In one of the books Amy read, she underlined a sentence of Mr

602. *Things As They Are*, 284–285.

603. *Things As They Are*, 285, 277, cf. 266: 'To wreck a person completely, strychnine was often used'.

604. *Overweights of Joy*, 202.

605. *Ploughed Under*, 97.

606. Cf. *Ploughed Under*, 93; *From The Forest*, 19.

607. *From The Forest*, 23.

608. *From The Forest*, 210.

609. In S. Pierce Carey, *William Carey* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, n.d.). The book is in the Dohnavur library.

Malabari who said about Hindu custom, 'in human custom, caste is more potent in its secret persecutions than was the inquisition of Spain'.⁶¹⁰ The Christian message, with its claim of complete surrender to Christ will always encounter fierce opposition of the living faith of non-Christian creeds. There is also the fear that the Christianisation of India will lead in the end to the rooting out of Indian culture. It must be granted today that Hindus form the major part of the Indian population, and that their culture is the most influential in national life. India is a country where an aspirant Christian has to cut every sacred tie to become a follower of Christ Jesus, and literally forsake parents, wife, and often children. It has to be preached there: 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved *and thy house*'. Family ties are one of the greatest hindrances for people in India to confess Jesus their Lord.

In the past 200 years, group accessions to Christianity have come from low-caste and outcaste Hindus. The idea of a transforming community is alien to the genius of Hinduism because of its basic belief about the nature of God as the eternal and the nature of man as essentially that of Brahman itself. There can, therefore, be no such community, as the church claims to be a community, where there is an inflow and outflow of personal influence, because the Holy Spirit provides the real bond of fellowship, who draws the members of the church together in communion with God as revealed in Christ Jesus. Christian missionary outreach and preaching invariably leads to a point where a decision is called for.

■ The need of India

Hendrik Kraemer brought in 1938 the question of the Christian message to the non-Christian world in force at the Tambaram (India) meeting of the International Missionary Council.⁶¹¹ His book makes a stand against syncretistic thinking. The Gospel stands for something, which God has done in Christ Jesus for the salvation of man. He is unique, the Incarnation is final and the Christian claim is to absolute truth. It is this Gospel, the good news of God in Christ, that we preach.⁶¹² India needed it and seeing all the superstition, Amy said, 'We live in the heart of old India – it is a dark Old India, very sinful, very needy, needing God.'⁶¹³ Western missionaries have often been accused of patronising un-evangelised peoples, but one of the most striking characteristics of Amy's writing is her transparent affection for and understanding of the Hindu people. She tells many stories of individuals and caste groups that bring their personalities to life. Once she said, 'I love the old native customs. I cannot bear the foreignising element so common in much mission work in India.'⁶¹⁴ Amy had a broad knowledge of the people she worked among and their religion. 'The Indian is quick to detect a sham, and equally quick to recognize holiness', or 'the Indian deep down is loving'. She could also trace the whole system of this religion back to the old Babylonian Mysteries.⁶¹⁵

610. In M.B. Fuller, *The Wrongs of Indian Womanhood* (Edinburgh: Olyphant Anderson and Ferrier, 1900), 64.

611. H. Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (6th edn., Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1963).

612. Cf. *The Indian Journal of Theology* 6(3) (July–September 1957): 74–79.

613. *From the Fight*, 4.

614. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 126.

615. *Overweights of Joy*, 154, 158.

There are many who talk of the beauty of Hinduism. But from outside the untold cruelties that abound in Hinduism are not seen. 'The tyranny of caste leads to evils which are beyond words to tell.'⁶¹⁶ Hindu philosophy: 'fog-wreaths of doubt, in blinding eddies drifted, that is what it really is':

There is, over and above the natural apathy common to all, an immense barrier of accumulated merit gained by pilgrimages, austerities, and religious observances, and the soul is perfectly satisfied, and has no desire whatever after God.

Thomas Walker, Amy's colleague and language teacher, confirmed this: 'It is true, absolutely true, that indifference to the glad tidings of the Gospel is the order of the day among the multitude of non-Christians who surround us here.'⁶¹⁷ In her eyes the 'fashionable Christianity in India is a strange saddening thing.'⁶¹⁸

Amy experienced when talking with Hindus, that adults as well as the children were soaked in the Hindu doctrines. Children who live 'in a land where childhood ends almost as soon it begins'.⁶¹⁹ 'The arrogance of centuries was stamped upon their little faces.'⁶²⁰ Since caste imposed barriers against commensality, Christians regarded it to be the greatest obstacle to the progress of the Gospel.

From the mid-1950s of the 20th century onwards, some years after Amy's death, we see few genuine conversions from Hinduism to Christianity.⁶²¹ Since India became independent in 1947, there has been a great open mind of inquiry among the multitudes in India. The Christian belief, they see, is not just the religion of imperial rulers; they see that Jesus is a Saviour for all. However, the major part of the Indian Church is made up of merely nominal Christians. Liberal theology has taken away the sense of authority, and many who profess to be Christian 'pastors and people alike are unconverted'.⁶²² The Gospel is not mere information; it is an offer of salvation. This is what India needs. The abovementioned words of Lilavati Singh have to be completed with what she also said: 'None but Jesus, none but Jesus, none, I say, but Jesus ever deserved this precious diadem, India; and Jesus shall have it.'⁶²³

The Gospel asks for a change of the heart and the belief that Christ is the one and only Saviour! A Christian cannot continue being involved in Hindu religious practices. The power of the Holy Spirit is at work in every nook and cranny of the Hindu world. The opposition towards Christianity is fierce. The Bible clearly shows that human nature is one vast strike against God. This big, massive 'strike' against God began and has gone on all through the generations. The disobedience against God continues

616. Thomas Walker in the preface to *Overweights of Joy*, VIII: 'It is true, absolutely true, that here in Southern India, we are "skirting the abyss," an abyss which is deep and foul beyond description, and yet is glorified, to Hindu eyes, by the sanctions of religion.'

617. In preface to *Overweights of Joy*, VII.

618. In a letter from Kotagiri, 31 May 1896 (PRONI D/461/1/1-D; D 4060/6/8).

619. *The Continuation of a Story*, 37.

620. *Ploughed Under*, 123.

621. See *Union Quarterly Review* 12(3) [1957].

622. Rev. Sobodh Sahu from India in his message to the missionary meeting at the Keswick Convention in 1962. In the same meeting was Mr Thyaharaj Ananda from Dohnavur. He was one of the first Hindu children to be cared for by Amy Carmichael. A man seeking to earn Amy's favour kidnapped him. He stated that still there was the need for the Home at Dohnavur. 'In one city alone, according to an official figure, there are 13 000 women making an immoral livelihood. Babies born to such women either disappear or are in grave moral danger' (*TKW* [1962]: 155).

623. In Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 95.

to this day. Sin, as the Bible states, is not a disease; it is revolt against the living God, pure anarchy. Hindus fear that Christianity will lead in the end to the rooting out of Indian culture, in this case Hindu culture. Amy emphasised from the beginning she was in India not to compromise on the absoluteness of the Christian revelation in which alone is salvation. So spiritual warfare and principalities are strong here. Hinduism has a grip on many of the people's hearts, strangling out the Gospel before it has a chance to take root. To be honest, Amy encountered the culture with a certain respect and was always ready to talk with Brahmins and other scholars about their religion. Near the end of her life she wrote: 'For though the gods of the heathen are nothing yet we should not be rude to anything another respects'.⁶²⁴ She knew what was written in their old books, for instance, the *Ramayana*.⁶²⁵ In her writings we cannot trace if she followed the deliberations and the outcome of the 1938 Tambaram meeting of the International Missionary Council.

The few years in Japan had given her deep insight into actual mission work. She recalls a time when she was distributing little books, and as they walked, they sang 'a somewhat revised version of "Bringing in the Sheaves" as "Bringing Japanese, Bringing Japanese, Yes, we'll come rejoicing. Bringing in the sheaves"'. Amy was honest and knew that her Japanese colleagues had to do the work, because of the language, but 'one could help to sing them through the fight'. And the reactions of the people? 'How dull seemed each unresponsive face!' 'We feel our calling is to hold up the Christ of God, that his very purity in contrast may condemn, and that he may convict men of their need of him.

At the time Amy arrived in India, missionaries were usually kept away from the large population centres. Mostly they worked in the rural areas and often among 'the tribal'. In India, all over the country, there was a great contingent of British men and women working in several secular services, but generally the missionaries were isolated from the mainstream of British society – which had little contact with or sympathy for their work.⁶²⁶ As a reason, Barr mentions that missionaries usually didn't smoke, drink, dance or hunt, they travelled second or even third class in the trains, they did not come from much of a background and their efforts to convert Indians to Christianity were considered 'a thorough waste of time' by the secular majority. As one missionary remarked after her arrival in Bengal, 'I soon discovered that we were regarded as the lowest form of animal life in the district'.⁶²⁷ Most missionaries managed successfully to ignore their lack of status; often they lived in close-knit communities of like-minded people and through intense mail contact knew their families and could count on their support. Also, most of them came from a 'warm' church background, had been active in Sunday school work, counted on the prayer support of those they had left behind, or had been active in student Christian movements and married missionaries or clerics – if they married at all.⁶²⁸

Lord Lawrence, Viceroy of India, testifies: 'Notwithstanding all that the English people have done to benefit that country, the missionaries have done more than all other agencies combined'.⁶²⁹

624. *Amma's Book*, 49.

625. *Overweights of Joy*, 7.

626. Cf. Barr, *The Dust in the Balance*, 90.

627. Barr, *The Dust in the Balance*, 90.

628. About mission work of women in the 19th century, see Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York, NY: Harper Collins 1975 [1953]), 407; Griffiths, *Not Less than Everything*, 10; Tucker & Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church*, 311; Kommers, "A flame of sacred love".

629. In Wells, *Stewart of Lovedale*, 253.

The women who went as missionaries in the 19th century exercised an authority on missions that few women of our era can match. The characterisation of the 'Victorian lady missionary' as 'resourceful, self-sacrificing, dedicated, and wilful',⁶³⁰ meant that the influence and impact of their work was felt for decades in the countries where they served and within the whole world of missions. We cannot deny that the Christian missionaries, men and women, have been the real pioneers of civilisation in India.⁶³¹ Did not the frontier advance on the stepping stones of missionary graves? Amy Carmichael was prepared by God to act as the advocate in India for those who suffered most and could not defend themselves against the evils hidden in the religious system.

630. Kent, *Converting Women*, 103.

631. Cf. this remark concerning Africa: 'Civilisation without Christianity only teaches the black man to add the white man's vices to his own.' 'Darkest Africa', says Captain R.N. Hore, of Tanganyika [Tanzania], 'is where the white man has longest been.'

We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

2 Corinthians 4:10 (NIV).

I cannot forget the flints on my own path and the thorns. But looking back, I know I would not have chosen any other if I could have known when first I began to walk in it what it would mean of His companionship, and also of the power to enter into the grief of others. It was all worthwhile, ten thousand times worthwhile.

Candles of the Dark, 98.

A voice crying in the wilderness. Well, it is something to be allowed to be a voice.

Thomas Walker in *Walker of Tinnevelly, 182.*

Raising a daughter is like watering your neighbour's garden.

A Hindu saying.



Itinerating work

■ Bangalore experiences

Amy's involvement in Christian mission predominantly took place in India, although her missionary work and training began at home. Unlike the recommendations of mission organisations today, Amy did not undergo an organised training regime prior being led further afield. Nevertheless, her exposure to and experience of working with a variety of different people within different contexts in the UK helped prepare her for the challenges that she would inevitably face in a completely different culture.

A friend⁶³² had written to Amy in early 1895 that the climate in Bangalore was very healthy; in fact, it was delightful to live there, so if other places in the tropics were taboo for her, here in Bangalore she could stay very well. This proposal was discussed by the Keswick Mission Council and they gave full consent, so her appointed place in India was Bangalore where she was with some other CEZMS missionaries doing regular mission work from the mission station there. In particular, the CEZMS hospital was the place where she was asked to do evangelistic work. Eugene Stock, the CMS secretary, during his visit to Ceylon and India in 1913, noticed the devotion, 'the noble and self-denying work of the ladies of the Zenana Societies'. Although not specifically mentioning Amy, he could not find words to 'honour them sufficiently'.⁶³³ In the Keswick mission report of 05 August 1896 we read:

Miss Wilson-Carmichael, being unable to resume work in Japan, has been sent to Bangalore. Accounts of her arrival, and impressions of work there have from time to time appeared in the Life of Faith. Constant prayer is asked that the many opportunities allowed her may result in blessing, not only to the heathen, but to native Christians also, and that health may be preserved in this new climate.⁶³⁴

Amy was not the first Irish missionary who became a legend in south India. Nearly 70 years before she arrived in India another missionary from Belfast, Robert Caldwell (1814–1891), an Anglican, had

632. This friend was in charge of the CEZ Hospital in Bangalore. Later married to Rev. E.S. Carr (CMS) of Palamcottah.

633. Stock, *My Recollections*, 358–359.

634. In KCMMB, mission report, 05 August 1896.

arrived in Madras in 1838, and worked as a pioneer for higher education, in the Tinnevely district for half a century. In 1883, the Bishop Caldwell College opened its doors in Tuticorin.⁶³⁵

Amy arrived in Bangalore unwell. After her arrival in India she contracted dengue fever, also known as 'breakbone fever'; she felt 'low and grovelly, not in the least a soldier'. With good care from British medical personnel she recovered. Her work in the hospital would be, as she said herself to be its 'prophet', which meant to be the hospital evangelist. She loved the work and the people she had to work with, especially with Clare, the doctor in the hospital. Once settled in Bangalore she felt the absence of her family, especially her father. The first letter from Bangalore to her mother and other family members runs:

Here I am – and the first book I opened after I arrived was Dr Whitla's, Dictionary of Treatment, – this man was the family doctor during the years the Carmichaels lived in Belfast. Can you imagine how it carried me back to the old house with all its many, many memories. How good he was to us. I shall never care for any doctor as for him. Do you remember how he used to carry Ethel in his arms from one room to another? And how he watched over Walter and pulled him through many a touch-and-go. But he is connected with other times, closer still in our hearts – Well – Like. I stopped, and I don't know what I was going to say so must leave it and go on.

Wilkinson questions whether Amy was writing here about her father when she was interrupted. She finally finished her sentence with, 'Oh let us one and all "fight under Christ's banner" with heart and soul until He comes – as father put it ten years and nine months ago'.⁶³⁶

By correspondence, she knew what happened in China at that time. Missionaries, also from the CIM, were threatened, driven away, even murdered. In her Bible we find a reference when she read Jesus's words in Luke 12:4, 'be not afraid of them that kill the body', to the killing of missionaries during the Boxer rebellion. As often happens with inexperienced missionaries, they tend to form their opinions within a few days, and are very vulnerable to express themselves in hasty generalisations. Amy fell into the same trap. She wrote home that the 'Indians were a series of contradictions':

[T]hey are loving and lovable, cruel and needing all-grace-to-love, bright and dull, eager and lazy to a degree perfectly incomprehensible at home. They are trustworthy and utterly the opposite, courteous and quite barbarous. [...] This is the average native character on the surface. Underneath there is much, much more, but one cannot get at it until one can speak and I am far off that yet.⁶³⁷

635. See about Caldwell: Y. Vincent Kumaradoss, *Robert Caldwell: A Scholar – Missionary in Colonial South India* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2008).

636. In Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 23. I disagree with Sarah Curtis's suggestion that in Amy's behaviour, her way of life in India and the way she expressed herself is 'based on metaphor' or remaining in a state of 'fixation that refuses meaning', based on 'metonymy'. Metonymy is a figure of speech in which a thing or concept is called not by its own name but rather by the name of something associated in meaning with that thing or concept. The words 'metonymy' and 'metonym' come from the Greek: μετωνυμία, *metōnymía*, 'a change of name', from μετά, *metá*, 'after, beyond' and -ωνυμία, *-ōnymía*, a suffix used to name figures of speech, from ὄνυμα, *ōnyma* or ὄνομα, *ōnoma*, 'name'. Curtis writes: 'In Carmichael's case, a "fixation that refuses meaning" can be seen as a state that she was prone to and which was exacerbated by her father's death in preventing her from obtaining satisfaction. It could be argued that her life was lived in a frustrating and exhaustive way because she was caught up in the process of mourning him without ceasing.' Curtis examines Amy as a woman, captivated in Victorian ideas about being a woman and sexuality, using Freudian terminology. Under this magnifying glass of psychoanalysis, the outcome of having been a 'hysterical character' can be expected. In *Amy Carmichael's Aesthetic Legacy and Lacan's Other Jouissance* (Melbourne, Australia: Lacan Circle of Melbourne, n.d.), 15 and 19, Curtis uses the theory of Jacques Lacan (1901 – 1981), a French psychoanalyst with his theory of 'Back to Freud'. In 1997, A. Sokal and J. Bricmont, in *Intellectual Deceit*, write that behind a complicated jargon often meaningless and wrong ideas are hidden. (Cf. Wikipedia, Jacques Lacan).

637. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 89.

We see that she was aware of her own limitations, and later on, she learnt what she yet did not know. Once deeply involved in their daily life and thoughts we see that she could speak with respect and treat the Indian people with dignity. There were days for her that were difficult, but had not God said to her ‘Go ye?’ And in her Bible she wrote next to Psalm 56:11 and 12: ‘Thy vows are upon me, O God. What can men do unto me?’⁶³⁸

The church in Bangalore was very active but Amy noticed that there were few changed lives and nobody seemed to bother about that. Reading Romans 10:16, ‘But they have not all obeyed the Gospel’. For Isaiah said: ‘Lord who has believed our report?’, she wrote in the margin of that verse:

How real here today in its measure here in Bangalore. Seven years Zenana visiting. No souls! And whatever has been true prayer and love! Lord give it to me to Expect great things to Thy glory. Lord give it to me to know deeper into the Fellowship of Thy sufferings.⁶³⁹

She detested the meetings with the other missionary women drinking their tea and gossiping, but showing little concern for the eternal souls of those who were trusted in their care. She, who longed to talk with people about Jesus and pray with them, wondered why she met so much apathy among missionaries. She was shocked by their conduct, and especially by their ‘stretching’ and adjusting of the truth. They did not want to tell stories, which might discourage their supporters. Here Amy resolved, whenever she might write something, to tell the truth and the truth only.⁶⁴⁰ She was always clear in her motives and views about mission work, whether in Japan, here in Bangalore, or later on during her itinerary work and in Dohnavur. Any half-heartedness, any coldness and nominalism could expect her reaction; she detested any compromise in the life of holiness. The clinging to the external form of religious adherence, either is without or does not match internal conviction. She often heard colleagues say: ‘We have had such a nice missionary meeting’. But people had no idea what these words meant to her:

‘Such a nice meeting’, to hear of sin unchecked, need unmet, woes uncomforted, death unlighted. Perhaps the tea and cake which (possibly by way of benediction) closed this little entertainment, the curio- examining, interrogation showering, the interchange of sentiment regarding the heathen in general and their representative now on view, in particular, were exceedingly ‘nice’. But it is puzzling. [...] Who will listen to Jesus when He said: ‘Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it’. Will you? Many are glad with a soulless gladness. A scentless camellia flower. [...] One can see its pretty round of sociabilities; afternoon teas, tennis parties, concerts, and lectures; kindly little interests in beings, doings, and dressings. Permeated pleasantly, doubtless with the odour of sanctity, for we go to church, teach in the Sunday –school, visit a district, take a great interest in missions. [...] Dear one, it is for you, to you the master speaks, forgive me for pressing it so. Will you not face these things with Him now? What will you wish you had done, when the King comes?⁶⁴¹

For three weeks Amy stayed in Madras, where the CMS secretary Mr Arden asked her to stay with his daughters. There, Mary and Maud Arden challenged her about her love for Jesus Christ. First Amy felt attacked by them and in her eyes they:

[W]ere like butterflies, pretty and dressy and I had been shy of them both. I had no idea they cared for the things of Christ and had thought I should wait until I knew them better before speaking of these things.

638. See in the margin of Amy’s Bible (1895) of Psalm 56:11–12.

639. In Amy’s Bible (1895).

640. Cf. here too J.E. Williamson, *Amy Carmichael. A Life Well Placed* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media Ltd, 2014), 15–16.

641. *From Sunrise Land*, 174. Here Amy quotes Ruskin.

She could help them. 'As pretty butterflies they were really hungry lambs.'⁶⁴²

Together with these girls, she read the *Song of Songs*, the book the D.O.M used to read every Sunday evening. Even Mr Buxton loved it 'and I had learned to love it'.⁶⁴³ Here Amy learned that to tell the truth you have to be straightforward and there is no need 'to invent a happy ending' in a story:

And that night I resolved that if I ever had to write a story I would not change one word to please anybody. God helping me, I would be very careful about truth.

Of the two girls, Mary, died young, and Maud, her younger sister, became one of the first helpers for Amy in Dohnavur:

Maud, the younger sister, became one of the dearest of the many dear friends who gathered round this work in its earliest days and prayed for you. 'Give me the naughtiest ones', she used to say; and I gave her the naughtiest. They are not naughty now but valiant in love and service. One of the last joys on earth was hearing about them. A little while ago she too passed on. What a lovely company is There – all loving, all beloved.⁶⁴⁴

Here among so many friends Amy still felt alone. For missionaries at that time, especially for single women, it was uncommon to form interracial friendships. At larger mission stations, the missionaries were expected to live and to entertain in a more colonial style. In the latter part of the 19th century, Western women missionaries, showed 'insolence and arrogance'.

In the last two decades of that century many 'daughters of a ruling race' began to arrive in India, eager to take education to women, many of them from the CEZMS, and they often had difficulties in adjusting in their expected roles.⁶⁴⁵ Amy, one of them, did not feel at home in the situation in which she now was. She brought into question the accepted practices of most missionaries of her day. She wanted to meet the other people, to make friends with them to have possibilities for deeper contact in order to serve more usefully for the Lord. One day she fell on her knees in despair, and a verse that she had learned long before floated into her memory: 'He that trusteth in Me, shall never be desolate'; she found that to be true throughout her long ministry in India. In October 1896 she wrote in the margin of Job 1:10: 'Want of strength to do all one longs to do. Wishes of others – when they cross mine.'⁶⁴⁶

'The beautiful air of Bangalore', with its many English people, 'delightful amenities', as they were called, and everything that made red-hot evangelism seem a thousand miles away, was alien to her spirit. Amy wondered why there were no converts among Muslims of Bangalore. Where was the missionary zeal to reach the group who was completely not in focus with the missionaries? Amy began to feel 'like a fish out of the water, and such a fish is a discouraged creature'. She disagreed with the mission that in the language school non-Christians as teachers were contracted and also saw that Muslim teachers were employed in the mission schools. She read in Ezra 3, where the builders refused to have builders for the temple who were not Jewish. Could a Muslim or a Hindu build the Church of God?

642. *Amma's Book*, 42–43.

643. *Amma's Book*, 43.

644. *Amma's Book*, 43.

645. Cf. Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 77–78.

646. In Amy's Bible [1895].

She expresses her grief in sharp words:

Compare our answers as missionaries in India. We are not so narrow minded as these builders of the Lord. We do not even wait until they are asked by us, we bribe them to come. [...] Then we wonder the wall not yet built. Or we pretend we do not wonder, or we so lose expectation, that we do not wonder at all.⁶⁴⁷

At that time she got a letter from some Keswick friends who wrote, 'Do not cool, look to Him to keep you burning and shining'.⁶⁴⁸ She also had a lot of fun in Bangalore, and it was here that they called her 'Madcap'.

When she was in Kotagiri, a popular hill station about 20 miles south-east of Ooty, she made some excursions riding on her pony, Laddie. She knew how to do it: while in Millisle as a young girl, she had ridden her pony Scamp on the beach. The other missionaries had been very considerate to the new missionary, but Amy was not altogether happy there. One of the group was:

[U]nfair and curiously dominating in certain ways and words. One day I felt the 'I' in me rising hotly, and quite clearly – so clearly that I could show you the place on the floor of the room where I was standing when I heard it – the word came, 'See in it a chance to die'. To this day that word is life and release to me, and it has been to many others. See in this which seems to stir up all you most wished were not stirred up – see in it a chance to die to self in every form. Accept it as just that – a chance to die.⁶⁴⁹

Here she learned a basic principle, which is if education is to be truly Christian, a principle she also followed later in Dohnavur when she had to choose fellow workers. 'Would an Indian, working for the church, do the work for the Lord without any payment?' was the question in one of the meetings. Nobody gave an answer, and this shocked Amy, as she noticed that people wanted to do the work only when they were paid for it and this did not even bother the other missionaries:

But I felt as if a thunderbolt had fallen in the midst of that pleasant company. It wasn't that I thought the question referred to those who could not work unless their expenses were paid. To have one's expenses paid if one had no money of one's own is apostolic. No, it was not that; it was that no one in that room knew any one (whether they had pay or not) were working purely for love of their Lord, who loved Him enough to work for love's sake only.⁶⁵⁰

For love's sake she wanted to work among India's people and tell them the saving Gospel. In February 1896 she prayed: 'Lord make me utterly hard on myself and utterly tender to others'.⁶⁵¹

She started to learn Urdu, but because no one in the hospital staff could speak Tamil, it was decided that she should begin to learn that instead – in order to be the hospital evangelist. In Japan, it had been very hard for her to master the Japanese language and during her short stay in Ceylon she had started with Singhalese. Again the change must not have been easy for her but the Tamil study was taken up seriously, and little by little she could talk a bit; she noticed they understood what she said, but her main problem was to understand them. Perhaps she knew the remark of the missionary and linguist Henry Martin, who, nearly 100 years earlier than she did, had arrived in India and had seen that language study 'was the rock on which

647. In Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of Ezra 3:3.

648. *Amma's Book*, 45.

649. *Amma's Book*, 45.

650. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 87.

651. In Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of Romans 14:11. In the margin of Romans 16:21 she wrote '198.000.000 are left unreached'. She too refers to the waste of time and of 'overlapping of effort on effort'.

missionaries had split, that they had attempted to write and preach, before they knew the language'. She, however, took it seriously, for to reach the hearts of the people they needed to be addressed in their own language. When she read Hebrews 11:30, 'By faith the walls of Jericho fell down', she wrote in the margin 'My language text, 1896'.⁶⁵² One day the language 'walls' would fall, she believed. It was hard for her to master the Tamil language and we read her prayer to learn the language well in the following poem:

Father, give the Tamil language
Hour by hour to me,
As thou givest let me use it
All for Thee.
Quicken courage, faith and patience,
Help me, Lord, today,
Let me study to Thy glory,
In Thy way.
Let the brightness of Thy presence
Make me glad and strong;
Let me learn the language singing,
Be my song.⁶⁵³

In Amy's time 55 million people spoke Tamil, and this language is one of India's two languages of antiquity:

One of the distinguishing features of Tamil is that it has three different forms of the sound 'T'. In fact the correct pronunciation of 'Tamil' sounds like 'Tamizh' for which there is no phonetic equivalent in most other languages.⁶⁵⁴

The first known book in the Tamil language using the Roman script was a Tamil catechism, printed in Lisbon in 1550.

Tamil, this old, rich language seemed for her to be an ocean in which she was not yet so much as ankle deep. She continued her language study in Kotagiri and then in Ooty. In a letter from Kotagiri, written 31 May 1896, she gives her reasons for studying the Tamil language: because 'I can understand and be able to bring eternal things so very near to them'.⁶⁵⁵

Here in Ooty she first met Thomas Walker. She had just heard of him and when she went to a convention where he had to speak, she took her Tamil grammar book with her, expecting a dull address, but the book remained unopened. This man would become her language teacher, a trustful friend, her guide and adviser, until his death in August 1912. He was also the cause that the Tinnevely District was to be her home until she was called into glory in 1951. In Ooty Amy found a lifelong friend in Mrs Hopwood, a missionary to the Muslims herself, who had a great house called 'Farley':

A zealous evangelical lady of some wealth who maintained a house named 'Farley' to accommodate missionaries of furlough. [...] We know little of her own family circumstances, but she spoke sometimes of travelling about Europe with her mother, and attending musical festivals. Music was her only 'worldly interest'; otherwise she

652. In Amy's Bible [1895], in the margin of Hebrews 11:30.

653. Unpublished poem of Amy Carmichael in a typed version of Wings. In the author's library.

654. In A. Frame, I. Hyder & S. Bray, ed., *The Dohnavur Fellowship* (in the DF office), 6.

655. In PRONI D/4061/1/1-D and D 4060/6/8], 7.

considered all forms of entertainment as belonging to the Devil's domain. Hymn-singing was a permissible indulgence of her taste for music.⁶⁵⁶

The young Miss Hopwood, a missionary to the Muslims, took Amy to visit the Todas, an aboriginal tribe who lived in the Nilgiri hills in 'a collection of beehives' or in 'nestlings in the hollows at the edge of the great jungles'.⁶⁵⁷

She had also hoped to find a Tamil teacher in Bangalore, but good Tamil scholars were difficult to find; in God's providence she met one who could teach her. This was the beginning of a lifelong relationship with one of the most prominent CMS missionaries and a Tamil scholar called Thomas Walker. She left Bangalore on 30 November 1896,⁶⁵⁸ going to the south to start itinerating work.⁶⁵⁹ She really did not like the scenes of 'fashionable Christianity', but enjoyed the more unconventional Keswick atmosphere and to sing the Keswick hymns. She liked 'real soldier missionaries', people like Thomas G. Ragland, Henry Martin, David Brainerd and Thomas Walker. Of her Bangalore time, Amy wrote, 'There were burning hours, and dark hours, and often difficult hours; but there was always, or nearly always, a bird singing in my heart.'⁶⁶⁰ Already in 1891 Thomas Walker had drawn up a practical scheme for itinerating work, 'for we are just on the eve of going into the district'.⁶⁶¹ Amy eventually followed him to the south. Afterwards it became clear to her, that this was 'the appointed service' for her.⁶⁶² She went around with a band of women who joined the mission enterprise of Rev. and Mrs Walker. During the time they itinerated with their preaching bands through Travancore in the south of India, they found out that they were not the first ones to bring the Gospel to the people in this part of the country.

■ Mission to India: How it started

As early as the middle of the 16th century Francis Xavier came to the west coast of south India. Roman Catholic missions used the 'adaption' strategy for the conversion of the Indian people. In 1559 the board for worldwide missionary work of the Jesuit Mission, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, gave the following instructions to missionaries:

Do not make any effort toward the change and do not for any reason persuade the people to change their customs unless they should be patently opposed to religion and morality. Do not impart these, but have faith

656. Mother of the Hopwood described by Malcolm Muggerridge, in *The Green Stick, Chronicles of a Wasted Time*, vol. I (122) (New York, NY: William Morrow, 1973). In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 96.

657. Cf. C.F. Ling, *Dawn in Toda Land. A Narrative of Missionary Effort on the Nilgiri Hills, South India* (London: Morgan & Scott, 1910), with a foreword by Amy Carmichael. Here Amy wrote: 'Fourteen years ago, upon my arrival in India, I heard of the Toda people for the first time. [...] A few months later I saw it [...] here were real souls to be won for Christ' (V and VII).

658. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 16.

659. 'Women missionaries on iteration in the countryside often relished the opportunity, like the Baptist Miriam Young, to escape from the mission house and the mission compound; from the smelly, noisy streets of the city or town [...] leaving behind organisations and institutions, conflicting claims and distracting duties, [...] to steep one's body and mind in the sights and sounds and smells of primitive country life. But these were short-lived interludes and, in the villages, an itinerant missionary was still a stranger, having "drive over in a foreign cart" and wearing "foreign clothes"' (Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 78).

660. *Amma's Book*, 45.

661. See *Walker of Tinnevely*, 121.

662. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 17.

that does not despise the uses and customs of any people be they not immoral in their behaviour. It desires, on the contrary, to see those preserved with all respect.⁶⁶³

At the time, when the Jesuits started their mission work in India, caste prejudice was very acute. For ages, the Roman Catholic view on the caste system had been that it was a custom, which should be allowed in the church as having nothing in common with religion. The story of the earliest Protestant missions to India is a fascinating one. It was about 200 years after Luther's Reformation in 1517 that the Protestant churches actively became involved in mission work. Seafarers explored faraway countries, coming to several parts of the country and eventually colonising. The first Protestant missionaries were mostly of Presbyterian background, followed by missionaries from other denominations.

The first effort from England for evangelism in India was pronounced in 1658 when the directors of the EIC recorded their desire 'by all possible means to propagate the Gospel in those parts'. In 1677 they sent out a schoolmaster, who was to instruct the Indian children, with others, 'in the Protestant religion'. The Charter of 1698 provided that the chaplains of garrisons and factories should 'learn the native language, the better to instruct in the Protestant religion the Gentiles that shall be servants or slaves of the Company or of their agents'.⁶⁶⁴ Mission work was restricted to settlements only, for the government and the EIC prevented the Gospel to reach the whole population of India. Thanks to Wilberforce and his comrades a solution was found in which the word 'missionaries' was avoided and it was stated as this: 'persons desirous of going to and remaining in India for the purpose of accomplishing [...] benevolent designs' were to be permitted to enter.⁶⁶⁵ The EIC sent with their personnel some chaplains, of which one, Henry Martin (1775–1812), is the most famous.

In the first half of the 18th century, the German missionary Bartolomäus Ziegenbalg (1682–1719) came out under the patronage of the King of Denmark. First Ziegenbalg was of the same opinion about caste as the Jesuits. For him it was a social institution, which could be tolerated to a certain extent, at least as long it did not come in direct conflict with Christian principles. This lax attitude towards a sinful system subsequently hindered the Lutheran Christians to get a clear Biblical attitude. Nominal Christianity, so widespread in the 19th century in south India was a direct outcome of this attitude. From the beginning, non-Lutheran missions have been intolerant towards caste feelings in the church. The South India Missionary Conference of 1900 resolved to discourage, repress and eradicate the evil of caste. The following is the resolution:

The Conference would very earnestly emphasize the deliverance of the South India Missionary Conference of 1900, that caste, wherever it exists in the Church, be treated as a great evil to be discouraged and repressed [...] and it earnestly appeals to all Indian Christians to use all lawful means to eradicate so un-Christian a system.⁶⁶⁶

English and American Protestant missionaries had adopted this policy as early as 1847. Hinduism stresses collective living and group living, while in Christianity it is the individual before his God and put in the *koinonia* of the congregation. When Chaplain James Hough arrived in Palamcottah, Tamil Nadu, in 1816 he met a church so neglected and nominal, that he contacted Charles T.E. Rhenius (Figure 8), a German CMS missionary in Madras, to assist him in the work. Rhenius arrived in 1820 and due to his enormous organisational skill and spiritual influence, the Christians in Tinnevely and in the district revived. Rhenius died in 1838. He is still revered as the second founder after Schwartz of

663. In J. Aberly, *An Outline of Missions* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1945), 47–48.

664. See H.C.G. Moule, *Charles Simeon* (London: IVF, 1892), 88.

665. A quotation from A. Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion* (Manchester, NY: University Press, 2004), 74. In Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 6.

666. Report of the Fourth Decennial India Missionary Conference (1902), 27.



Source: © J. (Hans) Kommers.

FIGURE 8: Rev. C.T.E. Rhenius. This image in the study of the local pastor of the 'Christ Church' in Dohnavur town.

Tinnevelly mission. Rhenius was 'one of the ablest, most clear-sighted and practical, and most zealous missionaries that India has ever seen'.⁶⁶⁷ Several times did the author of this book see Rhenius' picture in a pastor's house or church vestry in south India.

During the 19th century, there was an explosion of Protestant missionary activity in Asia. Protestants caught up in India with the earlier mission efforts of the Catholics. In June 1793 William Carey for the last time saw England's shore to commence his 15 000-mile voyage to India. The obstacles he met in India were immense, and the first five and a half years not a single Indian was converted. Yet:

I would not abandon the Mission for all the fellowships and finest spheres in England. [...] The work, to which God has set His hands, will infallibly prosper. Christ has begun to besiege the ancient and strong fortress, and will assuredly carry it.⁶⁶⁸

Carey, and his colleagues Joshua Marshman (1768–1837), a schoolteacher, and William Ward (1764–1823), a printer, ultimately settled at Serampore (Sreerampura), in Danish territory. 'The Serampore Covenant' (1805) of the new mission, partly influenced by Moravian missionaries, contained the vision and mission statement of the Protestant missionary era in India. It was clearly stated that the preaching of Christ the Crucified was the greatest subject of the preaching and also that the work of female colleagues in their work with women had to be valued.⁶⁶⁹ Christian F. Schwarz (1724–1798), the founder of the Tinnevelly mission who worked under the patronage of the SPG, was allowed by the EIC to work in an unhampered way at Tanjore, as was J.H. Kienander, who came out in 1758, in Calcutta. One of his converts, a Brahman women called Kohila, built a church in Palamcottah in 1785. This church became the 'mother' of the Tinnevelly Church.

In the Charter of 1793, Wilberforce asked to insert a clause owning the duty of England to seek 'the religious and moral improvement of the native inhabitants of the British dominions in India'. The Commons passed it, but still there was opposition from the EIC to mission work in every possible way, though it made grants to temples and mosques. Christian missions were banned as much as possible by the EIC for fear it would hurt their trade. From the very beginning, the British colonial interests were mercantile and thus 'secular', whereas the Protestant missionary interests were 'religious', although it would still be a long time before the full implications of these differences were felt on the host (whole) society.⁶⁷⁰

For too long Christianity had been banished from India and in 1813 William Wilberforce again brought in again the law that missionary work would be legally tolerated. Again, the EIC objected very strongly and tried to prevent the legalisation. The vote was taken, the motion carried by a vote of 89–36. This outcome marked a historical turning point in British dealings with its overseas subjects.⁶⁷¹ Wilberforce belonged to the Clapham Sect,⁶⁷² a group around Henry Thorand who lived in the Clapham

667. In S. Neill, *A History of Christianity in India, 1706–1857* (Cambridge: University Press, 1985), 218–222.

668. In I. Murray, *The Puritan Hope* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1971), 140.

669. Cf. Kommers, 'A flame of sacred love'.

670. We can say that the lives of Lieutenant Colonel Robert Clive (1725–1774) and William Carey (1761–1834) epitomise this distinction. Clive, the 'founder of the British empire', used despotic or sultanic methods to reap a personal fortune which included bags of Indian jewels; he used the same methods to sell 'protection' and thus procure a lot of wealth. Carey, the 'consecrated cobbler', is typical of the missionaries sent out by the English societies before 1860, people who came from the class of 'skilled mechanics', artisans and tradesmen with a deep distrust of hereditary hierarchies.

671. The passing of this bill 'marked the change from looting to paternalism' (Metaxas, *Amazing Grace*, 233).

672. 'The Clapham Sect wasn't really a sect, not in the usual sense of the term, as all its members were respected and committed members of the Church of England. Evangelicalism – whose distinctive tenets emphasise the centrality of the

district, in the south-west of London. They belonged to a circle of church members of Holy Trinity church, of which John Venn was the curate. They committed themselves to bring the vibrancy of the Christian faith to every area of life and believed that Christian faith could make a difference in the world. One of the members was Charles Grant, chairman of the directors of the British EIC. Was it by his influence that in 1813 when the EIC's charter had to be renewed, that a missionary clause was included opening the way for missionary work among the Indian population? The parliamentary decision in favour of the missionary clause went down in history as 'the greatest evangelical vote on any single issue ever recorded in the House of Commons.'⁶⁷³

In 1821, Mary Anne Cooke completed her journey from England and arrived in Calcutta as the first single female missionary to India. For most of the 19th century, women involved in missionary work were marginalised as 'helpmeets' of missionary husbands. The new Charter of 1813 removed the opposition to mission work. Missionaries were no longer hindered to enter the country and by 1830, nine mission societies were in the field and about 27 000 Christians. Another Protestant denomination, the Presbyterian Church of India, had its beginning when the first Welsh missionaries, the Rev. Thomas Jones and his wife, arrived at Cherrapunji on 22 June 1841. From the beginning, this church knew that it was entrusted with a mission and that it was being 'sent' out to proclaim salvation through Jesus Christ.⁶⁷⁴

Christianity has been in India since the first century, but Christians formed and form a very small minority. A large concentration of Christians is found in Kerala. Old Christian communities can be found in Mangalore, Goa, Bombay, Tamil Nadu, Chotanagpur and north-east India. They are also present in small numbers in every other state of the country.

We can say that India is a country trodden by the Prince of Peace many ages before Western missionaries entered the country. There is a very strong belief that the apostle Thomas travelled as far as south India. In a leaflet which I received during my visit in 2013 to the basilica St Thomas in Chennai (Madras), we read:

St Thomas, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ, came to India in a.D. 52, died as a martyr a.D. 72 and was buried at Mylapore, San Thome, Chennai, India. The Basilica is built over the tomb of St Thomas.

The famous Tinnevely missionary, Thomas Gajetan Ragland, was the first Englishman to camp among the people of India, while doing itinerant work.⁶⁷⁵ As a man of high standard duty, he worked in Travancore from 1850. He chose not to marry, because his missionary call cut straight across that hope. In writing about Ragland, it is as if Amy wrote down her own feelings about this issue.

During the 19th century, often called the 'Great Century of Protestant Missions', many men and women left England and America to serve the Lord overseas and India received a lot of them. All had one goal: telling the people in India of Jesus Christ, the Saviour. Opposition was fierce and few dared to cross the line and break forever with life as it had been and 'line the heart with the love of

[footnote 672 continues ...]

text of the Bible, salvation through the sacrifice of Christ, the need for personal conversion, and the outward expression of one's conversion through acts of service – was by this time a movement occurring both within and outside the established Church' (Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*).

673. Prior, *Fierce Convictions*, 180.

674. See S. Sangkhuma, *Presbyterianism, with Special Reference to the Presbyterian Church of India* (Shillong, India: Presbyterian Church of India, 1993), 16.

675. Cf. S. Neill, *God's Apprentice. The Autobiography of Stephen Neill*, ed. E.M. Jackson (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991), 102–103.

Christ'.⁶⁷⁶ By Western standards several cultural habits of the country were very harsh and it was difficult to introduce any religious change of heart in a country where for thousands of years Hinduism had been firmly rooted in the heart and mind of the people for whom Christ was just one of the many gods. Miss Eve Ross, a trained nurse working in the 1930s in India, came to the conclusion that:

[T]hose missionaries who went out with a burning zeal to win the world for Christ, believing they were offering Indians a pearl of great price, met with very little success I'm afraid.

She felt that, in the end, all her own medical efforts were 'like trying to fill the ocean with a teaspoon'.⁶⁷⁷ It was Carey's wish that faithful missionaries should preach Christ in India:

We only want men and money to fill this country with the knowledge of Christ. We are neither working at uncertainty nor afraid for the result. He must reign, until satan has not an inch of territory.⁶⁷⁸

At the dawn of the new century it was estimated that of the inhabitants of India, 210 million were Hindu and 67 million Islam. Out of the 145 million women and girls, only one million at the most could be said to be under any Christian influence whatever. For Tamil Nadu the 2001 census gave a 7% Christian population, 3 785 060 Christians. Tamil Nadu and Kerala have many times seen mass conversions, often due to socioeconomic motivations of the people. This can be the main reason why Thomas Walker and Amy were so often confronted with nominal Christians whose daily practices did not differ a lot from their Hindu neighbours. In 1900, Amy and the Walker family were among the 1700 missionaries working in this huge country.⁶⁷⁹

More than 28 years after the Tranquebar conference, the churches in south India had discussed for many years that they might unite, and on 27 September 1947, the Church of South India came into existence, a church in one of the most conservative parts in south India. Here Hinduism is practised as it must have been practised for centuries, and in the beginning of the 20th century, it was modified little through contact with Western education or civilisation. In the south, caste has one of its most formidable strongholds. At times this area has seen mass movements toward Christianity and in them some men and women have been truly born again. But as Robbins, who worked as a missionary doctor in the Dohnavur Hospital, wrote:

Large numbers of people have been swayed by emotion, or persuaded by material considerations, to become Christian in name. Nominal Christianity can be a deadly weapon in the hands of the devil, and it has been so here [...] a great proportion of the population is still completely uninfluenced by the Gospel.⁶⁸⁰

With a band of Indian women Amy, approaching the age of 30, itinerated in a bullock cart. The people of the district called the band the 'Starry Cluster'.⁶⁸¹ These women disciples banded together and followed Christ. Because they were Christians, they often were not any more accepted in their respective communities, more or less marginalised women, now using their gifts for the sake of Christ.

676. *Overweights of Joy*, 107.

677. In P. Barr, *The Dust in the Balance*, 102.

678. I. Murray, *The Puritan Hope*, 141.

679. In H.C.G. Moule, *Students and the Missionary Problem. Addresses Delivered at The International Student Missionary Conference* (London: SVMU, 1900), 345.

680. N.E. Robbins, *Greater is He. The Power of God Present to Heal in a South Indian Hospital* (London: CPCK, 1952), 18-19.

681. *Lotus Buds*, 232.

Their devotion had led them to denounce all jewellery; as one of them said: 'I saw Him, naked of this world's glory, stripped to the uttermost; and I went and made an ash-heap of my pride'.⁶⁸²

They itinerated, in a strategic preconceived plan, but, in addition, they were all consecrated, set apart and focused on the one who went before. These were women on the frontline, real pioneers, going to the spiritually dark places to bring the Gospel of Christ Jesus to those living in fear, ignorance, in short: without hope. Of this work, she knew: 'We had one thing to do and one only; there could be no perplexities as to which was the duty of the hour – there was only one possible duty'.⁶⁸³

Sometimes they met the people on a deserted veranda or under a tree, where, like Indian gurus do, they waited for the people to come. 'We grew more and more to use this way of approach; it seemed to suit the temper of the people, and it led furthest in'; sometimes the band went street preaching 'with a baby organ by way of attraction'.⁶⁸⁴ The poor in and around Tinnevely and Dohnavur did not wear slippers and therefore, Amy and her associates preferred not to use them. They travelled in a *bandy* through many dusty villages, wearing a sari, often with bare feet, recognisable by a flag 'made of folds of black, red, white, and yellow sateen, a most useful text for an impromptu sermon; and we found Eastern musical instruments useful too'.⁶⁸⁵ In an effort to respect Indian culture, members of the organisation – Amy included – wore Indian dress⁶⁸⁶ and later on in Dohnavur the children were given Indian names. She dyed her skin with dark coffee so she could travel and even entered locations only open for Indian ladies. For encouragement and personal spiritual growth, the women did Bible study together 'without which our work would have been vain'.⁶⁸⁷

Often they met with fierce resistance. 'We saw nothing of the beaters, and returned with whole bones, to the relief of the community at large.' To get access to homes and hearts of the people, they were baffled as to how to penetrate the spiritual walls that blocked true acceptance of Christ. To penetrate the spiritual they knew it to be the work of the Holy Spirit, but they understood, too, the Gospel mandate to be one of collaboration with divine purpose. They met all types of people, some completely ignorant, just staring at them with nearly no expression in their faces, while others were full of character and intelligence. Forcible faces, of which some are portrayed in *Things As They Are*. In the southern part of India the conception of caste is very strong and was seen by missionaries as the main stronghold to be conquered. Amy wrote:

It is the very stronghold of the devil, rooted as a living thing upon the rock of an ancient creed, moated by the mighty moat of custom, buttressed by the landmarks of superstition, hoary with the ages. Here it stands, strong as ever, and only in the far vision of faith have we seen it proud wall fall.⁶⁸⁸

682. *Ponnamal*, 26. For more about not wearing jewellery see pp. 25–31.

683. *Ponnamal*, 13 and 15–16.

684. *Ponnamal*, 14.

685. *Ponnamal*, 12–13. See more about the start of her itinerating work in *Ponnamal*, chapter 3 [pp. 12–22]. A *bandy* is a cart driven by oxen.

686. This was in a time when Indian converts to Christianity had to adopt English dress, English customs and English names. This is illustrative of the Victorian fear of going native, which was seen as the opposite of the civilising aspect of mission work.

687. *Ponnamal*, 15.

688. *From the Fight*, 27.

Amy met many obstacles in this type of work: sometimes they were chased away; at another time, a person who was interested in the new teaching was publicly beaten. In another village a small mission school was burned down and also the Bible women's house some 16 miles away from Panavilai. When someone became a Christian, the whole caste was roused, and the whole countryside joined the opponents. Amy met hate among the people whom she thought loved the *Starry Cluster*. If they were not mobbed, and had a quiet time to prepare themselves to explain the Gospel, it was always a challenge getting the people attracted and all too soon her listeners were distracted and little children were crawling everywhere, also asking for attention. It was always difficult to go inside the houses and have an opportunity to talk with the women. 'Theoretically, itinerating work is delightfully rapid; but practically, as every itinerating missionary knows, it is quite slow.'⁶⁸⁹ Even after the daily itinerating work was done, Amy used her time very well and continued her Tamil studies. Her first Tamil exam was in 1897 and the second in 1898.⁶⁹⁰ One night she had a dream in which she saw an angel who asked her how much Tamil she wanted. 'Enough to win souls and a little over' was her answer.⁶⁹¹ After she related this dream to Thomas Walker, he laughed and told her, 'I will give you a little over'; and he did! Sometimes Amy lacked faith. Could she ever learn this difficult language? The only text that helped her was, 'the Lord opened the mouth of the ass', so the less said about language study the better.⁶⁹²

Often she got no further than onto the veranda of a house and could only do 'veranda work', 'but this is better than nothing', and the greatest difficulty was that 'the women have no desire to be reached'.⁶⁹³ Still more could be done if more missionaries would be available:

But I look up from my writing and see a stretch of mountain range thirty miles long, and this range stretches unbroken for a thousand miles to the North. I know how little is being done on the plains below, and I wonder when God's people will awake, and understand that there is yet very much land to be possessed, and arise and possess it. Look down the mountain strip with me; there are towns where work is being done, but it needs supervision, and the missionaries are too few to do it thoroughly. [...] I do not want to write touching appeals, or to draw one worker from anywhere else – it would be a joy to know that God used these letters to help to send someone to China, or anywhere where He has need of His workers – but I cannot help wondering, as I look round this bit of the field, how it is that the workers are still so few. [...] These letters are written, as you know, with a definite purpose. We try to show you what goes on behind the door, the very door of the photograph, type of all the doors, that seeing behind, you may understand how fiercely the tiger bites.⁶⁹⁴

It was no wonder there was resistance; she even expected it. In their work, they avoided giving the people offence, but 'we were never able to discover a way by which the captives of the devil could be

689. *Things As They Are*, 146. See more about these difficulties, in *Things As They Are*, chapter 18.

690. See in Amy's Bible [1895] in the margin of Psalm 17:2 where she underlined the verse 'Let my sentence come forth from Thy presence'.

691. See *Amma's Book*, 46.

692. *Amma's Book*, 46. In a letter from Kotagiri, 12 June 1896, she writes about Tamil as a huge mountain. 'But it is His mountain. God was the inventor of the different languages with their wonderful systems of thought and expression. It makes Tamil doubly interesting to know that, so one can claim the promise "I will make all my mountains a way".' (PRONI D/4061/1/1-D; D/4060/6/8).

693. *Things As They Are*, 148 and 157.

694. *Things As They Are*, 147–148.

delivered without offending that person'. She knew that the people were often compelled by 'any idiotic code', and when she saw a mighty spider's web she saw the 'mighty Caste system of India'.⁶⁹⁵

One year after the death of Amy the situation in the Indian church is described in *The Cross Over India* by R.D. Paul. In this book he urges the church to go back to its first vocation: to uplift the Lordship of Christ. As obstacles to it he mentions: the prevalence of caste, the persistence of intemperance, the failure to naturalise the faith and the neglect of a ministry of reconciliation, especially between Westerners and Indians. And also the tendency to stand apart from the rest of the people of the country, which has led to an unfortunate communalism and the appalling lack of interest in Christian evangelism, in large measure due to losing the original freshness and zeal of the Christians of the previous generation. Paul stresses one call: 'repentance, repentance that will lead to fuller dedication to the Christian vocation. We show so little evidence of what the Gospel has done for us'.⁶⁹⁶ It is good to read that ultimately, after Walker's death in 1912, the Hindus in the Tinnevely district were talking of him 'as a man Heaven-sent'.⁶⁹⁷

■ Tinnevely (Tirunelveli)

Amy and her team never stayed long in one place, because she was 'dedicated to the wanderer's calling'⁶⁹⁸ and Dohnavur was only one of their various headquarters, of which Pannaivilai was the centre from which the work was coordinated.

In the 9th century the Christians in Madras State reconverted to Hinduism and in the 15th century only a remnant of Christians was left in the far south of the present state of Kerala, known as the Syrian Church. These Syrian Christians are a sturdy race, dating back, as said, from a visit of the Apostle Thomas, who according to tradition, brought the Gospel to India and died near Madras. The reason for the decline in the ninth century was that the Nestorians never translated the Bible into any Indian language; the worship was carried on in Syriac, and the Church was dependent on Nestorian bishops from the Middle East. One of the oldest fields of Christian activity in India is Tinnevely,⁶⁹⁹ located on the banks of the perennial Thamirabarani River, 75 kilometres from Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin), India's southernmost tip. Nellayappar temple, a famous temple of the Hindu god Shiva, is situated here. In 1534 the entire fisher-caste of the Paravas embraced the Roman Catholic faith. This was done more with a view to securing the support of the King of Portugal than from any religious conviction. The famous Francis Xavier came in 1542 to the neglected people and he carried out his wonderful three-year preaching service on the coast. His work remains: the Roman Catholics have a deal to show in the interior, but their great strength is on the coast.

For the Lutherans, Friedrich Schwarz, the first Protestant missionary made his appearance in south India. He headed to Palamcotta, and there found a group of soldiers who were Christians. His work prospered. At the end of the 18th century a revival movement broke out, not far from Kanyakumari, among the hardy Nadars. The Lutheran missionaries baptised more than 5000 of them. These Nadars were rather independent and have avoided dependence on missionaries 'which has been the bane of

695. *Ponnamal*, 17.

696. Cf. R.D. Paul, *The Cross Over India*, (London: SCM Press, 1952). A review of this book can be found in *National Christian Council Review* 73(3) (1953).

697. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 123.

698. *Ponnamal*, 32.

699. Tinnevely is the mangled English pronunciation of the Tamil word Tirunelveli, 'hedge of the holy paddy field', a town and district at the southern tip of India, divided from the old kingdom of Travancore (modern Kerala) by a range of mountains called the Western Ghats.



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FIGURE 9: Amy with Rev. and Mrs Walker in their itinerant ministry in Tinnevely District.

many churches in India'.⁷⁰⁰ In the 18th century, the German Protestant missionaries had translated the Bible into Tamil and had laid the foundation of the Lutheran churches of south India.

At the time Stephen Neill was ordained as bishop in Tinnevely, the church in Tinnevely (Figure 9) district had thus far been controlled by foreigners; but after a long period of strict missionary domination, the Christians of Tinnevely were to be introduced to the joys and perils of a democratic order. In the diocese were about 450 CMS congregations. For a long time there had been a conflict between the SPG churches and the CMS churches about whether the responses should be sung or read. Another old conflict was about the cross in the church. The banning of the cross had become a symbol of loyalty to truth, and every attempt to introduce it was seen as a conspiracy to destroy the truth. The Irish influence had been strong in Tinnevely; the Christians of the CMS allegiance were determined not to have anything in any church that could possibly be misinterpreted by the Hindus as idolatrous. On paper there were many Christians in the Tinnevely district; however, most were just nominal Christians, of whom several still practised Hindu prescripts and went to Hindu festivals, so it was difficult to identify them as real Christians. When as a young girl Arulai⁷⁰¹ was looking for the 'Living God', she went to the house of her uncle who professed to be a Christian. It was a shock for her to see that the man just lived

700. Neill, *God's Apprentice*, 82–83.

701. See her story in *Ploughed Under*.

and behaved like the Hindus living around him. A disillusioned word in the notebook says: 'But when I was among them [*in her uncle's home*], I saw that these Christians were quite different from what I had thought that they would be'.⁷⁰²

In Amy's itinerating work there was a strong emphasis on preaching. In the actual proclamation of the Word of God they were often required or challenged by Brahman scholars to have discussions with them. She felt that her field of work was, as was also the opinion of Thomas Walker, to concentrate on a limited area, or one district, and to cover it well, rather than to travel too fast and too far and work superficially.

■ A cry from the Zenanas, 'No Without'⁷⁰³

The 'murmur of the world' outside had never reached her. Her range of vision, mental as well as physical, bound only absolutely by the wall that surrounded her house. It is true that the call that wakens often comes from within, but oftener surely it comes from without. This woman's world knew no without, and much of the meaning of the within was hidden for her. We do not realize until we think about it, how much we owe to the largeness of our environment.⁷⁰⁴

In these striking words, Amy, in few sentences, gives us a description of the position of women in India as she saw them. The women she met in south India knew almost nothing of their own religion, nor even thought about it:

A South Indian wife and mother rarely feels her need of God. [...] We pleaded with her; but no. 'My heart is stone when you talk of your God; talk as far as you may, not an atom moves within me'.⁷⁰⁵

In traditional India, among the high and middle castes, the entire training of a girl was meant to make her a good daughter-in-law and wife, in that order. She had to master domestic work including cooking and she was trained to obey her mother-in-law, who was, in many ways, especially in the first few years of her married life, far more important than her husband was. A daughter-in-law had to bear children, in particular sons, to continue her husband's lineage. If she failed to do this, she was liable to be set aside for another wife.⁷⁰⁶ Amy went to India in 1895 as a CEZMS missionary. This Anglican women's auxiliary emerged since its beginning in 1880 as Britain's largest and best-funded female missionary society.⁷⁰⁷ This society tried to elevate the women's situation, many of whom lived in seclusion. Most missionaries at that time were men and *purdah* restrictions forbade them to visit the women. Male missionary doctors were also forbidden from attending female patients suffering various gynaecological problems about which most of the doctors were woefully ignorant anyway. This left women in labour at the mercy of the local *dai*, usually an elderly woman with no medical training who relied on traditional lore passed down from her maternal forebears.⁷⁰⁸

702. Cf. *Ploughed Under*, 40–41.

703. *Overweights of Joy*, 11.

704. *Overweights of Joy*, 11.

705. *From the Fight*, 33.

706. Cf. the discussion about the position of women in India after independence in I. Kendra, ed., *Women in India and in the Church* (India: Indore, 1978).

707. For information on the birth of the CEZMS and its development, see Seton, *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 93–110.

708. In 1885 Lady Dufferin opened in Delhi the first hospital run by women for women. It started as a medical dispensary in 1876 on the Chandri Road in the very heart of Old Delhi and later on was known as St Stephen's Hospital. See Barr, *The Dust in the Balance*, 87–90.

The missionary meeting at the 1930 Keswick Convention welcomed Mrs Sircar, who spoke of the great need of India, which, she said, 'is so great'. Caste was according to her the great curse of that land. People were living and dying in darkness. 'I stand here from the east to plead with you to come over and help us.' Still the women in India at that time had no privileges; many lived their whole life in *zenanas*.⁷⁰⁹ By an old law in some parts of the country 'a family was allowed only one daughter to a family (any others must be killed)'. This system had sometimes drained a clan of women, so that clan members sometimes were forced to have their sons marry women outside the clan.⁷¹⁰

An Indian woman, according to the earliest arguments in favour of sending women missionaries to the mission field, was oppressed and degraded. She was:

[S]hrouded in darkness [...] cut off from all sweet endearments of family intercourse, put down from her proper position as the friend, the councillor, the comforter of man, to a situation the most abject and humiliating.⁷¹¹

At the time, Amy came to India very young girls were often married to older men. In Hindu families, it was the duty, under the pain of sin, according to the laws, to marry a daughter before her menses. Most of the girls were married before the age of 5. In 1881, in spite of violent street protests in Calcutta the Indian government passed the Age of Consent Act under which cohabitation with a wife under the age of 12 was prohibited. The 1901 census reported that over 12 million girls were married before the age of 13. When the (mostly) elderly husbands died, their widows were often still children, and these children were doomed to a life of humiliation and shame. If such a child-widow had no protection, she had no future. 'An unprotected widow in India stands in a dangerous place.'⁷¹²

Under the benign stewardship of Lord Bentinck, the law, a tacit affirmation of a woman's individuality and her right to live even if her husband had died before her, abolished the inhuman custom of *sati*. Ancient Hindu texts prohibited the remarriage of widows. The Marriage Act of 1955 expressly legalises the remarriage of Hindu women. In Fuller's *The Wrongs of Indian Womanhood*, she explains the Hindu law as it was practised before 1955 and in the margin, Amy has written 'This is the Law which shreds Indian wheels today'. 'Dear brothers and sisters, you are responsible for India. Come to us, not as rulers, but as loving messengers of Christ', was Amy's plea for India.

The position of women in many Indian states meant they were often in a disadvantaged position in areas such as education. By contrast, we see nowadays that in India a large proportion of women go to colleges, universities and have high positions in Indian society. Many people in India in those days did not want to put up with that situation. Today many in India remember Pandita Ramabai⁷¹³ whose Christian social efforts and school for widows and children still flourish. The reason for her to become a Christian was that she had been attracted to the Christian belief because of its attitude to women and this fitted well when she was searching to find a way to relieve women's oppression. She observed that a wife who had not borne her husband a son was considered 'worse than a demon'. She helped to

709. *Zenana* is a Persian word, derived from *zen*, meaning 'women'. In India, the inmates are called *purdanashin*, or curtain women, i.e. sisters behind the curtain. The word *zenana* means the women's apartments.

710. See *Ploughed Under*, 121.

711. Female Education Society (FES), *Female Agency Among the Heathen, as Recorded in the History and Correspondence of the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East* (London: Edward Sutter, 1850), 3.

712. *Things As They Are*, 290.

713. For Pandita Ramabai Dongre (1858–1922), see Helen S. Dyer, *Pandita Ramabai, Her Vision, her Mission and Triumph of Faith*, (London: Pickering n.d.); A.C. Kwantes, 'A Women's Voice in India', in *She Has Done a Beautiful Thing for Me. Portraits of Christian Women in Asia* (Manilla: OMF Litt. Inc., 2005), 121–140.

organise the *Arya Mahila Samaj* (the Aryan Women's Society), a society that was established to develop women's education and social reform, and was especially aimed at eliminating prejudice against widows. One day a Brahman widow, 12 years old, was brought to Pandita Ramabai. She writes:

She was very dark, had cross eyes, and was very unattractive in many ways. [...] She had been given in marriage when five years old, but the boy husband died a few days after the marriage was performed. Her mother-in-law would not look at her. She said the girl had eaten up her son and was a great demon. As I looked at that little figure my vague thoughts about doing something for my sisters in similar conditions began to take shape [...] I began to place (before my countrymen) a plan for starting a Home for Hindu widows and to ask for their help. [...] I tried my best to get help, but could not.

In 1883, Pandita Ramabai went to England with her daughter and was accommodated at St Mary's Home, Wantage, Berkshire. Here she read the Bible and saw that Christ could transform and rescue downtrodden women. Through the Bible, she found that Christian religion treated women, including widows and fallen women, with respect and compassion. She and her daughter became professing Christians.

In 1887 she published in the USA *The High Caste Hindu Women*. Back in India she established in Kedagon, outside Poona, the 'Mukti Sadan', House of Liberation, for the welfare of widows and children of all castes and religions. For more than 20 years she worked on her translation of the Bible into Marathi, her mother tongue. For this reason she studied Greek and Hebrew, to be able to read the Bible in the original languages. Her Bible was printed in 1924. She is the only woman in the world who has translated, single-handedly, the whole Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew. Ramabai is seen as one of the founding Indian women of Indian Christian theology study, especially concerning the position of women in Indian society:

It was clear now to Pandita Ramabai what she must do. It was her guess that, at that time, there were 23 million widows in India, fifty-one thousand of them below the age of nine, and ten thousand of those under the age of four.⁷¹⁴

When she died in 1922, the *Times of India* called her one of the 'makers of the modern India'.⁷¹⁵ Several of her organisations – organised into one umbrella organisation, the Mukti Mission – continue to care for orphaned children and abandoned widows. In discovering the essential Hindu thought about women, she has helped others, like Amy, to further research and action. Amy saw the custom and caste in Hindu India as oppressing for women:

Think of the system which shuts her down, fastens her on the rack, holds her there, kills her, should she wish to be free. We take it all too easily, far too easily. We see them perishing, and we know they are perishing; but yet we go about our ordinary avocations as though there were no such thing as perishing people, and as though we could not do infinitely more than we are doing to try to save them! [...] Caste is a thing with an iron hand: it grips, and it grips to the death.⁷¹⁶

She was well aware of the situation of women in India for she had read a lot about it. From Ashby's *My India*, she learned about the festival of Holi, India's Saturnalia:

Holi is an occasion of licentious joy, drunkenness, singing, and dancing. It has its origin in an ancient legend. A terrible female demon, Holaka, was accustomed to make a daily meal of children.

Amy marked the following passage:

The custom has survived with new meanings incorporated from other religions which have successfully swept over India, but women have continued to be the butts. During Holi, no respectable woman would venture on the streets to be subjected to the insults and obscenities.

714. Kwantes, *She Has Done a Beautiful Thing for Me*, 130.

715. Kwantes, *She Has Done a Beautiful Thing for Me*, 140.

716. *From the Fight*, 30.

One woman said:

I don't want to be abused and have all my clothing stained red. Today the men upbraid us for being women, the cause of bringing men into the world, thus creating sin.⁷¹⁷

She agreed with Thomas Walker who once wrote about custom: 'Many of these so-called customs are truly grave clothes. They bind our people fast, and keep them back from the life and liberty of Christ.'⁷¹⁸

Apart from her inward possessions, a woman had little indeed on earth that gladdened existence. Was it not then thanks to God's grace and mercy that they received the saving Gospel, which also uplifts the lives of women, vindicates the truth and worth of their lives, and reveals how truly he had made women share in his grace. The Gospel gave them back their dignity by overwhelming them with experiences of heavenly beauty. Instead of the dark well, sometimes their only escape from their dark existence, the Lord gave them the loveliest meadows on its earthly side. At the dawn of the 20th century, the day for better conditions for India's women came nearer, for the work of Amy Carmichael and many others brought a stir through the amazing apathy of the land over the woes of its women.

"The evangelisation of the world in this generation" is an inspiring motto, but how are you to evangelise people when you cannot get at them?', Amy thought one day.⁷¹⁹ Missionaries trying to reach Indian women soon realised that they were not the persons for that work. Missionary wives did some evangelisation among women, but many more were urgently needed. James Thoburn (1836–1922), missionary and later Methodist bishop in India, wrote to his sister Isabella to start a boarding school for girls. She responded positively and in 1869 she was sent, together with another female missionary, to India.⁷²⁰ Isabella settled in Lucknow. Her work was recognised and in 1892 at the Third Decennial Missionary Conference in Bombay, she spoke on 'Christian Women'. She did not hesitate because she had much to say. 'The work of mission is circular, she emphasised, for evangelism leads to education which, in turn, leads back to evangelism'.⁷²¹ Amy had seen the sufferings of women. 'It is hard for the widows and wives; it is harder still for the girls'.⁷²² For one of them to become a Christian and to be baptised was seen as destroying the caste and would bring disgrace to the community.⁷²³ Amy knew from experience, that:

[T]he Indian woman is loving. She can love and she can hate, and so she can suffer too. She suffers in silence often – dumb, like the animals. She will not unveil her heart to the gaze of curious eyes. But when she knows you, and trusts you, she will let you look in through clear windows, and see her as she is.⁷²⁴

717. In L.L. Ashby & R. Whatley, *My India* (London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1938), 126–127. The last quotation on page 126. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

718. *This One Thing*, 142.

719. *Ploughed Under*, 85.

720. James Mills Thoburn (1836–1922), missionary to India, later became the Methodist bishop of India and Malaysia. For more on Isabella Thoburn, see James M. Thoburn, *Life of Isabella Thoburn* (Cincinnati, OH: Jennings and Pye/New York, NY: Eaton and Mains, 1903); A.C. Kwantes, 'The Law of Service, Isabella Thoburn', in *She Has Done a Beautiful Thing For Me*, 99–120.

721. Kwantes, *She Has Done a Beautiful Thing for Me*, 114.

722. *From the Fight*, 12.

723. *From the Fight*, 14–15: 'Baptised! That is always the crux, because it involves loss of caste. She shall burn to ashes first. She may go out dead if she likes. She shall go out living – never!' 'The wife, who did seem to come – Has she gone on? For a little while, she did, but her husband frightened her back. One night she felt him stirring beside her; she opened her eyes, and saw a dagger gleaming. "Turn Christian – and expect *this!*" he whispered in her ear.'

724. *From the Fight*, 39.

Amy was in India to open the window. Had not Jesus said 'I am the Light!?' The utter emptiness of Hinduism struck her intensely, and gave her the sense the worshippers were straining away into emptiness instead of meeting God. The utter absence among them of the idea of holiness is terrible. The beauty of holiness a phrase very far removed from Indian idolatry. Amy was convinced that India, 'this land of cruelty in dark places',⁷²⁵ is God's India. God wanted her to live under the southern sky.

■ A missionary in India: 'But all through life I see a Cross'

Lord Jesus, for me crucified,
Let not my footsteps from Thee slide.
For I would tread where Thou hast trod,
My spirit tender of the glory of God.

In her itinerating work, the bandy went along the roads where Amy was sure the Lord Jesus has been before. This land was his and she felt to fight for her master and to reclaim for him those now bound by Satan. For the honour and glory of her God whose name would be praised by many, Amy was willing to suffer everything for his great name's sake. In these years, she would discover her life's work. At that time, it was a habit for itinerating evangelists to receive *batta*, a kind of salary. The women who iterated with Amy refused that money; they said that they did not need it and did not want it. More important for them was the question: 'How much can I do without, that I may have more to give?'⁷²⁶

Amy saw that 'India is a land where it is fatally easy to live easily'.⁷²⁷ In this country, missionaries could have an easy life and around her, she saw many Christians living in dullness, in dimness, not bothering about the things that have eternal value. 'We have done so much, and so little will remain!'⁷²⁸ Here she quoted Traherne who wrote in about 1674:

'Tis death, my soul, to be indifferent;
Set forth thyself unto the whole extent,
And all the glory of His passing prize,
Who for thee lives, who for thee dies.

Most Western women viewed the people of India from a considerable distance. Language was a barrier, but even if they spoke a native language fluently, it 'was extremely rare for genuine friendships on an equal basis to develop between the races'.⁷²⁹ From Victorian times women married to British high-ranked government officials and those living with their husbands, managers of big tea farms and railway managers, lived in a kind of 'red-carpet world', filling their day with tea parties, excursions, hunting, tennis, polo, a chat at the club and dinner parties with balls. Clothes were a daily preoccupation and the coming of the motor car broadened the horizons for those who could afford one. Ayahs prepared everything for the comfort of the children and the numerous staff in and outside the house eased daily life at home. One, going out to India in 1906, wrote that it was 'a romance from morning to night [...] a continual kaleidoscope of colour and movement'. This was not so for all. For many other women,

725. *Lotus Buds*, 221.

726. *Roots*, 7.

727. *Gold Cord*, 10.

728. *Gold Cord*, 10.

729. Barr, *The Dust in the Balance*, 129.

married to unfortunate policemen, mining engineers, surveyors and foresters, never came to the red-carpet way of life and often had to live in extremely isolated regions without having any access to a doctor, dentist, schooling for the children and other things they would have had in their home country. However many the cares, they had a free life and several managed to enjoy their 'jungle' life.

Missionaries were more or less isolated from the mainstream way of life the British nationals led in India. Usually they did not smoke, drink or dance, and were not involved in obligatory social entertainment whose aim was to see and to be seen and which in their eyes contained many useless frivolities. Their focus was another, not in making money, not in striving for status or ambition, but in serving Christ Jesus. 'Their efforts to convert Indians to Christianity were considered a thorough waste of time' by the secular majority at that time. A woman missionary, working in Bengal, said in the mid-1930s: 'I soon discovered that we were regarded as the lowest form of animal life in the district'.⁷³⁰ However, Amy saw, that once missionaries had settled in an area, routine often crept in and many lost their first duty: to evangelise. Maintaining buildings, water pipes, administration, connections and parties with government officials, travel arrangements and many, many more things: these all bothered her.⁷³¹ Even 'mission agents' was an odious word for her, for should we not be colleagues? Mission agencies, secretaries and other officials in service of the mission can easily become targets themselves and the spiritual side is easily lost. Never should missionaries forget 'the hungry sheep'.⁷³²

Amy experienced that it was hard to find a Spirit-taught man or woman of real quality and stature. She met many nominal Christians for whom the earnest tone was largely lacking. The church services were formal and so were the Christians – formal, listless and without much heart. For Amy the Gospel of Jesus Christ always marked the line of demarcation and her attitude was always one of sternness: there must be no compromise. Hearts where Christ gets his seat can be established by the love of God as revealed in the Cross of Christ Jesus. The background of God's love is holiness; his is not a compromising love. In an atmosphere where idols surrounded the people, Amy sharply drew the line, not in a legalistic way, but as an outcome of the fear of the Lord and the biblical appeal: 'You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy'.⁷³³ There is much that was and is admirable in the ancient Vedic wisdom, but she saw deeper. In all human achievements and wisdom, there is no promise. Christ came to alter people first, and therefore the first duty of a missionary is not to meet the needs of the people among whom the work has to be done, but to do the will of the Saviour. It is easy for a missionary to start all kinds of social reform – which is part of ordinary honourable humanity and a Christian does it because his worship is for the Son of God – but remember the counsel of the Lord, given from the centre of his own agony, 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' An appeal to keep steadfastly true to what we know is God's order. Amy kept her eyes on the Lord in watching and praying while continuing to worship God while she did her duty in saving the children, in giving them a life of hope and real future. In Amy we see a missionary who had been made conformable unto Christ Jesus' death, being identified with the things in which her Lord had an

730. Barr, *The Dust in the Balance*, 90.

731. Cf. the situation of the newly posted missionary Rev. Graham Miller when he came to the New Hebrides in 1940 and heard that the ideal missionary was a 'chap who was good at pottering about with engines'. Miller soon found out that the work had developed into a routine of missionary activities: pulling teeth, giving endless injections for yaws, keeping a launch afloat and running, supervising the life and education of the people, doing your own building and repairs, and trying to maintain the Christian tone and church life' (Miller, *A Day's March Nearer Home*, 42).

732. *Gold Cord*, 7.

733. Leviticus 19:2; also 1 Peter 1:16.

interest. She threw herself into the language study, which for her was the key to relationships and acceptance. 'You must learn to *think* Tamil', was her advice to a new missionary later on.⁷³⁴ Thomas Walker was a very good teacher in Tamil. For her he was the ideal teacher, straightforward, clear and patient. On 30 July 1896 she finished reading the Gospel of Matthew in Tamil.⁷³⁵

Amy was happy with the fellowship of the Walkers. Walker himself used to call her Tungachie, younger sister. To practise the language, she improved her conversational use of the language and welded relationships with the people, who gave her access to their daily gossip and private thoughts. Every day she learned a new Tamil proverb, in order to understand better the background of people's talk and customs better. Her final Tamil exam was Saturday morning, 12 February 1898.⁷³⁶ Due to her knowledge of Tamil she was able to understand the conversation between the women in the temples,⁷³⁷ which was very important for her children's rescue work. In meetings with Indian scholars, Amy knew how to answer them and to quote – like Paul – their own poets.⁷³⁸

Amy's life in India was no ordinary missionary's life and work. Her work would be for not only her rescued children, but also her sweet simple unselfishness was a continual inspiration to other missionaries to be wholly devoted. Always she avoided the sensational and held a high standard of motive and of being true to God. Amy did not agree with all the foolish fever in mission circles. Organising this, organising that; a fever of intense activity for God. What she wanted was the baptism with the Holy Ghost to know how to live with God. To live in the heavenly places while here on earth doing the will of God day by day, always eager to be in conscious touch with God. What has made her a real missionary was her simple heart relationship to Jesus Christ.⁷³⁹

The problems of human life that she saw around her she could not face without Jesus Christ. It takes only the Cross of Jesus Christ to put them right. Without him, she could do nothing! With the grace of her Saviour, she faced the present-day problems with the old Gospel. Christ's own followers were poor, and did he say to them, 'Seek ye first and then not all kinds of earthly things will follow'? No, 'the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you'. Amy knew that she would be judged by her relationship to her heavenly Father. And this is an implicit relationship. Is not it fatal to live this life without preparation for the life to come? This was the underlying principle she had in mind in saving

734. In N.E. Robbins, *Not Forgetting to Sing. The Modern Story of Amy Carmichael's Dohnavur Mission* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1968), 34.

735. See in Amy's Bible [1895] at the end of Matthew 28.

736. See in Amy's Bible [1895] in the margin of Jeremiah 23, 8–9.

737. She put a lot of effort in her language study. Next to Ecclesiastes 10:10, 'If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength', she wrote: 'Language study' (in Amy's Bible, 1895).

738. See *Things As They Are*, 93.

739. Amy's thoughts were in line with Thomas Walker who wrote in 1902: 'There may be zeal for Christianity, without there being spiritual life. There may be liberality in giving, and yet no life. There may be church-going, and lyric singing, and street preaching, and all the time no life. *Let us confess it on our knees before the living God – we have been too much occupied in outward organization and missionary routine; we have not sought for our Indian brethren, as we should, a Spirit of life from God; we have not loved them, wept over them, wrestled in prayer for them as we ought to have done. Lord, we blame ourselves today. We are verily guilty, we missionaries, before Thee in this thing. Our strength has often been expended over the externals of our work; and we have failed to attain, in any adequate degree, the main object of our mission, that immortal souls might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. From this time, help us all to make a fresh start. And, O Spirit of life, breathe upon our congregations. Breathe upon these slain, that they may live*' [This One Thing, 134].

children not only for the danger of moral destruction, but also to prepare them for a life to glorify God and finally to be with him in heaven. In January 1935 Amy wrote in *Margaret King's Vision*:⁷⁴⁰ 'A beautiful book. God give us of the DF that tender burning love for souls'. And in 1941 she received Rosalind's Goforth's *Climbing*⁷⁴¹; after having read the book she wrote, 'Thank God for such soldiership. God saves us of the DF from its awful ease of Indian life'. God's true emissary is a 'Nazarite'. For Amy it meant that missionaries have to avoid 'trivial profanities'. Recreation is good for body and soul, if by recreation we mean *a pastime that will re-equip you for future work, and will not cause a leakage of spiritual power*. For us, missionaries, it is important to know: 'Where are we to find our fresh springs of life?'⁷⁴²

The legitimate joys of the world had to be for us 'as a thing to be touched at a distance'. By too much involvement in the secular things:

[W]e will lose our sensitivity to the very breath of the Highest and will no longer receive the manna that falls from heaven to feed our souls. [Avoid] the traps set there for us, reserving ourselves for a higher way. *The world is not for us*. We are called to live daily in a higher Kingdom, where we are touched, and our souls drink from the Spirit of God.⁷⁴³

When she first arrived in India, it did not give that impression. The way Amy behaved, dressed and lived among the Indians was an exception. Denying herself in her dress, she wore the Indian sari to get more in touch with the people, especially with the women – those with whom she worked and those she tried to reach. In wearing native dress, as in Japan, she was possibly the first white woman in south India doing so. Yet, neither white women nor Indian women dressed as she did. With a solar hat and long sleeves to protect her pale skin, she became the object of curiosity. Her contemporaries in India thought of her as 'controversial'; as someone who 'caused a stir among fellow missionaries'. Some of her fellow missionaries and Indian Christians started the 'Get-Amy-out-of-India-movement'.⁷⁴⁴

The cry to get her out of India became stronger after the release of *Things As They Are*, when a committee was formed who formulated the proposal for Amy to leave the country. Several years after that, Amy met the man who had convened that committee, and who was at that moment very sorry and asked Amy for forgiveness. 'This was the first I had heard of that committee, not of Hindus but of Christians.'⁷⁴⁵ She was 'something of a firebrand'.⁷⁴⁶ Amy did not behave in the expected way by the India 'red-carpet society'. She disliked the upfront glitter; her inner compass led her to the people of India whom the others just viewed from a considerable distance. Her way of living in Dohnavur was as much as possible Indian, especially to be equal to the Indian women:

It is well-known that we of Dohnavur follow Indian customs in so far as they are good and possible; our Indian dress, little simple sign of kinship with the women of India, would be a mere farce and wholly

740. H. Taylor, *Margaret King's Vision* (Philadelphia, PA: CIM, 1934). The book is in the Dohnavur library.

741. R. Goforth, *Climbing, Memories of a Missionary's Wife* (3rd edn., Nappanee, IN: Evangel Publishing House, 2008). The book is in the Dohnavur library.

742. *You Are My Hiding Place*, 42 and 43.

743. *You Are My Hiding Place*, 43 and 44.

744. Jayawardena, *The White Woman's Other Burden*, 94 and 95.

745. In *Roots*, 6.

746. Kent, *Converting Women*, 224.

useless, and even hindering, if we ignored the customs of women. [...] We live in glass houses in India [*and there are*] the eyes that watched me across the stone.⁷⁴⁷

No wonder that within the established mission circles Amy's often insulting, puritanical approach to her mission began to make her enemies. Her way of working was different from what she saw around her. So many were caught up in the whirl of the wheels of missionary machinery. Was only this mission life – a turning of wheels, and often in a questionable direction? Was this what the call meant, the call it had cost so much to obey? To her came the touch of influence that knew no hesitation and the result was a life set free to serve in steadfastness. Her view is expressed in Smith's poem:

But all through life I see a Cross, where sons of God yield up their breath.
There is no gain, except by loss, there is no life except by death,
and no full vision but by Faith, no glory but a bearing shame, nor Justice but by taking blame.
And that eternal Passion saith; 'Be emptied of glory and right and name'.⁷⁴⁸

Amy went on in her own way, not distracted by other voices. In Bangalore, while reading Isaiah 42:14 she learned her important lesson: marked in that chapter she wrote in the margin, 'Bangalore. 1896. His lesson. Be Still. Wait'.⁷⁴⁹

■ Itinerating work: India 1897–1904

Leaving Bangalore to enter itinerating work, she started with a lot of fear. Was she able to do it? Would the people listen? Would they understand her Tamil? She was comforted by Psalm 34:4, 'I sought the Lord, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears'. In the margin of this psalm, she wrote:

September 1896. Fears. Fears of failure. Fears of future. All my fears. There is a balm for every pain, a medicine for all sorrow. The eye turned backward to the Cross and forward to the morrow. The morrow of the glory.⁷⁵⁰

She thought about the people she would meet. Would the Mohammedans listen? She prayed for them and was comforted by Matthew 9:18 where she changed the words a little and wrote 'But come and lay Thy hand upon them, and they shall live. Bangalore 1896'.⁷⁵¹

From 1897, Amy was involved in itinerating work, a work with one fixed purpose. In her own words:

We were an itinerating band, furnished with a flag made of folds of black, red, white, and yellow sateen, a most useful text for an impromptu sermon; and we found Eastern musical instruments useful too. Being the first women's band of its kind in the district, we walked circumspectly. I used to feel like a cat on the top of a wall, the sort of wall that is plentifully set with bits of broken bottles; for there seemed to be no end to the occasions on which 'it was necessary to be careful'. [...] And our manner of life was ideal: we had one thing to do and one only; there could be no perplexities as to which was the duty of the hour – there was only one possible duty. [...] Sometimes we all went street-preaching together, with a baby organ by way of attraction. [...] Once, for a

747. *From the Forest*, 108 and 112.

748. In W. Chalmers Smith, *Poetical Works* (London: Cornell University Press, 1902), 86. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

749. In Amy's Bible [1896] in the margin of Isaiah 42:14.

750. In Amy's Bible [1895] in the margin of Psalm 34:4. See also in the margin of Matthew 6:25: 'Jan.25.97. Trusted about Tamil Exam'.

751. In Amy's Bible [1895], in the margin of Matthew 9:18.

period, which seemed ages long, we were shut out of the homes of the people, because some of them had believed our report. When we went to the villages where this had happened, we were pelted with ashes and rotten garlands from the necks of the idols. [...] 'If India were as Japan is, how different it would be!' I used to say (tr)uefully, after a battering of spirit in some vociferous village. There they are not compelled by any idiotic social code to turn believing members out of their community, and fall upon those who want to help them. And one day I looked at a great spider's web several feet in diameter, and saw the mighty Caste system of India.⁷⁵² [...] Oh, for an enthusiasm for Christ that will not endure to be popular when He is unpopular; that will be fired rather than be quenched when His claims are unrecognized and His word is slighted; that will thrill us with joy if He allows us to share in the faintest measure in His dishonour and loneliness; that will set every pulse throbbing with exultation as we go forth unto Him.⁷⁵³

Meanwhile in England, the Keswick Mission Council officially decided on 07 July 1898: 'Appointment of Miss Amy Wilson-Carmichael to engage in Village Mission Evangelization Work with Mr and Mrs Walker'.⁷⁵⁴ The Walkers were a godly family that really understood the Hindu religion and the tremendous need of reaching out to these people.

In the hospital in Bangalore, there were people who spoke Urdu and Canarese, but nobody could speak Tamil. Amy had to learn this language but Bangalore was not an ideal place to learn Tamil and the doctor in the Zenana hospital suggested that she go to Tinnevely and learn the language there. Just before leaving Bangalore, she almost had two accidents with a dogcart (a light carriage high from the ground):

These two almost-accidents – I have always felt they were purposeful – made me feel that a Force, powerful but not all-powerful was resisting my going South. So you will know how the words in Daily Light for the morning I left Bangalore (30 November 1896) spoke to me: My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto Him, if Thy presence not go with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us?⁷⁵⁵

She encountered opposition every day, but in the heat of the day and of the 'battle' she turned to her Bible and found strength. Next to Psalm 140:7 'O God The Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of the battle', she wrote: 'March 31.97 Palamcottah'.⁷⁵⁶

Before she left Bangalore, she wondered why doctors and nurses were not the people to evangelise there. They had eased pain and had the key to the hearts of patients. People from outside should not do the work, she meant:

I had said nothing about it but I had often wondered why I had been sent there. Bangalore seemed much like a blind alley, and yet it is not the way of our Lord to lead His followers in blind alleys.⁷⁵⁷

The Walkers asked Amy to stay with them to assist in evangelising the Hindus and insisted that she could do something for the Christian women. Her friends in Bangalore agreed. 'In this simple way the road turned the corner that led to you', she wrote for her children in Dohnavur.⁷⁵⁸ Itinerating work at

752. In *Ponnamal*, 12,13,15,16, and 17.

753. In L. Trotter, *A Life on Fire*, quoted in B.A.F. Pigott, *I. Lillias Trotter* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott Ltd., 1930), 54.

754. In KCMMB, 07 July 1898.

755. *Amma's Book*, 46.

756. In Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of Psalm 140:7.

757. *Amma's Book*, 46.

758. *Amma's Book*, 47.

that time was ‘pioneer work’, not work that had been ‘prepared’. Some people had never seen white women. ‘We live in the heart of Old India – it is a dark Old India, very sinful, very needy, needing God’. The work was done with her motto:⁷⁵⁹

Love through me, Love of God;
Make me like Thy clear air
Through which, unhindered, colours pass
As though it were not there.

Thomas Walker told Amy that when you want to know Hindu life and religion, itinerating work is not an option, but a must.⁷⁶⁰ In 1891, the CEZMS had sent out two women to serve in south India, working together with Thomas Walker in his itinerating work. Both died within a few years.⁷⁶¹

From 1897 to 1905 Amy itinerated with a band of women and girls who gathered around her, known by the Tamil name meaning the *Starry Cluster*. They were inspired by the verse:

[S]o that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life.⁷⁶²

Ponnamal was the leader of the itinerating band.⁷⁶³ The roads they had to travel were far from easy, and with the bullocks it also went very slowly. Amy made a rhyme for bandy-goers:

Two Annachies set out in a bandy, but at riding they were not very handy.
As they bumed to and fro, they shouted Ai-yo
Who’d go for a ride in a bandy?

Said the one with a cry, I am ready to die
Every bone seems breaking, I in this terrible heat
There’s no room for my feet, with laughter my ribs are all aching.

So to shorten the time, They’ve written this rhyme
Let travellers by bandy take warning, if you start out with smiles
You’ll go many miles, if not you will end up mourning.⁷⁶⁴

Their home base was the Pannaivilai bungalow. The Indians recognised the sincerity and the light that shone from them. The members of the band had no salary but looked to God to supply their needs. Just as in Japan, Amy took on the habit of wearing Indian dress, which she continued during her lifetime. The Walkers approved of her wearing Indian dress, but at that time, she wrote, everyone in India disapproved.⁷⁶⁵ It was wonderful work for her, to belong to the ones to break the silence in which God had been loving the people all the time. It was a private matter, but slowly – it was in 1898 – one by one the members of the *Starry Cluster* (Figure 10) laid aside their jewels. Especially in the Tinnevely district, the women wore many jewels, and Amy thought it wise not to interfere with the Indian custom.

759. *Mountain Breezes*, 248.

760. ‘To know what real indifference to true religion is, you must iterate in a heathen country’ (Thomas Walker in *This One Thing*, 60).

761. In *Walker of Tinnevely*, 178.

762. Philippians 2:15 and 16.

763. *Lotus Buds*, 219.

764. In the *Logbook of the Dohnavur Fellowship 1931 – 1941* (December 1933). In the Dohnavur library.

765. *Amma’s Book*, 47.



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FIGURE 10: Amy with some members of The Starry Cluster on village outreach.

The Holy Spirit, so the Starry Cluster members thought, had led them to these actions.⁷⁶⁶ Jewels were a married woman's dowry, so by this action the girls showed their longing to stay together with Amy and that they would not agree to a marriage proposal.⁷⁶⁷ A practical side effect of this action by the girls was that now the bandy could travel at night with no fear of robbers. The Starry Cluster had a flag with the colours black, red, white and yellow: the four colours of the wordless book so often used to tell the story of salvation. The women went around in an area where robbers were always active, and other dangers awaited them during their wanderings.

She toured in this itinerant ministry through the villages in the south tip of India in the state of Tamil Nadu. The band of women evangelists were striving to reach the women of the villages and prayed that by the light of the Gospel, which shone forth from them, many women would be reached. Next to the language, she learned a lot about the Tamil mind during the seven years which went by, nearly undisturbed. 'I have often thanked the Lord for those seven years.'⁷⁶⁸ She knew Tamil life more

766. One of the girls, Sellamutthu, said: 'If I had loved my Saviour more, I should have loved my jewels less' [*Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 100].

767. Later Ponnamal wrote in her journal: 'I could not have done this new work [*assisting Amy in Dohnavur*], if it had not been for the new courage that came with that break with custom, and from bondage to the fear of man. [...] I saw Him, naked in this world's glory, stript to the uttermost; and I went and made an ash-heap of my pride [*Ponnamal*, 26].

768. *Amma's Book*, 47.

and more from the inside. Once she made a visit to a Hindu festival, and looking back on what she had experienced she wrote:

Does this sound intolerant and narrow, as if no good existed outside our own little pale? Surely, it is not so. We are not ignorant of the lofty and the noble contained in the ancient Hindu books. We are not of those who cannot recognise any truth or any beauty unless it is labelled with our label. We know God not left Himself without witnesses anywhere. But we know – for the Spirit of Truth Himself has inspired the description – how desolate is the condition of those who are without Christ. We dare not water down the force of such a description till the words mean practically nothing. We form no hard, presumptuous creed as to how the God of all the earth will deal with those masses of mankind who have missed the knowledge of Him here; we know He will do right. But we know with a knowledge which is burnt into us, how very many of the units live to compose these masses. We know what they are missing today, through not knowing our blessed Saviour as a personal living friend: and we know what it means to the thoughtful mind to face an unknown tomorrow.⁷⁶⁹

One of the seven years was spent in Dohnavur with Ponnamal and Sella Mutthu and other women. They travelled and preached in the Tinnevely⁷⁷⁰ area around Pannaivilai where Amy and the Walkers lived. Three miles from Tinnevely town is Palamcottah. It was here that in 1874 CEZMS work started among the women. She would lie awake at night worrying about the fate of those who died unconverted. One night she was comforted by the words: 'I have the keys', because:

Today Rajpool's woman died. Burnt. Cried day and night: 'Ram!' Died unreached. Her brothers gave me her beads. She clung to them through all her pain. Her prayer-beads. God hold the key of all unknown. And I am glad. March 20. 1896.⁷⁷¹

While itinerating, Amy by letters stayed in contact with her family and with the Keswick Convention. A letter from Amy was read by Mr Wilson at the convention of 1898 in which she wrote:

For the good of the meeting, that those should stand up who were prepared to offer themselves to the Lord's service in the foreign field when the Lord should open the way, and that they should be prayed for; and also that parents should be made willing to let their children go.

Mr Wilson added, 'I know well what a self-sacrifice it is. But the words have often been repeated to me: "Nothing too precious for Jesus".'

After the letter was read about 200 stood up, mostly young ladies, with a 'sprinkling of young men here and there. [...] Parents stood up saying they were willing to offer their children. The scene was touchingly impressive.⁷⁷² Amy herself used to read her English letters 'as it were with the Lord Jesus, because there was no one else who understood English. I had never known before what the Presentness of the Presence could be'.⁷⁷³

769. *Lotus Buds*, 49–50.

770. Tinnevely, or Tiruneveli, means the Sacred Rice Hedge (Tiru=holy, nel=rice, veli=fence or hedge). 'It is a fiery red, sandy plain stretching out to the horizon. [...] The great plain of desolating distances is a part of the densely populated land of Dravidian India, for each clump of trees usually indicates the existence of a village, and the clumps are not far apart, "so thick do towns stand in heathendom." The South is the stronghold of Brahmanism, priest ridden and fast bound in the chains of the world, the flesh and the devil. It is also the cradle of the Christianity of those parts. [...] There are about 1400 villages in the district of North-Tinnevely' (A.D., *Until The Shadows Flee Away*, 201–202).

771. In Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of Revelation 1:18.

772. In KCMMB, 28 July 1898, 189–190. In the KCMMB a remark was added: 'Keswick never has to depart from its apostolic simplicity of character and aim'.

773. *Amma's Book*, 47.

Ponnamal especially was of exceeding value and was fully involved in the preaching work. The preaching was clear, and always focused upon the awakening of the spirit. Is a militant attitude wrong? 'We were never able to discover a way by which the captives of the devil could be delivered without offending that person.'⁷⁷⁴ While on tour, Sunday by Sunday, Thomas Walker preached and people started to listen, because as Amy revealed 'vital religion was preached.'⁷⁷⁵ The band roamed through the vast Tinnevely district and sought for ways to enter the houses and especially visit the women. From Pannaivilai she writes:

Here we are out in the jungle – so to speak – with thorny scrub, and tall, straight palms, and wastes of sand all round us, and strewn about in casual fashion – villages. ... There is a tremendous need all round us. First among the Christians; many a village fort, like the Shah Najaf of the mutiny days, has to recaptured. For backsliders are everywhere to be found; whole hamlets full sometimes... These souls must be re-won. Many were never converted at all, but 'came over' in masses in the old days; and their children are harder by far than those who have never heard. Then there are true Christians who need quickening. Here they are in the midst of dense darkness, and their light is burning dim. Only when they are on fire for God will the masses of heathen be reached. [...] Our hope is to go, as the Lord may lead, to these few sheep in the wilderness, turning from place to place, and through them gaining the Hindus. [...] Some weeks ago we went in force (though only a dozen to thousands!) to a Hindu festival, celebrated in a dried-up river bed before a demon temple. Thousands of goats were sacrificed. The people were much excited. But by the good hand of our God upon us, we had quiet groups and a good chance to tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is God. We sold over a hundred Gospel portions, and we know these seeds must live.⁷⁷⁶

During these years, there were hundreds who for the first time heard the Gospel, who would never have heard it had not the itinerant work continued for some time. Here was virgin soil and limitless scope for the legitimate work of the pioneer, which is to drive the Gospel ploughshare through the tangled roots of ignorance and superstition. Many welcomed them; at other times they were 'pelted with ashes and rotten garlands from the necks of the idols'.⁷⁷⁷ Sometimes they met openhearted people, and at another time they could only touch the very fringe of these villages. Still many doors stayed closed for them, and certain strongholds of Hinduism remained un-entered. During this itinerating work, Amy saw so much of the darkness and the nearby spiritual and physical need of these beautiful and attractive people, that the burning desire to help them remained unquenched during her whole life.⁷⁷⁸ Did their work make any difference? Were any people converted? She wrote:

And thoughts of India's millions who are as though the Saviour of the world had never died on Calvary, had never risen, was never to return, swept over me. And thoughts came too of unrecognised love of Him who said, 'All day long I have stretched forth My hands'. [...] So few heard, so few turned, so few cared to know those words, and I was sorrowful, never dreaming that in the town nearby, that night there was a child who could not sleep for awe and wonder.⁷⁷⁹

774. *Ponnamal*, 17.

775. *Ponnamal*, 7.

776. See A.D., *Until the Shadows Flee Away*, 207 and 208.

777. *Ponnamal*, 16. Next to the spiritual attacks, the physical situation during the visits to the people was not always easy. 'There are always small infants who cry, and bigger infants who laugh, and there are noises, of course, of every conceivable kind without much intermission.' Also Amy relates this event: 'One evening I was sitting on the doorstep of a house, with a dozen women round me, when suddenly a beast appeared, and without a moment's hesitation it walked straight over me, and in' (*Ponnamal*, 25). On 09 February 1897, while in Palamcottah, she was overwhelmed by fear and wrote in her Bible: 'With all my heart! [...] A great deliverance [...] from all my fears. [...] Thou knowest my frame' (in the margin of Psalm 86:12 in Amy's Bible, 1895).

778. Cf. Robbins, *Greater is He*, 23.

779. *Ploughed Under*, 27–28.

The child here mentioned was Arulai who prayed to know the living God. She had met Amy at a well. After much trouble, struggle and anguish, Arulai finally came to be with Amy. Later her sister Mimosa would also join Amy in Dohnavur.

The path of the itinerant preacher, going forth in Christ's name and strength, preaching Christ crucified in order to save people for eternal life, is an arduous one. One can imagine that the hardships and privations associated with this type of work had deep emotional significance for Amy and her team.⁷⁸⁰ It was especially difficult for the Walkers who so strongly opposed, like Ragland, the Anglican 'ceremonialism' and 'ritualism'. Therefore, they preferred the Anglican Low Church and dissenting traditions, which emphasised 'heart' religion and sought to set forth the glory of God and of Christ Jesus.

Often the women went travelling at night to evade the heat of the day. Or when they camped near a village they got up very early to be at the well where the village women would come in the early morning to fetch water and where also children gathered. Children were especially attracted by the stories of the missionaries, and for Amy it was sad when a mother forced her child to go home or forbid them to listen because this meant for the children, those little souls, that the village and all its sins and idols lay before them. The Starry Cluster prayed so much that days of open doors would last. One day could be completely different from another, so it could be that everything seemed to fall into irregularity.⁷⁸¹ Their itinerating work met with the usual difficulties:

He said 'Go, tell', and we have come and are telling, and we meet Him as we 'go and tell'. But, dear friends, do not, we entreat you, expect to hear of us doing great things, as an everyday matter of course. But what we say to you is this: Do not expect every true story to dovetail into some other true story and end with some marvellous coincidence or miraculous conversion. Most days in real life end exactly as they began, so far as visible are concerned. [...] And now we have told you a little of what is going on. There are days when nothing seems to be done, and then again there are days when the Terrible seems almost visible, as he gathers up his strength, and tears and mauls his prey. *And so it is true we have to fight a separate fight for each soul [author's own emphasis].*⁷⁸²

God's love within her was so powerful a magnet that during her life many were drawn irresistibly to her. No wonder that Hindus began to call her 'the child-catching Missie Ammal'. Amy's love for those she tried to win was pure and those who sought refuge with her were sheltered with great love and they felt at home with her so nearby, who was as a mother to them. A girl once heard Arulai's prayer: 'Don't let me go back to the dark, please, Lord! O let me live in the light!'⁷⁸³ In God was Amy's strength and to him she made known all her desires. 'Lord, all my desire is before Thee'; next to this verse from Psalm 38:9 she wrote 'Aug. 1899'.⁷⁸⁴

Often converts from Hinduism to Christianity were put outside their community. This made Amy furious. She was sure that this practice would not happen in Japan. There, she argued, they were not

780. An interesting note is that in this kind of evangelism Amy and her missionary colleagues were more or less walking in the footsteps of the itinerant mendicants and *sannyasins* (a homeless wandering ascetic), who centuries ago carried their particular doctrines to south India and Sri Lanka. Cf. C.R.A. Hoole, *Modern Sannyasins, Protestant Missionary Contribution to Ceylon Tamil Culture* (Frankfurt: am M.; New York, NY: Peter Lang, 1995).

781. Cf. here too Lilius Trotter: 'One comfort is that regularity is not the mark of a battlefield. Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise' (in Pigott, *Lilius Trotter*, 137).

782. *Things As They Are*, 24.

783. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 107.

784. In Amy's Bible (1895) in the margin of Psalm 38:9.

compelled by any idiotic social code to turn believing members out of their community, and fall upon those who only wanted to help them:

And now, what have you to do? Tell the glad tidings gladly to the hearts that are glad to hear? That is ideal, truly, but the real is not like that. Not one is keen to hear. Not one is longing or hungry. They like you to come, it is true. You come as a break in the day. And they will listen a little – but care? Ah no – not yet. [...] The husband sees us home. He is like polished marble. Nothing seems to go in. He knows the truth, but meets it with a smile. [...] Oh, these Jericho walls of strong superstition and sin! Sometimes it seems as though the soul is a city walled up to heaven, and a city roofed over, too, for the gentle grace of the Lord seems to fall upon cold grey slate.⁷⁸⁵

The opposition was fierce and Amy felt that mission work was in reality a fight. 'It is a real fight – this India fight for souls! We must have a daily re-inspiration, or we shall lose courage and fail.'⁷⁸⁶

The woman's band tried to talk with many Hindu women, whose husbands' minds were blinded by the god of this world and whose only concern for their wives was not their well-being and happiness, but the fertility of their bodies instead of the immortality of the soul. For these women, living in darkness, Amy and her team were there to open a window, that Jesus' words would become a reality for them, when he said: 'I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me, shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.'⁷⁸⁷ During her itinerary work Amy taught the women from the Bible, in order to win them for Christ. There were women missionaries from Protestant Zenana missions who, along with Bible study, began their own institutions to instruct Indian women in needlework, childcare and other practical issues. However, others reported that they never taught needlework in the Zenanas but relied 'solely on God's Word'. Kent writes that:

Amy Carmichael of the CEZMS in Tirunelveli deplored the suggestion of one of her Bible women, Saral, that she could attract more women to hear the gospel by teaching them to knit. When Carmichael refused the suggestion, Saral objected that 'there was nothing in the Bible that bore upon pink wool and knitting needles'. Carmichael's thunderous reply, 'Indeed there is! Zechariah 4:6, "Not by my power but by my spirit"' reflected a growing missionary consensus that Zenana education ought to be more serious, more explicitly evangelical, and concentrate more on Bible study.⁷⁸⁸

The band travelling with Amy consisted of women who all had decided not to marry. Ponnamal too was of the opinion that India needed the service of unmarried women as well as of the married.⁷⁸⁹ Not that this group had a special type of holiness or devotion, but because some type of work in the church could better be done by unmarried women. Each one of the band freely had decided not to marry in order to be free to be 'absorbed in her duties towards her Lord'.⁷⁹⁰ In 1947, Amy wrote a short memoir for her Indian friends about the DF, in which she also raised the question:

785. *From the Fight*, 8 and 9. In the cities it was extremely difficult for missionaries to do the work and see results of evangelistic effort. Helen Dyer says that after missionaries had laboured in the city of Bombay for 75 years, statistics showed that in 1888 there were less than 1000 Protestant Indian Christians, including children. Bombay in 1888 had approximate 800 000 inhabitants (H. Dyer, *A Life for God in India. Memoirs of Mrs. Jennie Fuller of Akola and Bombay* (New York, NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d.), 99).

786. *From the Fight*, 20.

787. John 8:12.

788. Cf. E.F. Kent, 'Tamil Bible Women and the Zenana Missions of Colonial South India', *History of Religion* (1999): 129.

789. *Ponnamal*, 76.

790. Quotation from A. Way's translation of 1 Corinthians 7:34.

Why are some of your men and many of your women not married? Because they feel that for them the care of the children and the care of the ill is a Call to whole time service, in other words, to serve without distraction. Without some so dedicated, the work could not be done. Do you feel there is a special virtue in that way of life? No, it is simply a matter of a Call and of obedience. The blessing of the Lord is upon both ways of life. What about your Indian workers when they grow too old for work? All who wish to do so stay with us here. They are greatly valued.⁷⁹¹

Rev. F.B. Meyer visited India in 1899 as a KMC delegate, and met Amy in Dohnavur. In the KMC yearbook of 1900, we read the report of his visit:

For the first time in his life he came in contact with heathenism, and never before realized the debasing effects on idolatry. [...] He witnessed on every side of the corridors the signs of obscenity which would not for a moment be tolerated in our own country. Romans 1 is a reality there. Masses sunk in sensuality, he saw their utterly need for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. [...] For the missionaries the very atmosphere sometimes were dense with evil spirits resisting the soldiers of the cross. [...] He also saw Miss Amy Wilson-Carmichael. Then Mr Wilson added, that he was very weakened by an illness, referring to his adopted daughter, he said Miss C. had a very warm place in her heart for Keswick, and wished her love to be conveyed to the dear brethren and sisters there. She has the work of the evangelization of the heathen very much at heart, and whilst there were circumstances which might have called her home, she felt for Jesus' sake her place was there with Mr and Mrs Walker, unless some call should come from God Himself to make it otherwise.⁷⁹²

Itinerating months could be very hard and take away all energy. Many of the band were attacked by *accidie*, in the 'dullest and dustiest of dull and dusty days', in a month when opposition had turned to stagnation. The women of the band were un-jewelled, for the Indian mind an eyesore, an offence against custom. In south India, a woman's life down to its merest detail is governed by the law universal, called 'custom'.⁷⁹³ 'To run the race that lay before them', some women laid off all the jewels and returned them to their families or gave them to the CMS 'for China'. This ultimate act for a woman was, as one reports, 'because I saw Him, naked of this world's glory, stripped to the uttermost; and I went and made an ash-heap of my pride'.⁷⁹⁴ The furore passed and the violence diminished at length; but it left its mark:

The women who had braved the storm had made a new discovery: they were no more mere biscuits in a biscuit-box thereafter, cut to correct pattern, fitted in rows, each the duplicate of the other; they had found a new thing, even their individuality; and in finding it they had gained in courage and in character. Things first impossible, were now undertaken without a thought; they were free from a thousand trammels that before had entangled their feet with invisible threads. And going deeper, those who for love of the Crucified had counted all things loss and vanity loved Him now with a new love, rejoiced with a new joy.⁷⁹⁵

The flies of criticism buzzed as they pleased about the band, but Amy was strengthened by the words 'walk before Me and be thou perfect'. In their evangelistic work, Amy and the band alike looked for

791. In *The Starry Cluster*, 10.

792. In KCMMB, 1899, 172–173.

793. *From the Fight*, 25.

794. *From the Fight*, 26.

795. *From the Fight*, 29.

conversion, a complete renunciation of the past life of the convert and a turning in faith to Christ. In 1900, a letter was read at the Keswick Convention in which she wrote:

Dear Christian friends: pray first for a revival of vital religion amongst Christians; then for open doors and definite conversions amongst the heathen; and for us that we may be good soldiers. [...] Again we will start new work and again we need your help. Will you praise Him for what He has done, and will you pray again?⁷⁹⁶

There was prayer for true revival, but due to nominalism in most of the churches in Tinnevely District, Amy was afraid that if the Lord would come down the churches were not prepared to receive the new converts. One day she wrote, 'We have no church here fit to receive Hindus when a big revival comes.'⁷⁹⁷

Amy could not foresee when she wrote her request to the Keswick Convention that the new work she wanted to start would turn in another direction and that the work God gave her to do would lead to her life's work in India. Still travelling with the Starry Cluster from one place to another, she got an extensive knowledge of daily Indian life and often could look behind the scenes. The fact that the women did not have any jewels made it possible for the band to travel at night, for robbers were not interested in following the group. In Dohnavur, in 'an open compound in jungle-land'⁷⁹⁸ protected under angels' wings, they camped for a year, while their belongings were at Pannaivilai. It was there that a little girl sought refuge and felt Amy's arms around her. The stories were so shocking and never did Amy forget that day nor the child's story, which was terrible beyond imagination. The date was 07 March 1901, the date too of the beginning of her rescue work of children who had been dedicated to the temple gods, which ultimately led to the founding of the DF.⁷⁹⁹

This child told Amy several things. Things too awful to be written down. Amy was confused and told Ponnamal what that child had told her. Amy was very close to Ponnamal, and from her she heard of 'the people in the village' near the bungalow, and of the secret things done among them, as they were done in every village in India.⁸⁰⁰ Not knowing immediately what to do, Amy began the search to know the details and find out the conditions that governed this traffic in children. Their constant itinerary work helped them, because they came to many places and in contact with many people. Amy just kept quiet, but with ears and eyes open, she tried to discover the things that were hidden away from the public eye. As *Alice in Wonderland*, only it was a different wonderland. 'Alice in Underland would have to be its name; and I was Alice, or who?'⁸⁰¹ She secretly entered the inner courts of the huge temples and:

[F]ar inside this Underland, deep in the recesses of some great temple court with its towering walls all around, or sitting among the friendly garland-makers as they strung jessamine and oleander into wreaths and flower balls for the gods, I heard much unknown to me before, and gradually to me it was given to see into the heart of the matter, and to know how the laws were being evaded and the children polluted. Word fail from such discoveries: they ask for deeds, not words.

796. In KCMMB, 1900, 192.

797. Dohnavur letter no. 4, December 1924 (PRONI D/4061/30/1), 6.

798. *From the Fight*, 31.

799. In England at that time at the Keswick Mission Committee it was reported: 'Miss Amy Wilson Carmichael and Miss Eva Carmichael, have been preserved in health and are able to do good work' (in KCMMB, 1901, 218). At that time Amy's sister Eva was in Nkanga, Pondoland, South Africa.

800. *From the Forest*, 23.

801. *From the Fight*, 35.

This was for her ‘the mouth of hell’.

These children who could help them? She saw, and added ‘but we had yet to learn that nothing is too good to be true.’⁸⁰²

During the beginning years of the DF, it was proposed by some that they start something in the line of a sisterhood or a Deaconess Home. Indian girls, conscious of a vocation, might find welcome, shelter, and guidance. This was not in the mind of Amy. The DF looked like a convent, but Amy herself ‘feared anything in the nature of vows, expressed or understood’. She knew India and said the country was not ready for it. The girls accompanying her and working with her had to have the full freedom to choose whether, for instance, to marry or not, whether to stay in Dohnavur or choose to live elsewhere. ‘We never let any of the girls bind herself in spirit.’ Her aim was that the children from their earliest days should be:

[S]urrounded by wholesome, healthy influences, and brought up in absolute straightforwardness. [...] If only these little ones grow up reliable and true, openings will not be difficult to find for them in the great needy field of missions.⁸⁰³

■ ‘A woman or such a thing’

In travelling around, Amy saw a lot, especially the situation of the women, trapped in their own houses. For many generations it had been the same life for them and the duties done according to their caste code. What was happening in the big world, the ‘murmur of the world’ outside, had never reached them. The wall that surrounded their houses bounded almost their range of vision, mental as well as physical. It is true that the call that wakens often comes from within, but more often, surely, it comes from without. These women’s world knew no without, and much of the meaning of the within was hidden from them. We do not realise until we think about it how much we owe to the largeness of our environment. Amy felt compassion for the women living in ‘the littleness’ of their lives. These women needed a voice from outside. In Amy’s time, the only thing that bought an Indian wife a place in the sun was when she gave birth to a boy. The whole idea of marriage revolved simply around the conception of life; that only justified the existence of a wife. If she did not fulfil her expected duty, her mostly short life was one long tragedy. For the temple girls it was the same. Amy saw many of the huge Indian temples:

Books have been written about the temples of South India, photographs of their marvellous towers and carven stone courts and corridors can be bought for a few rupees, but no books, no pictures, can give even a breath of the air of those mighty monuments of a people’s faith, nor can descriptions show them to one who has never stood alone in the silent space before the sacred symbol far within.⁸⁰⁴

Amy had seen more, hidden from visitors’ eyes; things too bad to write down. One day in a forest, Amy had a talk with a forester. He told her of the dangers in the forest, especially the way tigers took their prey. Talking about man-eaters in the forest he referred to what had happened one day to a ‘woman or such a thing’⁸⁰⁵ as he called it. That night Amy could not sleep. The forester’s story was

802. *From the Fight*, 35–36.

803. *The Continuation of a Story*, 44 and 45.

804. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 28.

805. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 28.

running in and out of her head, 'A woman or such a thing!' She saw the temples, to which they should have belonged:

[T]hose hateful temples with their huge towers and ancient tremendous masonry, their secret ways, their cruel ways, and the solid age-old feeling of Hindustan behind. What did it matter how many little woman-children those ways ensnared, those stone wall smothered? [...] And the Dohnavur nurseries, and many other places where hard fights are being fought, came to mind then; and I rejoiced as I remembered what the children mean to the Lord Who redeemed them, they are not 'things' to Him.⁸⁰⁶

In Amy's time, the cruellest things were said about wives and widows in India. The words in the *Sanskrit Catechism* are shocking:

What a cruel?
The heart of a viper. What is crueller than that?
The heart of a woman. What is the cruellest of all?
The heart of a soulless.⁸⁰⁷

When she first heard from the lips of a little girl about her life in a temple house, she was advised to collect facts and she started to write down in a blue notebook⁸⁰⁸ everything she heard, saw and read about the secret traffic of small children to be used there for bad purposes. After three years of research, Amy discovered that premeditated trading and commerce were occurring. It was part of a huge sinister system that was ostensibly religious, based on the ancient temples customs. Amy more and more saw the reality of the devadasi system. In the 19th century, *devadasis* were widely reputed to be prostitutes, 'and were recognised essentially as temple equipment'.⁸⁰⁹ In short it was the secret system 'by which the temple altars were supplied with little living victims',⁸¹⁰ and 'it was that which we existed to fight'.⁸¹¹ The practice involved grooming girls, some of them only babies, for a life of ritualised prostitution. These girls were a valuable commodity since they would become the sex slaves of the Brahman priests who ran the temples. Considered as property of the gods, the girls had no rights of their own and could be sexually abused and tortured without censure. Parents giving children to the temple were taught it was meritorious and since there were often financial rewards to the parents who did so, many children were – even before birth – dedicated to the temple.⁸¹²

Numerous young girls were sent away by their parents, and were forced to spend the rest of their beautiful young lives as sex fodder in the darkness of the huge temples. The traffic of the girls was worked upon religious lines, and very difficult to outlaw. Even when it was forbidden by law, it went on secretly. A characteristic of the system is its secrecy – its subtlety. This Amy wrote in *Things As They Are*, where a whole chapter⁸¹³ revealed the terrible things little girls underwent. Like chattels, little girls were

806. See the whole story in *From the Forest*, 92–98; quotation p. 98.

807. In J.K.H. Denny, *Toward The Sunrising. A History of Work for the Women of India Done by Women from England, 1852–1901* (London: Marshall Brothers, ZBMM, 1902), 49. The census of 1891 counted 22 657 429 widows in India, 13 878 under 4 years of age, 238 572 between 4 and 14. See 'Wives and Widows' in *Toward The Sunrising* (Chapter V, 49–61).

808. *Lotus Buds*, 250.

809. See K. Mayo, *Mother India* (London: Butler & Tanner, 1930), 52.

810. *Lotus Buds*, 71.

811. *From the Forest*, 100.

812. *Lotus Buds*, 257.

813. Chapter XXV, 'Skirting The Abyss', 223–248.

sold to the highest bidder. What could she do against an age-old custom? Many knew about it, but did not openly talk about it:

There are men and women in India to whom many a day is a nightmare, and this fair land an Inferno, because of what they know of the wrong that is going on. [...] The medical workers – God help them! – are those who are most frequently forced to look down, and I, not being a medical, know infinitely less of its depths than they. But this I do know, and do mean, and I mean it with an intensity I know not how to express, *that this custom of infant marriage and child marriage, whether to gods or men, is an infamous custom; that it holds possibilities of wrong, such unutterable wrong, that descriptive words concerning it can only ‘skirt the abyss’, and that in the name of all that is just and all that is merciful it should be swept out of the land without a day’s delay.*⁸¹⁴

Thomas Walker, with whom Amy had worked for several years, refers to Amy’s books in which these evils are revealed:

In St. Paul’s days, immorality formed part of the worship of many temples, as it does in India still. [...] Readers of Miss Carmichael’s books will not need to be reminded that the same grave is rife in India. Dancing-girls (*deva-dasis*) are employed in the temples, prove an attractive part of car-festivals, since they are decked with silk and jewellery and placed on the cars beside the idol, and are sent for to sing and dance at Hindu weddings. Hindu social reformers candidly acknowledge these evils and deplore the inviting of such ‘servants of gods’ to social functions, as they know full well that many a young man owes his first step on an awful downward path to their influence and attractions.⁸¹⁵

■ ‘The dust shown – The whole of the actual never’

What Amy knew, heard and saw – she just could not describe everything that she had discovered. Some things she knew and saw had to be ‘covered with silence’.⁸¹⁶ So many men ‘do the devil’s work today, branding on little innocent souls the very brand of hell’.

A few days ago we had a little child-wife here as a patient. She was ten or eleven, I think, just a scrap of creature, playing with a doll, and yet degraded unmentionably in mind But oh, to think of the hundreds of these little girls! It makes me feel literally sick.

Then Amy adds, ‘where the dotted lines come, there was written what cannot be printed’. With her book she appeals to the Western world, an appeal

[M]eant for our comrades at home, but it may come back to India, and so we have spoken straight from our hearts to our Indian brothers here. Oh, brothers, rise, and in God’s Name fight; in His power fight till you win, for these, your own land’s little girls who never can fight for themselves.

Who can stop a system that has existed for ages and ages? In 1004 the great temple of the Chola king Rajaraja at Tanjore had attached to it 400 women of the temple, who ‘as servants of the gods [*devadasis*], were subsisting by dancing and music and involved in the oldest profession in the world’.⁸¹⁷

814. *Things As They Are*, 233.

815. Thomas Walker in his explanation of Acts 15:19–20, 22–29, in *Missionary Ideals, Missionary Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (3rd edn., London: IVF, 1950), 90–91.

816. *Things As They Are*, 135.

817. *Things As They Are*, 226, 229, 234.

Devadasi or temple slave:

Devadasi is an institutionalized system of exploitation of women in many parts of India. It is actually religiously sanctioned prostitution of economically and socially deprived women. These women are mostly untouchables, lower castes or socially deprived women that are exploited by feudal lords, high caste superior men as well the priest of that arena. This system inherits the concept of exploitation of a social and economic section of society by upper class people. The priests who have a strong hold on the mind of innocent people and have a right to dictate their way of life use their power to religiously sanction prostitution under the name of 'sacred tradition'. Devadasi means gods servant in which young pre-pubertal girls are given away or married off to a local deity of the village or that particular area. They are not allowed to marry or keep any children. She serves the temple, priest and the local feudal lords in every manner, and even other men with money and power in that area. The service which she provides to priest and other men is considered equal to the service of god. She has no way to escape and even if she escapes society will not accept her. The first legal step to outlaw the Devadasi system dates back to the 1934 Bombay Devadasi Protection Act. This act pertained to the Bombay province as it existed in the British Raj. The Bombay Devadasi Protection Act made dedication of women illegal. According to this act marriage by a Devadasi was to be considered lawful and valid, and the children from such a wedlock were to be considered lawful and valid and the children from such wedlock were to be treated as legitimate. The Act laid down grounds for punitive action that could be taken against any person or persons found to be involved in dedications, except the woman who was being dedicated. Those found guilty of such acts could face a year's imprisonment, a fine or both. The 1934 Act provided rules to protect the interests of the Devadasis. Whenever there was a dispute over ownership of land involving a Devadasi, the local Collector was expected to intervene. In 1947, the year of independence, the Madras Devadasi Prevention of Dedication Act outlawed dedication in the southern Madras Presidency.⁸¹⁸

The devadasi system was once considered as a holy calling but further study shows that becoming a devadasi is a direct path to sexual exploitation. Amy knew what was happening and how the young girls were trafficked from one place to another:

Through our open windows in festival times come the glimmer of its lights and the sound of its tom-toms. From the rocks above we can count five or six temple towers, each the centre of a system stretching to the east where by the sea great temples rise; and over the mountains to the west where, in the beautiful Travancore country, things go on that are never told in books; and south, to Ceylon, connected by invisible lines across the sea with this same traffic; and to the north how far only God and the good angels and the bad demons know. So even here we cannot ever forget why we are in India, and our forest life is in its way as much part of the warfare of life as any other part.⁸¹⁹

All these things happened to women and young girls and are 'so often seen in a land where childhood ends almost as soon as it begins'.⁸²⁰ Amy tried to awaken the people in India and abroad:

But this I do know, and do mean it with an intensity I know not how to express, that this custom of infant marriage and child marriage, whether to the gods or men, is an infamous custom; that it holds possibilities of wrong, such unutterable wrong, that descriptive words concerning it can only 'skirt the abyss', and that in the name of all that is just and all that is merciful it should be swept out of the land without a day's delay.⁸²¹

818. <http://amara.org/v/31X>: *Deva* or male deity, *devi* or female deity. See also *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 'Devadasis, girls ceremonially married to the deity in the temple, an ancient ritual which degenerated into prostitution'. See http://www.irelandempire.ie/schools/India_Education_Carmichael.html

819. *From the Forest*, 100.

820. *The Continuation of a Story*, 37.

821. *Things As They Are*, 233.

For Amy it was clear, that whatever people might think about this devadasi system, for her it was all the same: immorality under the shelter of religion and custom. She knew that the dedication ceremony, *Pottukattu*, resembled a marriage ceremony, and that ultimately a devadasi is forced into prostitution. William Borden on his journey through India in 1914 saw from nearby something of Hindu worship and practices in Madurai:

All the large temples we have seen and innumerable small shrines are dedicated to the worship of Siva. You probably know something about this already – but if you don't I can't tell you, as it is too awful. The fact that this vile teaching is the most universal and popular thing in Hinduism is enough to offset everything that Hinduism may have done for the people, if it has done anything but degrade them. It makes me tired to have a person who knows little or nothing about it say that these people are as well off with their religion as we are with ours, or rather that theirs is as good as ours. Five minutes' explanation of facts in any one of a dozen temples I have visited would disillusion such a person. He would not put in plainer language the things these temples stand for – the deification of lust, the actual worship of symbols of vice, and the slavery of tens of thousands of women and girls 'married to the gods'.⁸²²

It was very, very difficult for Amy to get a finger behind this system and to get knowledge of what was really happening with the children in the temples. Even government officials found it difficult 'to discover or verify facts'. The moment a government official 'walks down an Indian street every blind, metaphorically speaking, is drawn, and no man ever sees behind those blinds'. Bills were framed but none became law. 'The powers against it proved too strong. [...] Those who know India know why'.⁸²³ In one of the books in the Dohnavur library, I found Amy's thoughts about this gross evil in a poem by her hand, and next to it, she wrote: 'Before *Things As They Are* was written':

I cried and said, O God, my words are cold! The frosted frond of fern or feathery palm on whitened window wrought, as near to burning are, as these my words;

Oh that they were as flames.

God answer me. Thou shalt have words. But at this price, that thou must first be burnt, burnt by red embers from a secret fire, scorched by fierce heats and withering winds that sweep through all thy being, carrying thee afar from old delights.

Doth not the ardent fire consume the mountain's heart before the flow of fervent lava? Wouldst thou easefully, as from cool pleasant fountains flow in fire?

Say, can thy heart endure, or can thy hands be strong In the day that I shall deal with thee?

For first the iron must enter thine own soul. And wound and brand it, scarring awful lines indelibly upon it, and a hand resistless in a tender terribleness.

Must thoroughly purge it, fashioning its pain to power that leaps in fire.

Not otherwise, and by no lighter touch are fire-words wrought.

Amy knew the Hindu culture very well and that this terrible practice of selling children into temple prostitution was a devilish influence upon the culture. Originally this practice was a foreign element introduced by a different kingdom that once invaded India. She gives us the reason why she is writing upon these things:

It is not allowed in the Vedas (ancient sacred books). It is like a parasite, which has settled upon the bough of some noble forest-tree – on it, but not of it. The parasite has gripped the bough with strong and interlacing roots; but it is not the bough. [...] The true India is sensitive and very gentle. There is a wisdom in its ways, none the less wise because it is not the wisdom of the West. This spirit which traffics in children is callous and fierce as a ravaging beast; and its wisdom descends not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish [...] And this spirit,

822. H. Taylor, *Borden of Yale*, rev. D. Bentley-Taylor [London: CIM, 1953] 20.

823. In *Nor Scrip*, 8.

alien to the land, has settled upon it, and made itself at home in it, and so become a part of it that nothing but the touch of God: 'Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke'. That is why we write. For we write for those who believe in prayer – not in the emasculated modern sense, but in the old Hebrew sense, deep as the other is shallow.⁸²⁴

It was difficult for Amy to conduct her enquiry and go 'into the polluted places'. What happened with the girls and women she said in a short sentence: 'It is that evil which defiles a woman.'⁸²⁵ For Helen Barrett Montgomery 'this connection of religion with immorality is one of the most cruel wrongs against womanhood of India'.⁸²⁶ All these things were unknown to many missionaries and government officials. When they were known, many turned a blind eye, turned themselves into ostriches mentally and ignored them completely. In 1834 the missionary Anthony Norris Groves visited a German couple, named Weibrecht, who were running a school in the neighbourhood of Calcutta. The Weibrechts were 'very concerned about the plight of little girls sold into a life of ritual prostitution, wondering if they should establish an orphanage'.⁸²⁷ Amy did not turn aside, and her books still show signs of intense study on this subject. In her bookcase are some books from or about Pandita Ramabai.⁸²⁸ Ramabai read the Hindu *Vedas*, *Upanisads* and the *Dharmashastras* and discovered the Hindu view about women, according to their sacred books. She read that all Hindu pundits and people agreed on two things: all women are bad, worse than demons as unholy as untrue, and they cannot get *moksha* or salvation. The only hope for them was to get salvation through the worship of their husbands. A woman had no right to study the *Vedas*. Ramabai was determined to change the miserable condition of women.

Of many of these issues Amy wrote about in *Things As They Are* and *Lotus Buds*.⁸²⁹ The first book is called a 'battle book' by Amy, written from the battlefield where the fighting is not 'pretty play but stern reality'.⁸³⁰ It is an honest book, causing much opposition, but the book had to be written as it was, because many in India and the Western world were according to her 'systematically misinformed'.⁸³¹ She was not believed, even by missionaries, and remarks as 'No such children in this city', 'Have you seen a myth?' or 'Temple children are creations of an imagination'⁸³² reached her. It would not be possible for her to bring about any change in a system already ages old, and she was 'just knocking her head against a rock'.⁸³³ Amy continued and, little by little, it began to dawn what really was going on in the temples. Friends from the American Madura Mission and people of the ICS also

824. *Lotus Buds*, 89 and 90.

825. *Lotus Buds*, 285.

826. Barrett Montgomery, *Western Women in Eastern Lands*, 66.

827. In Dann, *Father of Faith Missions*, 221.

828. Pandita Ramabai Dongre (1858–1922). Pandita: the name for a female Sanskrit scholar.

829. Published in 1903 and 1909.

830. *Things As They Are*, 4.

831. Sharpe, 'The Legacy of Amy Carmichael'.

832. *The Continuation of a Story*, 5.

833. *Things As They Are*, 19.

came with evidence, which proved the reality of the things Amy had revealed. It was Pandita Ramabai herself who wrote that what was written in *Things As They Are* is true:

I can honestly corroborate everything said in regard to the religious and social life of the Hindus. I came from that part of the country, and I am very glad that the book has succeeded in bringing the truth to light.⁸³⁴

Nearly 20 years later Katherine Mayo would call the work of Amy in Dohnavur 'extra-ordinary' and mention *Lotus Buds* and *Things As They Are* as 'too-reticent'.⁸³⁵ In Amy's bookcase, I found Gairi R. Banerjee's *Sex Delinquent Women and their Rehabilitation*.⁸³⁶ Amy knew everything about the evil practices and did not turn aside. She longed to help:

Oh to care, and oh for the power to make others care, not less but far, far more! Care till our eyes do fail with tears for the destruction of the daughters of our people!⁸³⁷

It was impossible for Amy to write the full story of what was happening with the children.⁸³⁸ So deeply was she hurt by the fate of these children, 'perverted at the very spring of being', that it was 'the shame that burns, the wrong that stings us as we are forced to regard it'. It is 'awful perversion of sweet to bitter, pure to vile, this deliberate defacement of the Lord's image in the soul of an innocent child'.⁸³⁹ The scope of her book is this: that 'it touches the Dust, but its purpose goes deeper, stretches wider, has to do with the Actual and our relation to it'.⁸⁴⁰ Revealing what was happening to the children in the temples was as if a stone had been thrown straight at a mirror. Amy saw the children as God's creatures, and not meant for a life in shame and moral destruction:

To be a temple child means cruelty. It means a worse thing, even the turning of that child's mind, from all that is good to all that is bad: it means killing the soul. And of all killings in the whole world, that is the worst.⁸⁴¹

834. In confirmatory notes of *Things As They Are*, VIII.

835. In Mayo, *Mother India*, 53. Mayo writes straightforwardly about the consequences of child marriages and all the physical damages for these girls and about the sexual behaviour sanctioned in Hindu religion. Mayo quotes a surgeon who said to her, 'For the vast majority of women here, marriage is a physical tragedy' (p. 60). It was discussed in 1922 in the Legislative Assembly to raise the age at which a girl was allowed to marry, because due to the very early marriages of girls it was estimated 'that in India each generation sees the death of 3,200,000 mothers in the agonies of childbirth' (p. 49).

836. Research from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Bombay.

837. *Things As They Are*, 221.

838. 'Once more we repeat it, to write the whole fact is impossible' (*Lotus Buds*, 291).

839. *The Continuation of a Story*, 10.

840. *Things As They Are*, 3.

841. *From the Forest*, 87. Amy was very reluctant to speak plainly about what happened with little girls; Katherine Mayo however used plain speech in revealing the living facts as they were in the 1920s in India. In her *Mother India* [Appendix, pp. 365–366] she gives the shocking outcome of medical evidence brought to the floor of the Indian Legislative Assembly of 1922. The evidence from the medical research was compiled in 1891, but still remained beyond challenge in 1922. In the report, evidence from women's hospitals goes as follows: A. [Aged 9] Day after marriage. Left femur dislocated, pelvis crushed out of shape, flesh hanging in shreds; B. [Aged 10] Unable to stand, bleeding profusely, flesh much lacerated; C. [Aged 9] So completely ravished as to be almost beyond surgical repair; E. [Aged about 9] Lower limbs completely paralysed; G. [Aged about 10] Very weak from loss of blood. Stated that great violence had been done to her, in an unnatural way; I. [Aged about 7] Living with husband. Died in great agony after three days; M. [Aged about 10] Crawled to the hospital on her hands and knees. Has never been able to stand erect since her marriage. This is just some evidence from the list presented. 'The practice of early marriage is not confined to any province or class of society, but is practically a universal custom in India', in *Young India*, 09 September 1926, 318 (quoted in Mayo, *Mother India*, 63).

One day Amy saw a little child with two men on the road, and she writes:

I was coming home from work a few evenings ago when I met two men and a child. They were Caste men in flowing white scarves – dignified, educated men. But the child? She glanced up at me, smiled, and salaamed. Then I remembered her; I had seen her before in her own home. These men belonged to her village. What were they doing with her? Then a sudden fear shot through me, and I looked at the men, and they laughed. ‘We are taking her to the temple there’, and they pointed across through the trees, ‘to marry her to the god’. It all passed in a moment. One of them caught her hand, and they went on. I stood looking after them – just looking. The child turned once and waved her little hand to me. Then the trees came between.⁸⁴²

Amy knew that the little one would join the temple women who danced and sang in processions and feasts. In a way that shocks us Amy describes her agony at seeing an innocent girl drawn into these evil practices. She gives us a pathetic picture of a sweet little Hindu girl, a child she knew, very affectionate and petulant. One day she had sung some Christian verses to her and the little woman with a pout replied in the Indian sing-song manner with an Indian psalm, declaring that she liked hers best, as her religion had been in existence hundreds of years before that of Amy.⁸⁴³

It is often suggested, that Amy herself was not fully aware of what was really going on with the girls and what was done with them and what they suffered. Elliot even says that she never fully knew the details of sex. I oppose this idea. Amy was fully aware! She withheld from writing the full truth and the details due to her upbringing in a time when people were of the opinion that it would be inappropriate to write openly about things referring to sexual issues. Also, too shocked by what she heard from the victims, she thought it not proper and wise to give all the details. Amy followed the ethical code of her time, but she knew everything:

There is an old, old man living near here, with a little wife of ten or eleven. [...] Our present cook’s little girl, nine years old, has lately been married to a man who has had already two wives. In each of these cases, as in each I have mentioned, marriage means marriage, not just betrothal, as so many fondly imagine. Only today I heard of one who died in what the nurse who attended her described as ‘simple agony’. [...] What must it be to those little girls, so little, so pitifully little, and unequal to it all. What must it be to these childish things to live on through it day by day, with, in some cases, nothing to hope for till kindly death comes and opens the door, the one door of escape they know, and the tortured body dies? And someone says, ‘the girl is dead, take the corpse out to the burning ground’. Then they take it up, gently perhaps. But oh, the relief of remembering it! It does not matter now. Nothing matters any more. Little dead wives cannot feel.⁸⁴⁴

Looking at the lotus buds floating on the water in a temple pool, she saw in them the young innocent faces of the children who were sacred to the gods. It flashed through her mind: ‘All souls are Mine!’ Now ‘an alien power has possessed them, counted them his for so many generations, that we have almost acquiesced in the shameful confiscation’. ‘The children of the temples of South India are His – His and not another’s.’ Now Amy saw that it was her work ‘to go forth with the Owner Himself to claim His own

842. *Things As They Are*, 217–218.

843. *Things As They Are*, 219–220.

844. *Things As They Are*, 230 and 231.

possession. There is hope in the thought, and confidence and the purest inspiration'.⁸⁴⁵ That moment the following song sang through her⁸⁴⁶:

Drop Thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Saving these children is 'temple service *versus* Christianity'. Due to the wealth of the temples, they could offer huge sums of money and this persuaded many a mother to hand over her child to the temple. Saving these children was for Amy 'work which our Father had given us to do'.⁸⁴⁷

The devadasi system is – according to Amy – 'something alien to the old life of the people'. It is not allowed in the Védas (ancient sacred books). 'It is like a parasite which has settled upon the bough of some noble forest tree – on it, but not of it'.⁸⁴⁸ Even the high-minded Hindu 'revolts from the degradation and pollution of this travesty of religion, and will abolish it where he can'.⁸⁴⁹ The temples are polluted places, the evil, which she reveals and describes in her books, is the evil in novels and newspapers people read for their own amusement. 'It is the destroying evil that we have refused so much. [...] It is that evil that defiles a woman'.⁸⁵⁰ Temple women were defending this system, they were raised in this system from infancy and had not had any chance to escape from this system.

'The Traffic is worked upon religious lines; and so in trying to save the children we have to contend with the perverted religious sense.' Amy saw this system like a net spread over the country, 'and the net is alive: you can feel it'.⁸⁵¹ It has been said, that Amy, due to her Victorian upbringing, knew nothing or very little about the sexual exploitation of the girls in the temples, but she knew about the practice of 'the oldest profession in the world'.⁸⁵² Because temple women were brought to the temple when they were very young, even as babies, 'she is taught all evil and trained to think it is good'. She lives 'along lines which lead far away from the freedom and innocence of childhood'.⁸⁵³ Married to the gods means they are tied or, as the Tamil idiom has it, 'tied to the stone'. 'Oh, she is tied indeed, tied with ropes Satan twisted in his cruellest hour in hell!'⁸⁵⁴ When Amy saw these children in danger, she thought: 'Poor little all-unconscious illustration of India's need of God. [...] God pity them; for, like those of old, they do not know what they do'.⁸⁵⁵

845. *Lotus Buds*, 4.

846. *Lotus Buds*, 5.

847. *Nor Scrip*, 9.

848. *Lotus Buds*, 89.

849. *Lotus Buds*, 254.

850. *Lotus Buds*, 285.

851. *Lotus Buds*, 250. See 'The Secret Traffic', in *Lotus Buds* [Chapter XXVII, pp. 249–254].

852. *Lotus Buds*, 257.

853. *Lotus Buds*, 261.

854. *Things As They Are*, 218.

855. *Lotus Buds*, 338 and 339.

This rescue work was very trying and opposition was severe. It demanded everything from her. When after many difficulties a little child was saved in Dohnavur it was often difficult to keep the little one alive. Babies were sometimes but a few days old, some of them seriously ill and all needed appropriate food. Indian women were not easily inclined to breastfeed a child that was not theirs, and babies need mother's milk. Amy managed to find some who were willing, but it remained every time difficult to get the right help. God's hand was over the nurseries. Once she wrote:

Yes, God's Glory is our plea, highest, strongest, most impelling and enduring of all pleas. But oh, by the thoughts of the myriads who are passing, by the thought of the Coming of the Lord, by the infinite realities of life and death, heaven and hell, by our Saviour's cross and Passion, we plead with all those who love Him, but who have not considered these things yet, consider them now! [...] Do you think we are writing like this because we are discouraged? No, we are not discouraged, except when sometimes we fear lest you should grow weary in prayer before the answer comes. This India is God's India. This work is His. [...] So, though we sympathise with everything that tends towards life and light in India, and rejoice with our brothers who bind sheaves, believing that though all is not genuine corn, some is, yet we feel compelled to give ourselves mainly to work of a character which, by its very nature, can never be popular.⁸⁵⁶

Just a few years before India got its independence, the system was still going on. Eddy describes the situation in 1945:

The servants of the gods, who subsist by dancing and music and the practice of 'the oldest profession in the world' are partly recruited by admissions and even purchases from other classes... The rise of the Caste and its euphemistic name seem to date from the 9th and 10th centuries. Inscriptions show that in the year 1004 the great Temple at Tanjore had attached to it, four hundred women of the Temple, who lived in free quarters in the four streets round it.⁸⁵⁷

Since India's independence in 1947, legislation limited the activities of the devadasis and prohibited the traffic of children. The State Legislative Assembly in Madras passed legislation prohibiting the dedication of female infants to Hindu temples. Dr Mutthu Lakshmi put forward in 1947 the Devadasi Act for implementation.⁸⁵⁸ This Act forbade the devadasi practice in the temples in the Southern Madras Presidency. This prohibition was extended in 1954 nationwide by the Central Government in Delhi. For the proponents of the system, it was keeping alive India's very old venerable art and culture; those who wanted to do away with it talked of the dangers of this practice in which religion indirectly gave sanction to prostitution and child trafficking. The Bill passed in the India's Parliament and made this system illegal. It took a long time to put it fully into effect but in another way, this kind of child abuse still flourishes in this 21st century.⁸⁵⁹ Since 1988 the devadasi practice has been forbidden all over India, but health and social workers think that in this second decade of the 20th century there are about 45 000 devadasis, so prostitution with its allied evils has not been ended by legislation.⁸⁶⁰ In common with most

856. *Things As They Are*, 302 and 288.

857. Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 126.

858. Margaret Wilkinson one day visited her at Adayar in the south of Madras. The first thing that caught her attention in Lakshmi's room was a small photo of Amy hanging on her wall. Asked, why that photo was there, Lakshmi answered that it was 'through Amma, that she had first seen the temple women were a blot on her religion. After her study in Europe, she decided to seek election to the legislature in Madras. Her special concern was to see an Act passed which would really deal with the evil of the Devadasi system and put an end to the giving of children to temple houses' [Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 91].

859. Cf. Robbins, *Not Forgetting to Sing*, 152–153.

860. Cf. C.R. Kermorgant, *Servants of the Goddess. The Modern Day Devadasi* (India: Vintage Books, Random House, 2014).

countries, also India still has problems with child abuse and child exploitation. In poor communities a succession of girl babies in a family is a disaster. These redundant daughters must be fed and later an appallingly expensive dowry must be paid to get them married. The government takes measures to stop infanticide but still it is difficult to stop this widespread problem.

The focus of the work in Dohnavur was the saving of the children, but continually women were in need of protection and shelter. Several of them were brought to Dohnavur. Here since 1937 about 40 women of mixed ages, of very mixed backgrounds and castes have lived together. All of them could tell stories, which shocked Amy and the others. Several of them were deserted wives, others were forced into prostitution and wanted to escape, and some had run away from home because there they were continually beaten and tortured, even in the presence of the children. It was not always easy to live together, because a few were totally undisciplined, usually illiterate, or rebellious or quarrelsome. In Dohnavur, the Place of Confidence was built for them in 1937 where they received love. Amy wrote:

I had a letter asking me if we really could possibly love these with whom life had dealt so hard that 'broken things' is the only word to describe them. [...] Often things happen that drain human love dry. Nothing but the divine is any use of them. God give us Calvary love, love that cannot be tired out of loving, love that never says, 'I have borne enough, done enough, suffered enough'. The agony of crucifixion could wring nothing from our Lord's heart of love but the cry, 'Father, forgive them'. Perhaps one has to reach the very end of one's natural human love before one realizes what ocean depths of love were in that cry.⁸⁶¹

This is one of the reasons why Amy wrote her books:

For we write for those who believe in prayer. [...] We believe there is some connection between knowing and caring and praying, and what happens afterwards. Otherwise we should leave the darkness to cover the things that belong to the dark. [...] We stand on the edge of the pit, and look down and tell what we have seen, urged by the longing within us that the Christians of England should pray.⁸⁶²

At that time newspapers like the *Indian Times*, the *Christian Patriot* of the south and the *Bombay Guardian* of the west reported about the existence of the evil and the need for its removal. The *Indian Times* wrote about the little ones being 'steeped deep from their childhood' in all that is most wrong.⁸⁶³

Amy never blamed the temple women for their immoral behaviour. These women did not choose this life:

Let us deal gently with the mishandled flower. Let hard words be restrained where the woman is concerned. Let it be remembered she is not responsible for being what she is.⁸⁶⁴

Secret India does not easily reveal what is really going on and few have ever felt the scorching fire of grief over children spoiled:

Some would have escaped if they could, but they could not, and they grew up to be like the gods whom they were forced to serve. These things would break our hearts if we did not believe that the God of gods looks upon souls not as we see them, debased because they never had a chance to grow up pure, but as they would have been if they had had a chance. But do you wonder that we burn?⁸⁶⁵

861. *Fragments that Remain*, 115: A note by B. Trehane about the 'Place of Confidence'.

862. *Lotus Buds*, 90.

863. Cf. *Lotus Buds*, 274.

864. *Lotus Buds*, 284. Cf. too *The Beginning of a Story*, 8: 'She did not choose the life. She was doomed to it from infancy, nothing else ever opened before her. She is the result of her environment, an environment for which she is not responsible.'

865. *Windows*, 41.

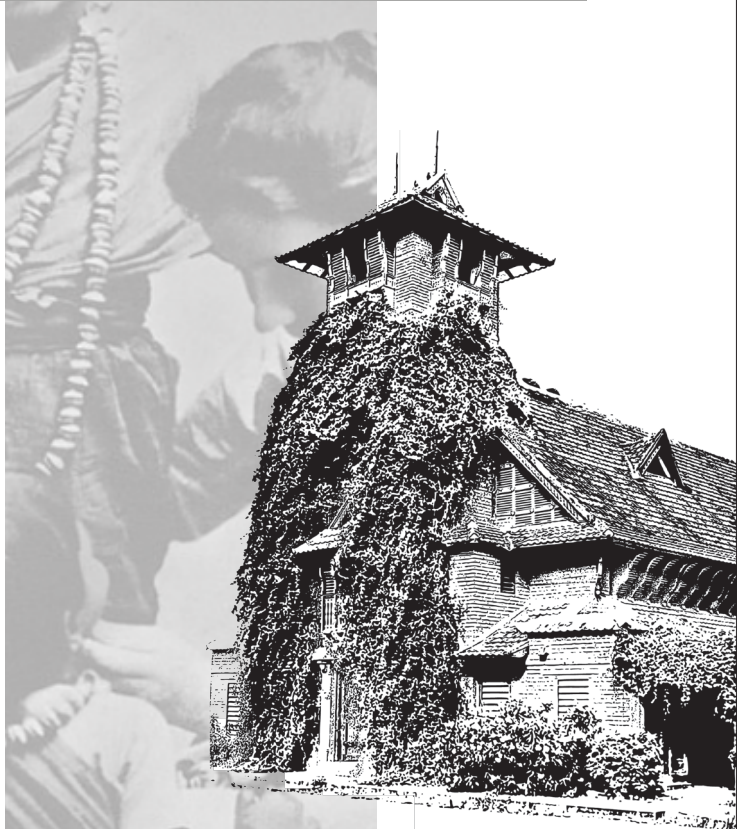
The driving power in Amy's life was her whole-hearted love of Christ, which was inexorably translated into obedience to his will. For Amy it meant rescuing the most helpless; the children in great danger and need found in her a real mother. Amy saw the potential witnesses for Christ in India. Infuriated at what Satan was doing to these lovely children, Amy declared war. When God chose her location, the battle came. In India she fought many battles on her knees, risking her life on more than one occasion and facing arrest and imprisonment in order to snatch some pleading child from the jaws of defilement and destruction. People often wondered why she did not speak out openly about what was really happening to the children. Along with the reasons already mentioned, Amy followed Thomas Walker, who never wanted to talk about impure things. "Those unutterable things which were in his mind when he said briefly, "Better not". These words "coloured" all his thinking. "They sacrifice to devils" said St. Paul.⁸⁶⁶ In early mission work of Christian Schwartz and others they saw a growing number of young men joining the Christian faith, so the need to seek female converts continued to increase because men should have pious companions and because of the great influence of women at home, the vital role they play in the education of the children, and therefore because of the favourable influence they could have on society through converting to Christianity. While missionaries needed women converts to build Christian homes, the women themselves remained largely beyond the reach of hearing the Gospel. It became a formidable difficulty in having any form of contact with wives, mothers and daughters, particularly those of the higher castes, who seemed confined in the most rigorous cloister-like seclusion with all its ignorance, frivolity and narrow-mindedness. The reason why it was so difficult is because the cloistered interior of the house is to a Hindu a protected womb, as sacred as the womb in the inner sanctum of the Hindu temple, and as such is protected from the disordering forces as it is believed, which brings great blessings to the family, including the birth of many sons.⁸⁶⁷

866. *Roots*, 25.

867. Cf. S. Wadley, *The Powers of Tamil Women* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1991): 'The status of women in South Asia, is related to Hindu belief. Women, who like the goddesses are feared, must like the goddesses, be kept under control. Through male control and her own chastity, the Hindu woman controls her dangerous sacred powers and is able to use them for the benefit of the family' [p. XXII]. The need for protection and social control arises from the woman's alleged propensity to create disorder which led to the enforcement of a decree from Manu that she should never be independent: 'In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent. Though destitute of virtue, seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife. In reward of such a conduct, a female [...] gains in this life highest renown, and in the next world a place near her husband' [*The Laws of Manu*, sacred Hindu text, v. 148, 154 and 166].

It was marvellous to see it all coming to life – the Fellowship that I had heard and read and prayed so much about. One had to realize that under God there was only one boss and that was Amma. She would not proceed with any course of action until everyone had agreed, but who dared oppose her? We are awed – perhaps excessively so – by her wisdom and experience. She was a remarkable, alarming to a raw recruit, with a sort of aura around her. You sensed at once that she walked very close to God. Quite apart from her spirituality she was a highly gifted person – she was very widely read and had an amazing knowledge of Tamil and of Indian ways. Mercifully, she had a sense of humour, which saved the day many a time.

Hugh Evan Hopkins's first impression of Dohnavur in 1931. In K. Makower, *Follow My Leader. A Biography of Murray Webb-Peploe Including his Years of Service with Amy Carmichael at Dohnavur* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1984), 127.



The beginning of the Dohnavur Fellowship

■ Rooted for life

At the beginning of this chapter, the famous words of Livingstone come to my mind, that ‘the end of a journey of discovery is the beginning of the mission’. Amy’s circuitous route came to its destination in Dohnavur. Amy, after an exploration of several years, had discovered the secret travel of little girls and boys, whose very young lives were used for evil purposes. God gave her a mission in Dohnavur to rescue these children:

Deep in the heart of India, if only one can pierce to it, is a sense of God. Many a child is here because of that sense. Let our thoughts be tender when we think of India. The fiercer our fight against the unclean power whose nature is summed up visibly in certain of the symbols in Hinduism, the gentler let our thoughts be of the soul of this people, who might be so different.⁸⁶⁸

Amy’s last move had been made in 1901, to Dohnavur, a village some 15 miles south of Tinnevely. The place is named after Count Alexander Dohna (1771–1831), a German friend of missions.⁸⁶⁹ During her itinerant work, she had also already visited Dohnavur and stayed there for a while.⁸⁷⁰ Rev. Walker with his band and Amy with her team used Tinnevely as their operating base.⁸⁷¹ Often they travelled to faraway places and therefore it was useful to have a place nearby to stay for a rest. It was not easy to

868. *Gold Cord*, 225.

869. Count Dohna was a Prussian politician, a friend of Schleiermacher, Schlegel, Novalis and Wilhelm von Humboldt. See *Neue Deutsche Biographie* (vol. 4, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1959), 53.

870. Cf. KCMMB, 1879. In the annual report of the KCMC, July 1897, we read: ‘Miss Amy Wilson-Carmichael, Tinnevely, India’.

871. KCMMB, Mission Committee report, 08 March 1898: ‘The Committee heartily recommend Miss Wilson-Carmichael’s location with the Rev. T. Walker in Tinnevely district as proposed.’

reach the Dohnavur compound, situated far away from the main roads. For Amy the place was just ‘an open compound in jungle land’.⁸⁷² ‘This work [*to save the children*] would never have been done by the road side, so He hid you’, was the remark of a Christian friend from Palamcottah.⁸⁷³

Dohnavur was a small enclave of native Christians mostly from the caste of palm climbers. Amy, once high in the mountain near Dohnavur, seeing the green forest stretching as far as her eyes could see, gazed down enchanted over the plains far below her:

Dohnavur, it is our own Dohnavur that holds us; we can see into it; see part of its nearly mile-long wall, the little pointed roofs of its nurseries, the trees of its gardens, the bungalow roof, a mere slip of red paint, my room’s roof a round-shaped daub, and most clearly of all the new, largest nursery, built all by itself in the field facing the hills. [...] For surely more precious than even the glorious forest and the mountains which sweep in new and beautiful curves unperceived from below, more precious than all the coloured glory of the plains in so far as it is only of earth, air, water, is that little square within its garden walls, the work of the everlasting God. [...] Why should we fear for His work, whether it be in a place dear as the apple of our eye to us, or in a soul to succour whom we would pour out all we have? Are the children of these lands, yes and of our cities at home of all waste places, not regarded by Him? On many a life fell, as we looked down, what seemed like a special ray of that commanded light, and we saw, as if we had never seen it before, that we need not, dare not, fear for any single child in whose unobtrusive life is set the imperishable work of the Lord.⁸⁷⁴

She herself had not chosen this place and this kind of rescue work. She writes: ‘We have a God who thinks beforehand for His children; we have only to follow His thoughts’.⁸⁷⁵ In this country with uncountable millions, ‘are the children of these lands, yes and of our cities at home and of all waste places, not regarded by Him?’:

The roots of our Fellowship, it seems to me, run down through Matsuye to Broughton Grange, then to Ancoats, Manchester and further down to the Welcome in Belfast. Through that way they run down to the book of Ezra, the Epistle of 1 Peter 1:22 and 4:8 and to the 13th, 14th and 15th chapter of St. John’s Gospel.

The Dohnavur text ‘Love never faileth’ was the red thread through all the work:

We are trusted to spread the spirit of love. Tenderness in judgement, the habit of thinking the best of one another, unwillingness to believe evil, grief if we are forced to do so, eagerness to believe good, joy over one recovered from any slip or fall, unselfish gladness in another’s joy, sorrow in another’s sorrow, readiness to do anything to help another entirely irrespective of self- all this and much more is included in that wonderful word love. If love weakens among us, if it ever become possible to tolerate the last shadow of an unloving thought, our Fellowship will begin to perish. Unlove is deadly. It is a cancer. It may kill slowly but it always kills in the end. Let us fear it, fear to give room to it as we should fear to nurse a cobra. It is deadlier than any cobra. And just one minute drop of the almost invisible cobra venom spreads swiftly all over the body of one into whom it has been injected, so one drop of the gall of unlove in my heart or yours, however unseen, has a terrible power of spreading all through our Family, for we are one body – we are parts of one another. If one suffers loss, all suffer loss. Not one of us liveth to herself.⁸⁷⁶

872. *Ponnamal*, 31.

873 *Lotus Buds*, 145.

874. *From the Forest*, 13 and 14.

875. *Fragments that Remain*, 13.

876. *Amma’s Book*, 28.

Just before she had settled in Dohnavur to take up what would become her life's work – the care for the children – the question of the 'other life' came again. Never to marry – was that really what the Lord had in stock for her? Questioned by Neela about her renouncement of marriage Amy wrote to the Dohnavur children (Figure 11):

Neela's second question, the one that is so difficult to answer, takes me back to an evening before I sailed to Japan. I had been far too happy, too much wrapped upon the life of the people I loved, to have any time of thought about my own. It didn't seem to come to mind. So when a letter that looked towards what you call 'the other life' came, I was startled. It was a new thought. But presently as I waited quietly deep down in me a voice seemed to be saying: 'No, no, no: I have something different for you to do'. And from that time on, whenever this question rose, that seemed to be the word that settled things. [...] But was there no desire for the other life? Yes, at times there was, and there was fear. One day in Japan that fear was so strong that I went away alone to a cave among the mountains of Arima, where we were staying then. Alone in that cave I listened to that voice of fear. 'It is all very well now while you are young, but when you are old, you will be desolate'. And then Another Voice spoke. 'None of them that trust in Me shall be desolate'. [...] The last time 'the other life' pulled was at Ooty, just before you [*the Dohnavur*



Source: © Dohnavur Fellowship. Permission to reproduce was obtained from Jeremiah Rajanesan. Photographer unknown.

FIGURE 11: Amy with two children in Dohnavur (1912): 'It is very comforting in so sad a world to be allowed to make even a little child happy'.

children) began to come. There was no cave nearby there, but I had a room to myself and I knelt down in that room and laid this that was pressed upon me before the Lord. It was not a question of giving up His service. It never had been that. And now that was (as others would have told me) such a good thing would have led me into wider opportunities than ever had been mine, but it would have led out of India. Lord what wilt Thou me have to do? Shall I do this? And all I heard in answer to that was: 'No, no, no. I have something different for you to do'. I did not then know what that 'something different' was. But I know now.⁸⁷⁷

Amy always saw the whole enterprise in Dohnavur as a divine commission. Writing about the practices in the Indian temples, she says; 'We have been appointed to save such children – girls and boys'.⁸⁷⁸ Dohnavur might be a forsaken, lonely place, somewhere in south India's plain, but "in His hand are all the corners of the earth", is one of our words in Dohnavur'.⁸⁷⁹ Was not Dohnavur and all that happened there the visible answer to prayer with which that place abounds?⁸⁸⁰ The place is situated off the road and rarely unexpected visitors or people who have no good intentions pass by. Amy saw it as God's provision:

We are also most mercifully quite out of the beat of the ordinary exploiter of missions; few except the really keen care for such a journey; so that we get on with our work uninterrupted by anything but the occasional arrival of welcome friends and comrades. These, when they visit us for the first time, are usually much astonished to find something almost civilized out in the wilds, and they walk round with an air of surprise, and quite aspiring appreciation, being kindly pleased with little, because they had looked for less. The compound in which the nurseries are built is a field, bounded on three sides by fields, and on the fourth by the bungalow compound. The Western Ghats with their foothills make it a beautiful place.⁸⁸¹

To a visitor, entering the DF premises one can say that if you seek Amy's legacy, look around you. The buildings, the church, the clock tower, the hospital, the nurseries – all have Amy's touch. Walking through the moon arches, one realises that much more lies ahead. Look around and you encounter a feast of treasures and monuments that tell the story of the Fellowship of the 20th century. Of this place in the very south of India, it is as if the Lord has said, 'I will make the place of My feet glorious'. Here the Spirit of God had the habit of taking the words of Jesus out of their spiritual setting and putting them into the setting of the Fellowship, where they are determined 'not to know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified'. A unique Fellowship in the very south of India, in the middle of nowhere, desert-like, came into shape in the first decades of the 20th century. An Irish lady, with other men and women from England, of whom two men came via China, were united with Indian women and men and hundreds of children, without distinction of caste, who were drawn by the Gospel to Jesus Christ, lived and worked there for his glory and to his service and depended for financial support fully upon him.⁸⁸² Their fellowship is expressed in the Fellowship Song, with the notion of 'We are, as it were parts of one another'.⁸⁸³

Welded together, parts of one another,
So we are oned in Thine obedience,
Oh let no earthly vapours ever smother
The heavenliness of this sure confidence.
Comfort and joy meet this vital union,

877. Amy in 'Taken out of the Auto-Biography', papers in the office of the Dohnavur Fellowship, Dohnavur.

878. *Ploughed Under*, 144.

879. *Nar Scrip*, 77.

880. *Nar Scrip*, 51.

881. *Lotus Buds*, 146.

882. Ultimately, workers came from England, Canada, Northern Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, New Zealand, Australia and Scotland. As far as it is known, only one came from the Netherlands.

883. Weymouth's translation of Ephesians 4:25.

Shelter in storm and peacefulness in strife;
 Thus to be knit in Thy pure love's communion
 It is our life, O Lord; it is our life.
 And as the petals, fitly framed together,
 In rose-bud nourished by or rain or sun
 Make one sweet rose, so nourished by Thy weather,
 We would be one, dear Lord, in Thee all one.⁸⁸⁴

The work here was completely new and Amy was pioneering in a place 'hand-picked by God for her and the children'.⁸⁸⁵ For several years, Amy thoroughly researched in what way the 'secret travel' with the children was done and what was done with them in the temples. She felt a burden laid upon her heart and shoulders to do something:

At last a day came when the burden grew too heavy for me; and then it was as though the tamarind trees about the house were not tamarind, but olive, and under one of those trees our Lord Jesus knelt, and He knelt alone. And I knew that this was His burden, not mine. It was He who was asking me to share it with Him, not I who was asking Him to share it with me. After that there was only one thing to do: who that saw Him kneeling there could turn away and forget? Who could have done anything but go into the garden and kneel down beside Him under the olive trees?⁸⁸⁶

From that day onwards Amy went a way on which no one had been before, and since that memorable, heart-searching day, when she had to give up all her itinerating plans, she crossed an invisible frontier into an unknown land which for so many years we have known as the Dohnavur Fellowship. Meanwhile, by correspondence she was well informed of what was done in other mission fields, for instance what happened in China. Missionaries, also from the CIM, were threatened, driven away, even murdered. In her Bible we find a reference when she read Jesus's words in Luke 12:4, 'Be not afraid of them that kill the body', to the killing of missionaries during the Boxer rebellion in China.⁸⁸⁷

■ Service in a sari

We did not choose Dohnavur. We were living here, itinerating in the country round and almost entirely Hindu tract [...] when the work for the little children grew up about us, and before we knew it, we were a family.⁸⁸⁸

Though naturally conservative, Amy was unconventional and she warmly welcomed new ways of evangelism. She was careful not to be occupied too much with the instrument – the truth – and too little with the end – conversion. Her first years in India were spent with itinerary work, which had a prominent place in her daily programme. For transport, Amy sometimes used a pony, Scamp, but she thought it would be good to sell the pony. In riding Scamp, she felt separated from the Starry Cluster. With a band of Indian girls,⁸⁸⁹ she went around in a bullock cart. Previously Thomas G. Ragland and Thomas Walker did this itinerary work. The small group of women missionaries were always among the unofficial crowd. A crowd that was not always noticed, but they went out with their one dominant

884. Carunia, Dohnavur Fellowship.

885. Williamson, *Amy Carmichael*, 82.

886. *Gold Cord*, 31.

887. In Amy's Bible (1895) in the margin of Luke 12:4.

888. *The Beginning of a Story*, 9.

889. In *Overweights of Joy* the names of these women are mentioned: Golden, Blessing, Star, Joy and Gladness (the names are translated names).

note, Jesus Christ. The women in the group did not get any salary for their work. They could afford to be poor with such a rich father!

In an effort to respect Indian culture, members of the organisation wore Indian dress and later on in Dohnavur the children were given Indian names. Amy used to dye her skin with dark coffee and so she could travel and even enter locations only open to Indian women. Often the group encountered a lot of resistance. 'Many doors had been closed to us after the conversion of two caste-girls in the Great Lake district.'⁸⁹⁰ Sometimes they were beaten and many evenings they came home and were glad to return 'with whole bones'. In *Ploughed Under* Amy gives us a vivid description of such tours which were all but luxurious.⁸⁹¹ Early morning and afternoon hours were spent with preaching and talking to the people. One child, searching for the 'Living God', and longing to see Amy again, one time prayed: 'O living God, take me to that Ammal in the sari'.⁸⁹²

The village fountain was a favourite place to go to, because there the women gathered to collect the daily water portion. She tried to talk with them, as a group, or to enter a house to talk with the women, who like Linnet 'thought of nothing outside the walls of her home and the borders of her field'.⁸⁹³ Men and children gathered early in the morning or in the evening at the village fountain and this was for the preaching band an exquisite preaching place. 'And we searched the faces before us to find the face of a seeker.'⁸⁹⁴ People listened for a while and then melted back into the streets of their town. What really failed the women were 'a real desire after God'.⁸⁹⁵ Amy felt stricken and she felt compassion in her heart when most of the listeners showed no single sign of interest:

Heaven, hell, sin, holiness, what did those great words mean to them? [...] We had prayed to be led to souls prepared; we had not, so far as we knew, found one yet. It mattered tremendously that these people who were so near to us now, and yet so far away, should know the true God and Jesus Christ whom He had sent. Nothing else really mattered. And thoughts of India's millions who were as though the Saviour of the world had never died on Calvary, had never risen, was never to return, swept over me. And thoughts came too of the unrecognized love of Him who said, 'All day long I have stretched forth My hands', and of the Voice which cries without in the streets, in the chief places of concourse, in the opening of the gates, by the well-side of the town and village, by the well-side this evening, 'turn you, I will make known My words unto you'; and so few heard, so few turned, so few cared to know those words, and I was sorrowful, never dreaming that in the town nearby, that night, there was a child who could not sleep for awe and wonder.⁸⁹⁶

Itinerary work as a mission method gave the missionaries the opportunity to reach the people with the Gospel in their very localities, often in remote areas. One year after the death of Amy in 1951 the situation in the Indian church is described in *The Cross Over India* by Rajaiah D. Paul. In this book he urges the church to go back to its first vocation: to uplift the Lordship of Christ. As obstacles to it he mentions: the prevalence of caste, the persistence of intemperance, the failure to naturalise the faith, the neglect of a ministry of reconciliation, especially between Westerners and Indians, the tendency to stand apart from the rest of the people of the country, which has led to an unfortunate communalism, and the

890. *Ploughed Under*, 59.

891. See pp. 80–81.

892. *Ploughed Under*, 38.

893. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 14.

894. *Ploughed Under*, 25.

895. *Things As They Are*, 143.

896. *Ploughed Under*, 27–27. The child mentioned in the quotation is Arulai Tara, Star of Grace, sister of Mimosa.

appalling lack of interest in Christian evangelism, in large measure due to losing the original freshness and zeal of the Christians of a previous generation. Paul stresses one call: repentance; repentance that will lead to fuller dedication to the Christian vocation. We show so little evidence of what the Gospel has done for us.⁸⁹⁷ The wish of Paul to go back to the 'first vocation' was already done by the aforementioned missionaries Ragland and Walker.

Working in India meant working in an old field, set with fixed and firm tradition. The field of work was about 5000 square miles. Dohnavur was Tamil country and Amy was not the first who had been active in that area. People there did not respond easily to the Gospel. What did they do after hearing the good tidings for the first time? Amy wrote, 'They simply stare'. Sometimes the message touched them, 'but the Tamils are not easily touched, and could never be described as unduly emotional'. During their itinerating work, they rarely had five consecutive minutes in which people were willing to listen. Especially for the women it was difficult to listen. 'Most of them would prefer to be told that secret [of using soap that makes the skin white] than how to get a white heart'. The villages for the bandy were just 'a very citadel of pride and the arrogance of ignorance'. As was often the case, 'their interest was simply nil'.

Amy required devoted, single-minded service of her associates. In fact, she formed a religious order of sorts to accommodate these women – Sisters of the Common Life. These women were not compelled to take vows, but should they marry they would automatically revoke their status in the sisterhood. Amy's work depended heavily on national women who would devote their lives to the children's ministry that became known as the Dohnavur Fellowship. Her heart was broken for these innocent children and she felt called to save them from this evil. Never give up. 'Sometimes, [...] we dream a dream, dream that perhaps at last it may be possible to win souls peacefully.' A song came in her heart:

Oh, might some sweet song Thy lips have taught us,
Some glad song, and sweet,
Guide amidst the mist, and through the darkness,
Lost ones to Thy feet.

When it happened that someone wanted to become a Christian, the people who at first loved Amy and her band 'hated them because the whole caste was roused'. The pattern for this work was shown to her on the mount. It was:

A work which was set on the glory of the Lord.
A work whose workers were all truly the Lord's.
A work full of love, joy and hope and peace.
A work hidden from the eye of man, but open to the eye of God.
A work whose needs are supplied by the Lord Himself.⁸⁹⁸

The DF was a select minority within the local community. The practices observed were intentional, not accidental. To enter meant crossing a boundary. Motivation and character were deeply related to the Gospel they sought to proclaim. Amy could hardly find words to describe all that she saw in the temples and heard during her investigations. Sometimes she could not put on paper what she saw and knew about the real situation of the children and what they had to suffer. 'Words are poor things when the heart is burning with unspeakable indignation.' The temple walls were thick, but 'though only an arm's length separated us, the legions of hell were massed there', and an attempt at rescue would have led to a riot. In the temples at that time little girls could be seen, all dressed in white, girls devoted to an infamy countenanced by the religion of the land.

897. Cf. R.D. Paul *The Cross Over India*, SCM Press, 1952. A review of this book in *National Christian Council Review*, Vol.73, No.3, 1953.

898. *Whispers of His Power*, 30 September, 207–208.

Thousands of little boys in south India were sold when they had no will in the matter to be trained for the drama, in an atmosphere that precluded all hope of purity and the true life for which God brought them into this world:

Those whom God has saved and brought to us here are but a drop in the sea. In face of this: 'It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones perish' is a solemn word.

Laws had been passed in various parts of India to forbid the adoption of minors into temple houses. But to fully enforce such a law is impossible in a land 'where evidence can easily be bought'. Many went to moral destruction by the deliberate will of men and women to meet a popular demand. The beauty of holiness is a phrase very far removed from Indian idolatry. They were brought up in the worst way for the worst purposes, and had no chance at all of being good. They were fore-doomed to sinfulness – and yet 'Christ died to redeem them from all iniquity'. More and more she saw the need to help children in mortal danger:

The living movement for the salvation of the threatened children had already been born, but there was still to be sore travail of soul for those who were ordained to give their loves to nothing less than the spiritual salvation of these children.⁸⁹⁹

In Dohnavur Amy knew the children through and through, enough to make us pray: 'O God, save them through and through, or take them quickly to Thyself'.⁹⁰⁰ She could pray this, because after her long research she knew exactly what was going on in the temples.

She wanted to know what was really going on behind the big temple walls, determined as she was 'to get down to the roots of the things'.⁹⁰¹ In 1926 she wrote an introduction in a book about the Gorakhpur Nursery:

I know, it will tell of children delivered from a peril so great, so cruel, that no imagination can exaggerate it. Perhaps one has to live in the East for many years, and hear and see and touch many hidden things hidden from the winter visitor, and even from those whose lines are cast where ugly things are not allowed to obtrude, before one can begin to understand these depths of Satan. [...] You cannot care too much. The danger is to care too little, and if you care, what are you going to do to help to save these children from the grasp of the Terrible.⁹⁰²

■ The time appointed

Little by little, Amy began to see in operation a surrendered life. In the precious years she had to learn God's dealings with her life. He made her understand that he needed her life for the fulfilment of his purpose, and now she was entering into a further step of response to that vocation. The street work in Belfast and Manchester, the mission work in Japan and Ceylon, had been an interlude, sometimes a difficult period of constraint, in which she bowed her will to the demands of uncongenial conditions. The impetuous girl from Millisle, now fully at peace with God, looked steadfastly ahead. Her vocation was tested and tried. She knew now what to do and what it cost, ready to go anywhere, dare anything and face any hardship lying ahead, with the one and only attraction, the Cross.

899. *Ploughed Under*, 145.

900. *The Continuation of a Story*, 37.

901. As one of her brothers once said about her. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 22.

902. In the introduction of M. Warburton Booth, *Take This Child* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1926), 2–3. Mary Warburton Booth was the founder of the Gorakhpur Nurseries Fellowship in Uttar Pradesh, north India. About this nursery Amy wrote: 'The Gorakhpur Nursery is one of the greatest joys our Father has given to Dohnavur' (in the introduction of Warburton Booth, *Take This Child*, 2).

On 16 June 1900, Rev. Thomas Walker with his itinerating band of men and Amy with the women arrived in Dohnavur,⁹⁰³ where they settled in a decrepit missionary compound next to the village and Amy used the bungalow (Figure 12), built in 1839, as her home.⁹⁰⁴ So Amy's last move had been made to a village some 15 miles south of Tinnevely. In the 18th century, a great wave of conversion to Christianity, Catholic and non-Catholic, swept Tinnevely. Whole villages were converted, and new villages founded, composed solely of new converts. Christians became a power to reckon with, and from the Muslim and Hindu side came a lot of opposition, intimidation, violence and destruction of prayer houses. This gave rise to the establishment of 'villages of rescue', modelled after the cities of refuge set up by Joshua in the promised land. In 1802 there was a new mass conversion in the Tinnevely district. This was seen by non-Christians as an act of disloyalty to the EIC's Raj. In India, Tinnevely was one of the most important centres of old and wealthy Brahman power, and by any means they tried to prevent the growth of the Christian communities. Dohnavur was one of the 'villages of rescue'. Rev. Rhenius had established Dohnavur in 1827.⁹⁰⁵

Often during her itinerary work she had visited and stayed in Dohnavur for a while. At that time, a CMS missionary, Mr Storr from Australia, held in Dohnavur classes of divinity, but overstrained by the work he left the place and would not return. Walker was asked to hold the classes in Dohnavur. 'Dohnavur, then, in our eyes was simply a centre for evangelistic work, nothing more. It was a bare place. There was not a flower anywhere', and when Amy arrived there it was just 'an open compound in jungle-land'.⁹⁰⁶ To reach the Dohnavur area, a two-day journey by ox-cart was necessary. It was not easy to reach the compound, which was situated far away from the main roads. Amy was sure that the Lord himself showed her this place, a 'place of songs'.⁹⁰⁷ She cried to the Lord, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me *do*?' She continued:

There in that secret place, that which had seemed impossible to do was done, the group of girls and young women already in being, was fashioned into a fellowship simple but recognized as the very core of the spirit of the work at Dohnavur. And a new quickening was granted to us all, a new love.

This humble work she took as 'royal service'; there was:

[N]o distinction of rank, all were one. [...] Sometimes we think our God must have been looking for something very small when He chose us to do this work for Him in India. But such a life asks for a clear cut separation from the things that are not of the Father. The two lives will not mix.⁹⁰⁸

903. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 273.

904. The bungalow was renovated in 1946.

905. Rev. Charles Theophilus Ewart Rhenius (1790–1838) was a German-born first CMS missionary for India. With various compulsive options before him, he chose to be a missionary in an alien land after his formal seminary studies in Berlin. His compassion for the people of other religions made him befriend many Jains and Hindus, who wholeheartedly came forward to support his social service. During his period of stay in Palayamkottai, they usurped a mass movement among the people belonging to the Nadar caste, which earned him the name Apostle of Tinnevely. His determination to give a proper translation of the Bible in the Tamil language propelled him to do a new translation, which he completed only up to the New Testament. He was a pioneer in writing a grammar book for Tamil, only to be later overshadowed by the work of Bishop Robert Caldwell. Still, I would consider Rhenius's grammar more practical. His book is handy for anyone who is desirous of learning Tamil. Rev. Rhenius's uncompromising attitude towards the Christian lifestyle and worship earned him hostilities from many quarters and, as a result, the same organisation that handpicked him to work in India terminated his service. Later, to earn a pension from CMS [the widow of Rev. Rhenius and his son were also employees of the CMS], he had to obey the CMS and, as a result, the chances of recording the justification for his standoff became very remote. Anglican historians who wrote books on Indian Christianity do not give due recognition to the missionary work of Rev. Rhenius [from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C._T._E._Rhenius].

906. *Amma's Book*, 49, and *Ponnamal*, 31.

907. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 273.

908. *From the Forest*, 72 and 73.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 12: Amy's bungalow in Dohnavur.

Carefully she sought her Father's will. In September 1900 she read Matthew 18:5, 'Whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me'. In the margin we read her words: 'Read, Sep. 29.1900 when waiting for guidance about little ... [*here follows a name in Tamil*]'.⁹⁰⁹ Amy tells:

We were in Pannaivilai, on the eastern side of the district, when our first child came. We had been working for a year round Dohnavur on the west, and had just returned to our headquarters, when she escaped from the temple house and was brought to us. If we had been a few hours later, she would have been taken back to the temple house by the Christian woman who found her wandering about looking for me in the village. As we had arrived, she brought her to us. Wasn't that a blessed happening? [...] After a year or so we returned to Dohnavur, only intending to stay there for a short time, for we were itinerating all over the district, and never stayed long anywhere. But in 1904 the temple children's work began, and Dohnavur became our real home.⁹¹⁰

Now, the village of Dohnavur is a place with a bustling population, Hindu temples and the like, but in Amy's time it was a more secluded place.

Amy was often asked to write down the story of how the DF started, what it was that held the group of Indian and European women and men together and what the connection still was with the CEZMS,

909. In Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of Matthew 18:5.

910. Cf. A.D., *Until The Shadows Flee Away*, 208.

with Keswick and with the Anglican Church. In 1932 *Gold Cord*⁹¹¹ came from the press. For her Indian friends Amy gave in 1947 a short explanation how the Fellowship had started and what the aim of the Fellowship was when she wrote *The Starry Cluster*.⁹¹²

The Starry Cluster began to be in 1897. This name was given by the Tamil people to the little company of Indian workers who, with as sister from England, worked together in the villages of South India. [...] So the Starry Cluster was not a thing planned by man. It was called by the Lord. It was not a thought of man. It was a thought of God. And those who composed it had only one thing to do when they were called: 'When he called them they said, Here we be'.⁹¹³

Early in the morning Amy with the other ladies went to the rivers and the wells where they talked with the women about the things eternal. In the afternoons:

[W]e were at that time spending our time in the Presence of the Lord, reading His Book, and seeking His light upon our path Gradually it was as if in a new way the Sovereignty of our Lord Jesus Christ shone forth. His last wish became our law, customs which had bound some of us fell off like withered leaves from a tree when the sap springs up and flows through its branches. What will people say? eased to be a question that mattered. And we learned to be deaf to the praise and the blame of men. [...] And we came to understand that our place was in the fifth rank of God's army. We saw our calling 'to be not on the lines of anything which the world sets up as important'. [...] We were things which are of no account whatever, that no flesh should glory in His Presence. [...] For some years the work appointed was that we should travel from place to place and witness to all who would listen. [...] It was very wonderful and beautiful to see the heavenly Sunrise break suddenly on a soul that had been in the dark all its life.⁹¹⁴

It was not always easy for the band members to reach the high-class Brahman women, who from their side did not show any interest in the Gospel. The work thrilled Amy in the very core of her heart, and she longed to 'enter' into the hearts of the people. The members of the band were not promised money or other benefits. Never did Amy sugar-coat this work to attract more helpers; Christianity would cost the people something. For nearly seven years, Amy travelled around with the Starry Cluster, often sowing in tears and weeping, making known the Gospel to all who were willing to hear. At about that time, July 1899, Mr Wilson asked Amy to come back, but for her there was no drawing back. Mr Wilson understood and rested in the will of God.

In 1901 while Amy was itinerating with Thomas Walker and his wife, guidance came to return to the eastern side of the district for a while. Amy tells the story of what happened on 06 March 1901: 'our first temple child was given to us':

We prayed for clear direction as to the day when we should journey via Palamcottah to Pannaivilai where we had worked before, and believing that guidance was given, early in March we set forth as usual by bullock cart at night, spent a day at Palamcottah, and arrived next morning in Pannaivilai, to find something that was to lead to an undreamed-off turn of the road. The day after our arrival, so exact was the direction we received, a child of seven escaped from a temple house in the village of Perungkulam [*Great Lake*] and was brought to us. [...] And though the

911. Amy's friends wanted to know how it began 'and they asked for something that would link up the stories already written: the beads should be strung on some sort of cord, they said. [That is why some of the Dohnavur books are mentioned in their years.] Others asked for another kind of cord. "What holds you together?" they asked; and we answered, "A gold cord" [in foreword of *Gold Cord*, III].

912. The Starry Cluster is the Indian name of the Dohnavur Fellowship. The booklet written under the name *The Starry Cluster* is not published officially. It was written for the Indian public to answer the many questions people had asked about the existence of the Fellowship. A copy of the booklet is in the Dohnavur library.

913. *The Starry Cluster*, 1. The thought is from an old book, read by Walker of Tinnevely: 'The stars shined in their watches and were glad: when He called them.'

914. *The Beginning of a Story*, 3; *The Starry Cluster*, 2 and 3.

Gospel work in the villages continued for some years longer, gradually it became impossible to travel, for 'children tie the mother's feet,' and the feet of all who give themselves to help them. [...] From this so small beginning grew that which is known as the Dohnavur Fellowship. A kindly Bishop gave it a lovely name – The beloved Community. Our Indian friends continue to call it by the shining name they gave it fifty years ago [*this was written in 1947*].⁹¹⁵

Several times in her itinerating work, Amy came across children who she knew belonged to the temple. She tried hard to save them, but always in vain. Was it for her to set up rescue work for them? It would mean her work in India would take another direction. These questions puzzled her:

In the Autumn of 1903, when my comrades, Mr and Mrs Walker had to go to England, I was much alone with the Lord Jesus. It was then that the burden of the little Temple children pressed so heavily that I could not bear it any longer- 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' I asked, and the answer came quite clearly: 'Search for the little lost lambs with Me'. And so the work began.⁹¹⁶

Her research into what really happened in the temples with the temple girls continued and often she was confronted with horrible things. An entry in her private notebook goes as follows:

Heard that the child had been married (to the god), had lived for a year, then died in such agony that the one who was responsible fled from the house with his hands over his ears to shut the sound of her screams.⁹¹⁷

Once in Joyous City (Kalakadu), Amy with the Starry Cluster came to a large rectangular pool surrounded by stone walls in which beautiful lotus lilies grew. The flowers, the local people told them, belonged to the temple and could not be gathered to make a nice bundle for home decoration. In a flash Amy saw the picture of the little buds lifting their innocent faces to the light. They were sacred, but to whom? It came in her mind 'All souls are Mine' and then Amy saw the temple children as 'lotus buds gathered by a hand that had no right to them, and crushed underfoot', and there she consecrated herself again to gather some of those flowers and offer them to their true owner.

It was very difficult to start the work – few were interested in the temple children – but Amy had some Indian friends who cared as she did and soon a pastor who had saved a baby brought the child to her. Once a baby was in the hands of the temple women it was nearly out of reach to be saved. Children were given when the mother had made a vow; sometimes the gift was hereditary, sometimes a child was given in order to escape from some entanglement or a poor widow was unable to marry her child suitably or a baby was very 'fair to look upon' and well worth adoption.⁹¹⁸ Selling children was illegal, but laws were hardly operative. Many of these evils happened in darkness and in secret. The Indians were not prepared to give up an old custom. Women who were urged not to give their young daughters to the temple could answer: it is necessary 'to continue the succession'.⁹¹⁹ Ponnamal had given up the idea of saving those children in peril, but could not dismiss the thought of the terrible fate for these temple children:

Thoughts about them were rising round me like a sea of waters that rose above my head. I could not push those thoughts away; I saw the perishing children, I heard them call.

What to do? She did not know, only she knew 'she had to try again'.⁹²⁰

915. *The Starry Cluster*, 3 and 4.

916. *The Beginning of a Story*, 3.

917. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 128. Amy had read Mayo's *Mother India* and she knew the appalling death rate of young girls who were married to the gods and then obliged to have sexual intercourse while their very young bodies were not mature enough. Many girls died because of the mutilation of their sexual organs and the internal wounds (see Mayo, *Mother India*, chapter IV and V and Appendix I, 365–366).

918. See *The Beginning of a Story*, 5.

919. *Lotus Buds*, 330.

920. *From the Forest*, 20.



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FIGURE 13: Babies in Dohnavur.

Within one week, the first temple baby (Figure 13) was brought to her. She did not know that here in Dohnavur they:

[W]ere on the edge of new things, and must soon stop our usual work [...] carve a path through the jungle, where all the way along sharp thorns would be ready to stab us as we passed – a pass ending in what? New responsibilities, graver, heavier, than any we had ever undertaken. No, not ending there – ending in joy, blessed eternal over-flowings, in exhaustible wells of delight.⁹²¹

After several years, Amy had received little ones from 29 widely separated districts who were now safe in Dohnavur and many Indian Christians and missionaries were on the lookout for these children. So at last, Amy received support for her work. There was no doubt anymore that these children really existed and that something should be done for them. Even orthodox Hindus helped her.⁹²² By January 1904 she was settled in Dohnavur, where she now cared for 17 children.

In *Lotus Buds* we can read the moving stories of how the children came under Amy's wing in Dohnavur. The old Tamil expression 'children tie their mother's feet' became for Amy a reality. Now with the growing number of children in Dohnavur it became more and more impossible for Amy to continue the itinerant work, which forced her to be absent for several days to some weeks. For her it was a difficult choice to be a missionary or to become a full-time mother. Having given up marriage, now she would be a 'mother' of many children. Should she continue evangelism or was the Lord asking her to obey and care for the

921. *From the Forest*, 38–39.

922. *The Beginning of a Story*, 6–7.

children? By that time, Walker had to stay in Dohnavur to teach divinity students. It became clear for Amy that she too had to stay to be there for the children. In August 1902, she wrote: 'Oh, I am getting so hungry for another child!' She was beginning to see that she must allow her feet to be tied 'for the sake of Him whose feet were once nailed'.⁹²³ Now the search for children who were in peril could be intensified and on 01 March 1904, the first temple baby, 13 days old, was in Amy's arms. Preena was to give the name and she called the baby Amethyst. Gradually more babies were rescued and soon the total number was 30. Mrs Walker, back from furlough, writes, 'Since we came here a month ago I can truthfully say [Amy] has scarcely had leisure even to eat. She is mother, doctor and nurse, day and night'.⁹²⁴

Mr Wilson died on 19 July 1905, a day Amy called 'Fatherie's Glory Day'. Mr Wilson, and others, had tried to break through her defences and persuade her to come home. He felt more and more helpless and dependent. In one letter he wrote, 'I hope thou wilt not let my present condition disturb any arrangements' and in the next, 'Do thy diligence to come to me before winter', words which she could not read afterwards 'without a pang'.⁹²⁵ She did not come before winter, that winter or any winter. Evangelically correct as Amy had been since 1892, in this instance one feels that although she was not exactly hiding behind one obligation to absolve her from another, she was caught in a most painful dilemma, with suffering the result whatever her choice. It had again been in Keswick that she had devoted herself to the work of God, now to India, strong in another's strength. Like a true determined Irish Presbyterian, she determined 'to do or dee'. 'The strong man and the waterfall channel their own path', as the proverb puts it:

I could not be sure that for me to be with him would mean blessing or joy for him. If God wanted me here and I was there, how could it mean that? [...] Arulai Accal was a little girl then God gives mother-love to the one who has gone through travail for a soul. How could I leave her?⁹²⁶

Amy was aware that her whole life, her decisions where to go and what to do, every part of her life was under the scrutiny of God. In every detail God's grace was sufficient, so taking up new challenges could only be done after long prayer and any practice undertaken had to be in keeping with a holy God. In listening to the Scriptures she became a true disciple. For months Amy did not really know what was God's will: to go to the DOM or to stay. At last this came:

The Master's word was brought to me this morning early: 'He that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me', 'Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horn of the altar' no drawing back. Amen, may it be so in the strength He gives. It is well to have some gift of value to present to Him who gave His all for our redemption. Praise Him.

From that day on till the end there was no drawing back. The date of that letter was July 1899.⁹²⁷ Amy was against the system of paid missionaries. She continues in her letter:

India needs another type, at present all too rare, and we want try it to show it to her – men and women trained to a glad readiness for all manner of service, with their hearts set, not upon pay, but upon pleasing God, and able, as was St. Paul, to support themselves by service of work other than that called religious'. Such a life does not attract great crowds of willing workers. To have 'faith in God' those will experience 'they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing'. In Dohnavur they experienced it, 'to work on these lines is no impossible ideal, as the joyful devotion of many of our Indian comrades constantly reminds us'.

923. See Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 150.

924. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 156.

925. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 108; *Roots*, 47.

926. *Amma's Book*, 47.

927. *Amma's Book*, 48. Here Amy adds, 'Dear children, do not forget, not one Sittie, nor one Annachie has been given to you without cost.'

The girls and the boys 'are His, and we are His, and out of us all, united in a joyous harmony, we want it to be possible for God to form something for His glory; that here among all castes, both high and low (as India counts caste), in spite of the presence of a most triumphant Hinduism, He may draw unto Himself jewels for His crown'.

The workers had a willingness to do anything joyfully, 'so we had to start in ourselves to show the way'. In a special sense the DF compound would become home for many children, girls and boys, a 'village of rescue'.

■ 'Drawn as by an angel's hand'

We have already read about Amy's investigation into the fate of children dedicated to the temples. Now we zoom in on the actual start of the DF.

'The story of the beginning of the work among Temple children is very simple. On 06 March 1901, our first Temple child was given to us'; with these words Amy starts the story of what would be known as the Dohnavur Fellowship.⁹²⁸ The search for the 'little lost lambs' had begun:

For three years it was a vain search. We could not find the source from which the children, trained to be Temple children, were drawn. It was a bitter time. There were days when the sky turned black for me because of what I heard and knew was true.⁹²⁹

What had happened? On 06 March 1901 a 7-year-old girl called Preena entered the mission station and begged for help. She had run away from the nearby temple. Her parents had sold her for 'service' but she did not want to stay there. Having already attempted once before to run away to her home, some 20 miles away, she had been returned and subjected to the punishment of being tied to a stone and having her hands branded with hot irons. Amy was thus to uncover one of the ugliest hidden sores of Mother India's body – the secret traffic of temple boys and girls:

When first, upon 07 March 1901, we heard from the lips of a little child the story of her life in a Temple house, we were startled and distressed, and penetrated with the conviction that such a story ought to be impossible in a land ruled by a Christian Power. The subject was new to us; we knew nothing of the magnitude of what may be called 'The Secret Traffic of India' – a traffic in little children, mere infants oftentimes, for wrong purposes.⁹³⁰

'And so began that which was afterwards to be the Dohnavur Fellowship'.⁹³¹ And also began 'the year which we look back upon as the year of beginning of battles'.⁹³²

Since 06 March 1901, on the sixth day of the month in the evening, the Fellowship members meet in the House of Prayer. New ones, who have been rescued are brought in and dedicated to the Lord. There is always prayer these evenings for children in danger. The names of the temple towns in southern India are mentioned, and as each name is spoken, all join in the petition: 'Lord, save the children there'.

928. *The Beginning of a Story*, 3.

929. *Amma's Book*, 48.

930. *Lotus Buds*, 249.

931. 'Notes on Photographs', in *Ploughed Under*, VI.

932. *Overweights of Joy*, 174.

‘Houses closed, also the people closed upon the eager, earnest, little hearts of the children. Facts form the fuel with which missionary fervour is fired and fed.’ This statement applies fully to the work, which would be Amy’s life’s work. Amy did a deep research into what was happening behind the thick walls of the temples and she discerned at length the first streaks of dawn in the hidden darkness. Confidently she asserted that now she had brought to light what in missionary operations had been lying dormant in the minds of other missionaries and was now transformed into a year-long mission enterprise. Where she did not find a way to enter ‘unknown lands’, she made a way herself. The accursed obscene practices with children in the temples were not less than a ‘hell’s living’⁹³³ for them. And here God touched her heart, and alongside the love, and fervour and simplicity God gave her the practical ability and insight, wide knowledge, the readiness to do the things that had to be done and the invincible devotion to the work she now had undertaken; this characterised Amy Carmichael.

■ Asingam: ‘She always stopped dead’

She once all but told of something done to other children before the tali (jewel) was given to them, but stopped. It was what she did not say rather than what she said, that drove me to try to do something to save children like M.⁹³⁴

With these few dramatic words, we know that Amy knew about the secret things happening in the temples. The child who told Amy everything that happened with the little children was so shocked to recall the stings and bad things she had seen and heard that she could not even go on. It was ‘asingam’, which in Tamil means ‘unclean’.

The same letter goes on with details of her long research and we can admire her profound and detailed notes of what she discovered:

I found too that even the modified English life lived with English fellow missionaries prevented getting at the core of anything, so I often left them and went away alone with one or two India women and lived almost like a Tamil. [...] After May 1901 I wrote down and dated everything as it happened.

She knew:

[T]hat the training of a child, however, all but ensures its moral degradation; a year or less, of that special training is sufficient to obliterate all look of innocence from the face of a little girl.

Of this ‘under-life’ – as Amy called it – and all the evidences, she had seen and heard of this devadasi life, she came to the conclusion that ‘nobody can deny it, it is sanctioned by the temple, as an integral part of the Hindu life’.⁹³⁵

‘In India certainly youth is the time for spiritual decision’;⁹³⁶ this surely could be said from the first girl who was led to Amy and sought refuge with her. After Amy died, that girl wrote:

When I first came, it was the early morning of March 7th, 1901, about 6.30 a.m. Our precious Ammai was having her morning chota. When she saw me, the first thing she did was to put me on her lap and kiss me.

933. This expression here used by way of comparison with the expression of Stanley when he condemned the slave trade in Africa. On seeing the traffic of captured men, women and children to be sold into slavery on the roads in the interior of Africa, he called these roads ‘hell’s highway’. In Mrs Mackay, *Mackay of Uganda* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), 89.

934. See ‘First contact with Temple children’, (PRONI D/4061/34/1, 1897), 4.

935. In ‘First contact with Temple children’ (PRONI D/4061/34/1), 62. Here Amy explains the word devadasi as ‘The one at the god’s feet, hence his slave’. Devadasi life was not seen as sin. The sin lies in any subsequent ‘dishonour of the family honour’ (p. 10).

936. *Overweights of Joy*, 132.

I thought, 'My mother used to put me on her lap and kiss me – who is this person who kisses me like my mother'? From that day she became my mother, body and soul.⁹³⁷

Little by little, Amy discovered the secrets of the immoral, cruel devadasi system. She was aghast to learn of the hideous, secret underground traffic in little children given or sold to the Hindu temples for the purpose of prostitution. For the children there was not any possibility to escape from this cruel and immoral way of life. One day while she was staying in a hostel, she heard loud voices and cries. This led her straight to a child in danger, 'and also opened our eyes to one of the sources for which we were searching. The child was saved.'⁹³⁸ Many influential people in India, even missionaries, told her that what she said about the children was pure imagination, and very few were in sympathy. Then Amy writes:

Sometimes it was as if I saw the Lord Jesus Christ kneeling alone as He knelt long ago under the olive trees; – the trees were tamarind trees now, the tamarinds I see as I look up from this writing. And the only thing one who cared could do, was to go softly and kneel down beside Him so that He would not be alone in His sorrow over the little children.⁹³⁹

After Amy died in 1951 the deliverance of these children, their spiritual salvation, and their training to serve others were still the main objectives of the DF.⁹⁴⁰

Touch a Temple child and you touch the heart of the system which has only one rival in the whole world for its subjugating power. No wonder the devil fights.⁹⁴¹

One pastor's wife, assisting Amy in the salvation of a little child, wrote:

I never knew how very difficult it would be to save these children until I began to try. Then I despaired. I found satan at every point. I nearly gave up hope. I began to think it has gone on so long – this traffic – it will go on to the end. Who can stop it? [...] God give it to us to persist.⁹⁴²

It was in Pannaivilai one day, having just returned the day before to that place, that Pearl-Eyes sought refuge, and 'escaped from the clutches of the gods'.⁹⁴³ That child would definitely change the course of Amy's life. In her own words:

It was the evening of the eighth of March, 1901, when we, who were back in Great lake again, walked together, singing and playing on tambourines and cymbals, through the palms to the shore of the water which gave the place its name. From the temple nearby, two days before, a little girl had come to us, the first of the company of children undreamed of then. We had been so carefully directed in our journey from Dohnavur near the Western Ghats, to our old headquarters on the plains of Vishnu's-heaven, that we were there just in time to shelter little Pearl-Eyes when she escaped from the clutches of the gods. She was the first child in Southern India, so far as is known, to escape like that. Thank God, she was not the last.⁹⁴⁴

937. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 114.

938. *Amma's Book*, 48. Amy adds: 'The child is in heaven now. It was she who said, "Ring the joy-bells for me". [...] The long happy friendship with Stira Annachie [...] began in that cowshed, for the child he came racing in his car from Neyoor to help was the child of whom we heard that night, and in the mercy of God were able to redeem from the priest who bought her from her father.'

939. *Amma's Book*, 48.

940. See B.M.G. Trehane, *The Timothy's. Schoolgirls in South India* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958), 102.

941. Trehane, *The Timothy's*, 258.

942. Trehane, *The Timothy's*, 290.

943. *Ploughed Under*, 108.

944. *Ploughed Under*, 108.

That time Amy saw further and thought of that other door:

Behold a door opened in heaven, and He whom the prisoner of Patmos saw when he looked through that door, He who sat on the throne, the Saviour of the world, had said, 'Let a door be opened on earth, a door out of the temples of India, and suffer the little children to come unto Me'. And it was so.⁹⁴⁵

Pearl-Eyes had been sold by her mother to the temple, and there she was prepared and taught all the degradation of temple prostitution. She retold the girl's words:

Pearl-Eyes heard she was to 'be married to the gods', 'tied to the stone'. Terrified, she flew to the temple, slipped past the Brahmans, crossed the court and stood before the god in the dim half-darkness of the shrine, clasped her hands – she showed us how – prayed to it, pleaded, 'Let me die!' Oh, let me die! barely seven years old, and she prayed, 'Oh, let me die!'⁹⁴⁶

Twice she had run away only to be caught and carried back, beaten severely, and subjected to the terrible temple perversion of that Hindu temple. Finally, as she was running away again one night, she met an understanding woman who brought her to Amy, who gathered the child up into her lap and picked up a ragged doll and gave it to the child to play with. It was then Amy became fully aware of the evils of the temple prostitution practice. Pearl-Eyes talked freely, as she played with the doll. She told Amy things that they did to her body in the temple, demonstrating them using the doll. The date was 07 March 1901. Never Amy could forget that day nor the story the child had told her. 'The child told me many things. These things burned in me.'⁹⁴⁷

The stories Amy heard from Pearl-Eyes filled her with horror and made her more determined than ever to bring down the horrible industry of sex trafficking.⁹⁴⁸ What she had heard from an Indian woman about the traffic of children shocked her and gave her a vision:

'They are sold like little kids. [...] I have gone from mission to mission asking if nothing can be done for them, the broken things – but no one can do anything.' When she said this, two or three of us were with her by the roadside near a wide expanse of moonlit water; the hills were in the mist behind. As we looked across the water we seemed to see the form of One walking there in the mist, seeking these young lost things who had been sold as little kids. And He was quite alone. [...] Then we promised her that we would not refuse such Broken Things if she brought them to us. And so began what would grow into a special work, and we thanked God, as we thought of those streets round that temple, that we had been given that open ear that evening.⁹⁴⁹

'This, then is one look into Hinduism, this ghastly whitened sepulchre, within which are dead men's bones.'⁹⁵⁰ Amy's heart was touched severely hearing of so many young lives being so polluted, and in the name of religion! So many grew up, boys and girls, accustomed to seeing and being part of immorality shielded in the temples with a divine cloak. It made her heart sick and faint. Could she tell everything in letters home? Telling the people of these innocent children used as 'servants to do devil's work' in a place where sin is deified? 'The whole truth can never be told.'⁹⁵¹ But the world had to know, for 'God's Truth

945. *Ploughed Under*, 109.

946. *Things As They Are*, 166.

947. *Ponnamal*, 34.

948. For the whole story of Pearl-Eyes, see *Things As They Are*, chapter XIX.

949. *Gold Cord*, 339–340.

950. *Things As They Are*, 190.

951. *Things As They Are*, 190.

needs no painting'.⁹⁵² Amy felt that God directed her to a special work, 'and I understood and knew that for the first time I was inside India, the real India'.⁹⁵³

The child stayed with the band. Amy's heart was touched. Coming home there was 'a child's loving welcome, little loving arms were round one's neck'. In a very remarkable sentence, she gives us an inside glimpse into her own heart. It goes as follows:

I remember wakening up to the knowledge that there had been a very empty corner somewhere in me that the work had never filled; and I remember, too, thanking God that it was not wrong to be comforted by the love of a child.⁹⁵⁴

Was her silent desire to be married and to become a mother herself silenced here by God himself, showing her to become the 'mother' of this child and, in line with this, to become the Amma (mother) of the Dohnavur Fellowship? She would be the cause to see 'the birth' of many children in India for the Kingdom of God and guide them in a motherly way into the arms of Christ. We must not forget that at in that time Ponnamal was a great help to Amy. As an Indian woman she knew what was really going on in the thoughts and the deeds and how the laws of the country were evaded and the children polluted. She even explained the mysteries of the Indian marriage market to Amy. In Amy's own words, Ponnamal was one who 'would have gone with me to the mouth of hell, and did, when I had to go there'.⁹⁵⁵ Thomas Walker called Ponnamal 'The Princess', because of the 'stately way she carried about her with all her gentleness'.⁹⁵⁶

After the arrival of Preena the itinerating work of Amy came to an end. The decision to stay in Dohnavur was actuated by the coming of a girl from a nearby village of Dohnavur to seek refuge at the bungalow where she temporarily lived. The villagers wanted the girl back but Amy hid herself with the girl in the tower of the village church where they slept for one night. The girl did not want to go back to the Hindu religion now she had found the Saviour. Meanwhile, Thomas Walker was appointed to teach divinity students, and for their sake the Walker family settled in Dohnavur and it was decided that Amy, too, would stay there. And then one by one the babies were brought in and the family took shape. More children came and the little family in Dohnavur grew. Amy felt the power of the evil one in the reactions from the temples or from relatives of the rescued children. Several references in her Bible show that she wrestled with God for them. In the margin of Psalm 79:2 she wrote: 'She left unknown on Nov. 20.1902 and came to us at Nov. 21.1902. Hallelujah'.⁹⁵⁷

Dohnavur, this God-given place, was the place where he had brought Amy. Why to a place, half in the bush, which appeared to be desert? In this place was found an abundance of water,⁹⁵⁸ a prerequisite for life to live there with hundreds of people all in need of water every day. Here the DF would live and grow year by year; the desert reshaped into a paradise-like environment and the water of life flowed from there in various directions. As the years passed, land was bought, piece by piece, resulting in the

952. *Things As They Are*, 131.

953. *Ponnamal*, 35.

954. *Ponnamal*, 33.

955. *Ponnamal*, 36.

956. *Ponnamal*, 42.

957. In Amy's Bible, next to Psalm 79:2: 'They have given. [...] The flesh of Thy saints unto the heaven'.

958. Amy wrote, 'So this gift was a boon. Even in Dohnavur it was to prove a great help, for the underground water is not found everywhere. [...] Without the faintest thought of what was prepared for us, we were led here and established here - here, where this sub-artesian basin had been fashioned, who knows how long ago' (*Though the Mountains Shake*, 202-203).

present-day settlement. In 1907, after several girls had been baptised, the dark one (the devil) took revenge and a serious outbreak of dysentery followed. All hands were needed in Dohnavur to assist, help and nurse the sick, and nobody could prevent 10 babies from dying. There was oppression from various sides. About what had really happened, Amy was never clear. Amy herself was ill; there was the Neyyoor epidemic, a deadly kind of dysentery. Sixteen babies were ill, and more were sickening and some of them died. Distances seemed immense those days. In Dohnavur also many got ill and an English girl, training to be a nurse, was unequal to the strain and had to leave. Did not the Lord hear their prayers, they wondered in Dohnavur? A small sentence gives us perhaps more light: 'some whom we trusted snapped, and the staff we had leaned upon splintered and pierced our hand', and she continued:

A band of evil men (Christians in name, and therefore the more deceptive) all but wrecked everything by trying to injure the young convert girls who were helping Ponnamal. [...] Another girl for whom we had waited hopefully drew back when she understood how unromantic our life really was. [...] For Dagon is still on the throne. The Power that planned these labyrinthine corridors and halls, the Power these great structures represent, fought then, and still fights every inch of the ground with us.⁹⁵⁹

In 1906, Amy's mother came to assist her for one year. 'As for my mother, she would have gathered all India into her heart; for India's imperilled children she had only one word, Welcome.'⁹⁶⁰ This was really a challenge for her mother, who was always willing to break new ground, just like her daughter. When the opportunity came for her to travel to India – she accompanied Mrs Walker who went back to India after a period of sickness and recuperation – she immediately settled things at home in Manchester and went on her journey. Her mother had always stood by Amy during her work in the Belfast and Manchester streets. Converted during the revival meetings held in Belfast in 1859, she had hoped to live for those in need and to help others to know the Lord. Due to her marriage with David Carmichael, she was a mother to her children and assisted in church work in Millisle. Amy about her mother says:

My mother lived like a bird in a cage, a nice cage but still a cage, and she must have remembered how she used to beat her wings against the bars for she never tried to hold me back from anything, even things that were dangerous.⁹⁶¹

Catherine Carmichael went to the Lord on 14 July 1913. On 04 July, she had written a letter to Amy with the words at the beginning 'My own most precious earthly possession'. Her last loving letter is from 10 July, and her last act was to post a cheque, which had been received for the Dohnavur work, to *The Christian* for transmission. Her friends in Wimbledon knew Mrs Carmichael as 'the Beloved'. Amy heard this sad news on 17 July and on the morning of the next day she read, in *Daily Light*, the verse that had been her mother's verse since 1885: 'The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knowest them that trust in Him'. Amy had prayed that that verse might be given to her in those days and the Lord provided! Years later Amy wrote to the children:

When my mother passed on we made the Praise Room bright with lights and beautiful with flowers, and you all stood in the dark courtyard and then came into the shining room, and we sang together the most heavenly hymns we knew and were happy in her happiness.⁹⁶²

From Mrs Carmichael's Wimbledon house the Dohnavur work was brought to the attention of the British people. That same year, Irene Streeter from Oxford became the first Home Secretary for the DF

959. *Gold Cord*, 59 and 61.

960. *Ponnamal*, 44.

961. See Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 11.

962. *Fragments that Remain*, 143.

in the UK. She had visited Dohnavur in 1909.⁹⁶³ In these early years of the formation of the Fellowship Amy was often overworked, had to work day and night for the children, of whom several were sick, and the difficult times during the trial of Muttamal⁹⁶⁴ brought her to the end of her physical strength. In those difficult days she wrote many of her songs, which are sung in the House of Prayer to this very day. When Amy's mother was in Dohnavur she saw that at times Amy was overworked:

Since we came a month ago, I can truthfully say she has scarcely had leisure even to eat. She is a busy mother, doctor, and nurse day and night. [...] It is wonderful to me how her health stands it. Of course she is often pretty nearly worn out, but she recovers, and is as bright and vigorous as ever.⁹⁶⁵

Thomas Walker was one of the most valuable helpers for Amy, especially when lawsuits against her were brought from the temple side. Particularly in 1909 and 1910 a storm arose when in a court case representatives of a family ordered Amy to return a child – her name was Jewel – to them. The case was brought to the High Court in Madras. ‘The matter created a stir all over South India.’⁹⁶⁶ For some years, the child had to find a place to stay out of the hands of her iniquitous mother who wanted to dedicate her to the temple and therefore she was carried off to China for safety reasons. Walker with his excellent knowledge of Tamil and the judicial system in India made long journeys and spent many days pleading for the child. In his own diary, Walker wrote:

Heard that the girl was carried off forcibly yesterday after giving evidence in court. Now may God grant a mighty intervention! Left Dohnavur at midnight, with Vakil (lawyer) to Magistrate and Inspector of Police about girl's abduction. Got private information that she is forcibly detained in K-, and after much hesitation [*fearing it might do more harm than good*] informed Magistrate of it. A man tried to send me off on false track, but we discovered it.⁹⁶⁷

During these days Amy knew ‘God is unto us a God of Deliverances’; for these words she wrote in the margin of a CIM book; another word from her on the same page says ‘Read again during weeks of tension about little Muttamal, July 1909’. She read repeatedly the words written by Emily Blatchley:⁹⁶⁸

‘They that weep as though they weep not’, - not that they are not to weep; but there is for us in Jesus a power to live above the weeping; while the heart bleeds, to live as though it bled not; while the whole soul is shaken, as with an earthquake, by some trial from which there is no escape, for which there is no mitigation, still to be a comfort and steadfast help to those around. If God has denied the luxury, or taken it away, of a human sympathising heart to weep upon, there is still the secret chamber, where we may occasionally find, though alone, the relief of tears; and tears wept on Jesus' bosom ought to be as great a relief as those shed in the arms of an earthly beloved; and surely they leave more power to go out and stand before others as though we wept not.⁹⁶⁹

963. See *Gold Cord*, 137 and 138.

964. See *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, chapter XIX.

965. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 139.

966. *Gold Cord*, 100.

967. In *Walker of Tinnevely*, 325.

968. Emily Blatchley (1842–1874), CIM missionary. Belonged to the first group who went with Hudson Taylor on the Lammermuir Party in 1866 to China. She was the one who chaperoned the Taylor children after the death of Maria Taylor in 1870 back to England for their health and safety. In England, she was put in charge of the editorial work of the CIM *Occasional Paper*. Read more about her in Taylor, *Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission Volume II* (London: CIM, 1946 [1918]), 187–188, 233, 263.

969. These meditative words were written by Emily Blatchley of the words of 1 Corinthians 7:29–30, ‘They that weep as though they weep not’, in *Save in the Arms of Jesus* (p. 337), one of the books Amy had in her book box in 1898 during her itinerating work. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

The beginning of the Dohnavur Fellowship

In the margin of these words Amy wrote: 'April 12.1909 until July 31.1909'. In December that year another friend wrote:

It is ten years ago this month, since poor A's terrible ordeal began, and I have been going through it all again. You know what he was, what a splendid, brave, unselfish defender. How well I remember how he came with us day after day to that hot, crowded court, and how bravely he stood up for us; and not only that, but the long hours he gave to interviewing V. and going through papers, even our old milk bills and accounts, to prove that A's father was not the Shepherd who supplied us with milk, as he claimed to be [*a point of importance in the defence*]. What Mr Walker was to us I can never say.⁹⁷⁰

Even on holiday in Switzerland, Walker was working for the children in Dohnavur and their welfare. On 14 June 1911 he wrote to Amy:

All who know anything know that you have been fighting a righteous cause. If we suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are we. I need say no more. Let us continue in prayer. If anyone opens my letters, which I don't anticipate, they shall have good advice. We know we have done our best to save a little one from evil. If things seem to have gone against us, we can do no more; and it is by no means an invariable rule that truth and right triumph in the law courts of earth. They will triumph, however, in God's tribunal; and we shall yet praise Him, when He manifests His kingdom and glory.⁹⁷¹

In Walker's own words, he was accustomed to having 'to look round the corners'.⁹⁷² He had so identified himself with Amy's work in Dohnavur that in his last year on earth he wrote to friends in England, 05 February 1912, to look for a lady who could teach the children. It also gives us a nice insight into the standard of education Amy realised in Dohnavur:

I am writing now to ask you to be on the lookout, during your travels, for a lady suited to take educational charge of ---'s children. God may lead you to just the very one. You know our position as to God's Word, and thorough evangelical principles, as also that spirituality is of the first importance. [...] They [*the children*] know far more than I was ever taught – even the tiniest – about flowers, insects, birds, etc., and are very much alive on the observation side of things. I consider it a unique sphere for one who loves children and is a real educationalist. And there a great possibilities of the children's becoming a real missionary force.⁹⁷³

From 1895 to 1925, the Church of England supported Amy's work in Tinnevelly and Dohnavur. After that time, the work continued in the faith mission style, 'and we had long since learned to set no limits to the dealings of the Lord with His beloved'.⁹⁷⁴ Nurseries had to be built, and every time the builders were astonished by the plans Amy had for what way they had to build: they had to be homes for a big family. All the bricks were the results of prayer and the masons looked at the money notes as if they had dropped from heaven, 'as assuredly they had'.⁹⁷⁵ These were days of battle; Satan never gave up territory without resistance. From one of her fellow workers Amy received a book with the inscription: 'Remembering battles together. February 9, 1912'.⁹⁷⁶ For the work in Dohnavur it had been and would

970. In *Walker of Tinnevelly*, 326.

971. In *Walker of Tinnevelly*, 438.

972. *Walker of Tinnevelly*, 327.

973. In *Walker of Tinnevelly*, 446. Here Amy left out her own name in this quotation.

974. *Ponnamal*, 102.

975. *Nor Scrip*, 10.

976. In G. Macauley Trevelyan, *Garibaldi and The Thousand* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1910). Amy wrote in this book the words of Garibaldi to his soldiers: 'I promise you weariness, hardship and battles. But we will conquer or die.' Then

continue to be weariness, hardship and battles. She faced this reality and knew that only through 'His Right Hand' victory would be there for her and her fellow workers.

She gave all the love of her heart to the 'precious'⁹⁷⁷ children. She loved them dearly; in her eyes she saw them as precious jewels for God's service and as 'Jewels for His coronet':

We have been given a young, dear life [*Star*] to tend. And as the soft willow catkins are set round the fragile upright beauty of this lily of the valley, so would the softness of our protective love gather round the precious thing that is a new-born soul.⁹⁷⁸

Ever since the first little temple child had been led out of the temple house, on the sixth day of every month Amy and the other members of the Fellowship prayed that the burden of these children might be laid on hearts all over India. Every tract of country in India was prayed for by name, asking that in all the districts nurseries would come and 'not in name only but in reality' should be a home for these children.⁹⁷⁹

As we saw, Amy did not choose Dohnavur, neither did she make complete plans for the organisation of the DF. She was fully aware that the Fellowship was not in the mainstream of other organisations; they were blamed by others, and being different, were compared with others. In 1944 she wrote about the beginning of the Fellowship: 'but I did not see far, as it were frame a policy. It just was so.' At the back of the letter, we read: '1 Cor.4. 13 is exactly in Tamil. I have just read it as if for the first time.'⁹⁸⁰

■ 'When Jesus came to Dohnavur'

As the DF came into existence, the hand of God was felt in India.⁹⁸¹ In 1891 Rev. R.J. Ward, a missionary from Madras, experienced renewal at the Keswick Convention in England. Back in India, prayer meetings were held to deepen the spiritual all across India and many missionaries were involved. In 1895 in Bombay the first Saturday of the month was set apart for prayer. In 1897 the World Student Christian Federation called for a day of prayer all over India, especially praying to God for an awakening. Rev. Ward started in 1902 a movement of prayer for missionaries of all denominations, and soon more than 800 were praying together. All over the world, prayer circulars were sent to pray for India, and Moody himself longed to see revival there before he died.⁹⁸² At the 1902 Keswick Convention 5000 Christians agreed to form home prayer circles for the outpouring of the Spirit worldwide. On 29 June 1905, starting in Mukti (Ramabai's home town), revival spread all over India. From Madras and further

.....
 (footnote 976 continues...)

she quotes these words of Jesus's disciples: 'We had done our utmost and had failed'. Then she continues: 'They got not the land in possession through their own sword; neither was it their own arms that helped them; but Thy Right Hand and Thine Arm, and the light of Thy countenance; because Thou hast a favour unto Him'. These are annotated 'Dohnavur 09 February 1912'.

977. *Candles in the Dark*, 84.

978. *Ploughed Under*, 140-141.

979. Cf. Amy's words in the introduction of Warburton Booth, *Take This Child*, 2.

980. In a letter dated 31 March 1944. In the Dohnavur library; 1 Corinthians 4:13 goes as follows: 'When slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like scum of the world, the refuse of all things' (ESV).

981. For more on the revival in India see Duewel, *Revival Fire*, 214-252; H.S. Dyer, *Revival in India: Years of the Right Hand of the Most High* (London: Morgan and Scott, 1907).

982. He died in 1899.

southward revival spread very fast across south India, to Coimbatore, Madurai, Nagercoil, Chittoor and other places. In Dohnavur many had prayed for revival. On 22 October 1906, 'Jesus came to Dohnavur':

At the close of the morning service, Amy was compelled to stop speaking, overwhelmed by the presence of God. It even became impossible to pray. One of the older children in the Boys' School tried to pray, but he broke down, and so did the other children. They cried bitterly and prayed for forgiveness. Their sorrow spread to the women.⁹⁸³

Amy, who for so long already had prayed for her children that the Holy Spirit would really work in them, tells us:

It was so startling and so awful. [...] I can use no other word, that details escape me. Soon the whole upper half of the church was on its face on the floor, crying to God, each boy and girl, man and woman, oblivious of all others. The sound was like the sound of waves or strong wind in the trees. No separate voice could be heard. [...] I had never heard of such a thing as this among the Tamil people. Up in the north, of course, one knew that it had happened, but our Tamils are so stolid, so unemotional I had never imagined such a thing as this occurring.

The prayer went on for four hours:

They passed like four minutes. For two weeks life was apportioned for us much as it was for the apostles when they gave themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word. Everything else had to stand aside.

Many weeks later Amy reported 'that almost all of the children were truly converted 'out and out' and she added:

There are conversions in the village, and Christians were quickened to walk in newness of life. [...] For all this we do praise God... We have seen just enough to make us very hungry to see more.⁹⁸⁴

In *Lotus Buds* Amy referred also to this revival time but her impression was that:

It was not the Great Revival for which we wait, but it was something most blessed in effect and abiding in result; and ever since the tone has been higher and the life deeper, so that there is something to which we can appeal confident of a quick response.⁹⁸⁵

During that time Thomas Walker was often involved in preaching in Mukti, at CMS stations in central India, Travancore and Kerala. A great awakening had come in central Kerala since 1892 with 'usual accompaniments of confessions of sin, with great brokenness and weeping and public witnessing of faith in Christ'.⁹⁸⁶ The Mar Thoma Church invited Rev. Walker in 1902 to evangelise in Kerala. His ministry there brought great spiritual thirst and expectancy of revival for India. Concerning 1906, Rev. Walker reported:

This closing year has been in a very special sense, a year of grace for India. [...] Congregation after congregation was bowed before the power of the Holy Spirit in deep conviction and confession of sin. At times, the solemnity and power were almost painful, and we were often in church till midnight. The people of a 'revived' congregation would follow us to the adjacent villages to give their testimonies there, and their testimonies did far more than our preaching.⁹⁸⁷

983. See W.L. Duewel, *Revival Fire*, 230.

984. In W.L. Duewel, *Revival Fire*, 230–231; *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 146–148.

985. *Lotus Buds*, 223.

986. See J.E. Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in India* [Delhi: Masili Sahitya Santha, 1970], 88.

987. Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in India*, 100.

The Mar Thoma Church doubled in size in ten years. This was especially due to the work of Rev. Azariah of Dornakal, Hyderabad state, who led and moulded one of the most successful and spiritual movements to Christ that the church in India had ever witnessed.⁹⁸⁸ After Walker returned to his home station in the south, he wrote: 'I have returned to the South to find that He has been working during my absence, both in Palamcottah and Dohnavur.'⁹⁸⁹ In Dohnavur the people stood firm. Amy writes:

After three months' testing, the work abides and goes on apart from us. It seems to me that is a mark of the real thing. The meetings do not depend on us at all. The thing is of God.⁹⁹⁰

What happened in India was that God was answering the prayer first breathed at Keswick in 1898, when Pandita Ramabai attended the Keswick Convention, where they prayed for 200 000 Indian evangelists – 100 000 men and 100 000 women – to go through the whole country, every state, every city and every village to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. Before the end of the 19th century, a great number of missionaries in India had embraced Wesleyan 'holiness' and 'higher life' teachings on the baptism and gifts of the Spirit. The expectancy of the 'last days' outpouring of the Spirit grew more intense. What happened in India happened all over the world. Duewel called the first decade of the 20th century 'the Revival Decade'.⁹⁹¹ John F. Goucher, a Methodist minister from Baltimore, during a tour of India in 1912, remarked, 'I heard more about the Holy Spirit in the time I was in India [*it was a visit of a few months*], than in thirty years from the preaching here in America'.⁹⁹²

■ Hidden jewels

'The story of the beginning of the work among Temple children is very simple.'⁹⁹³ In this way Amy starts her short report of the beginning of the DF. During her itinerating work, she often came across temple children who were playing outside and she tried hard to save them, but always in vain:

In the autumn of 1903, when my comrades Mr and Mrs Walker, had to go to England, I was much alone with the Lord Jesus. It was then, that the burden of the little Temple children pressed so heavily that I could not bear it any longer – 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' I asked, and the answer came quite clearly: 'Search for the little lost lambs with Me'. And so the work began.⁹⁹⁴

Everywhere in south India were men and women on the lookout to get children for the temples, 'especially if a child is attractive, or shows promise of being afterwards attractive, you have a child in danger'.⁹⁹⁵ When Amy started her research into the fate of the temple children, there were about 12 000 temple

988. Samuel Azariah (1874–1945), evangelist, pastor, secretary of The National Missionary Society, missionary to Dornakal, consecrated Bishop of Dornakal on 29 December 1912. He played an important part in laying the foundation for church union in India. 'In the West denominationalism may be a weakness, but in the East it is a sin.' In September 1947, the Church of South India came into being. There were 50 000 Christians in the area, many of them Telegu-speaking Christians. At the time of his death, there were close to 250 000 Christians in Dornakal Diocese, making it the largest diocese in the Indian Church.

989. In Dyer, *Revival in India*, 64.

990. In Dyer, *Revival in India*, 64.

991. In his *Revival Fire*, 204.

992. In Oconer, "'Keswickified" Methodism': 122.

993. *The Beginning of a Story*, 3.

994. *The Beginning of a Story*, 3.

995. *The Beginning of a Story*, 5.

women in south India and each had 'adopted' at least one child. The more she became involved in this work the more sympathy she received, even from educated Hindus who realised the iniquity of dedicating a little girl to temple service. Amy did not blame the temple women. They did not choose this kind of life. They were doomed to this life from infancy. 'She is the result of her environment for which she is not responsible.'⁹⁹⁶

Her life's work would become the salvation of many children. For Amy it was like Jesus when he took the towel.⁹⁹⁷ 'So we won't mind if our feet are bound, for it is Love that binds them. His were bound on the cross.'⁹⁹⁸ Children, so often the object of neglect and abuse, do they not need the strong arms of Jesus encircling them?⁹⁹⁹ For Amy it became her mission to rescue and raise these children. 'We gave ourselves to save them.'¹⁰⁰⁰ When a child was rescued, it was for her the 'joy of joys, a lost sheep found'.¹⁰⁰¹ These children were like precious stones. Like a miner searches for precious stones buried in the dark mine: after entering into these dark places, he lightens them and so ends the darkness and he finds the jewels hidden there. News of Amy's courageous exploits reached Christian circles back in England and in 1912 Queen Mary gave her official recognition for her efforts:

We are here to do that very thing. We have for light the presence and the promises of God. There may be someone whom we are trying to help; we are trying to bring out of the dark mine of that personality precious jewels for our Lord. Perhaps we are terribly tempted to despair, because of continual disappointments and what seems like hopeless weakness of character. But we are not alone. The search, the long effort, is lighted by the presence of our God. He is not baffled by personality. His promises are light. So let us go on, despairing of no man, for the jewel mine is His. He died to purchase it. Behold, all souls are Mine is His word.¹⁰⁰²

Once settled in Dohnavur, Amy did not want to give up itinerant work. Evangelism had a priority, a work she called 'pilgrim work'. On 22 May 1922 she opened her Bible at Luke 10:1-24 and underlined the words 'and send them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself was about to come'. In the margin, she wrote:

Read Monday - May 22, 1922. After Sunday's prayer Titus, Agnes, Dorothy, Eevie and I set about Pilgrim's work. We asked for a car so that we could reach the towns all round about.¹⁰⁰³ [Next to Mark 9:23] And Jesus said unto him, If thou canst All things are possible to him that believeth.

She wrote:

Pilgrim Work thoughts. See Mark 8:3. June 5.22. If thou canst. Question not answered - ignored. Is this not what He can but what we can. Not the oil that is stayed but the vessels that fail.

996. *The Beginning of a Story*, 8.

997. See John 13:1-20 where before the last supper Jesus took a towel and washed the feet of the disciples.

998. *Candles in the Dark*, 35.

999. Here we can also think of the work of Lillian Trasher (1887-1961), founder of the Assiout Orphanage in Egypt. During her lifetime, the Assiout Orphanage cared for more than 25 000 Egyptian children. See J. Johnson, *The Top 100 Women of the Christian Faith* (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour, 2009), 98. NB: Amy objected to Dohnavur being called an orphanage: it was a family, a fellowship!

1000. *Figures of the True*, 22.

1001. *Lotus Buds*, 231.

1002. *Whispers of His Power*, 20-21. Amy refers to Job 28:3: 'He setteth an end to darkness'.

1003. Written by Amy in A. Stevens & E. De Witt Burton, *A Harmony Of The Gospels. Part I*. (New York, NY: The Int. Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations, 1903), Par. 87.

And next to Mark 8:3 she wrote:

For so much has been done in the past we never find it easy to believe for the present. God has done great things, yes but how can we be sure of the answers to do the same again. Pilgrim work. Sunday June 4.¹⁰⁰⁴

Officially, the Fellowship was registered in 1927 (from 1895 to 1925, Amy's work was supported by the CEZMS), which legally established the DF as an independent organisation. After registration, she continued in faith mission style, establishing and enlarging the DF. Amy never referred to Dohnavur as an orphanage.¹⁰⁰⁵ It was a Fellowship and 'His Hand covers us'.¹⁰⁰⁶ A family where all lived together – Amy, the women of the Starry Cluster and the children. There the education of the children took place, and all had some practical contribution to make to the family life, in the village next to the Fellowship compound and in the countryside. From the very beginning, Amy made use of Indian fellow workers, whom she could trust thoroughly. For her it was real 'happiness of enjoying', this friendship with the Indian people.¹⁰⁰⁷

The Accals (older sisters) were the leaders in the nurseries; they were assisted by the convert workers, 'dependable as comrades'. They were next in age to the head Accals. These girls in their teens assisted the Accals and were of great value. This way of introducing them to this nursery work meant that they were 'developing in character and trustworthiness'.¹⁰⁰⁸ After India got independence, the schooling conditions changed for the Dohnavur girls. For Amy, the education for the children had one object: 'to prepare the child to serve the Lord Christ'. It was that thought that governed the choice of lesson books and everything else. She needed converted teachers. A new chapter began when after 1947 the government was expanding nationwide its education policy, which meant the Dohnavur school would be inspected if they were to work along government lines. Staff needed to have recognised teaching qualifications, so the primary goal of the education for the Dohnavur children could no longer be training to be Christians only. For further training the children were sent to the girls' high school at Trichy. There the principal was the daughter of Amy's first convert in India. Nine girls were selected to study at Trichy and they would be living in the YWCA hostel. However, the idea of preparing children to lead a life with Christ was never lost. The children were always seen not as orphans, but as:

[H]eirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. From the Dohnavur side, their aim of education was service. From that follows that our task is to make disciples; our desire is to send out witnesses and our vision is India for Christ.¹⁰⁰⁹

■ The glory of the usual

In the Fellowship no rules were made, but we were of one mind to follow whither so ever our Unseen Leader led us. In other words, we set no boundaries to obedience. We asked for grace, to offer all, 'without a but, an if, or a limit'. Our standard the one toward the other, we found in our Saviour's last long talk with His disciples:

1004. In Stevens & De Witt Burton, *A Harmony of the Gospels*, 111. In the Dohnavur Library.

1005. In her is a book (first edition) by one of the Dohnavur friends, the missionary doctor and mountaineer T. Howard Somervell, *After Everest The Experiences of a Mountaineer and Medical Missionary* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938), in which the author mentions her work and writes about Dohnavur as an orphanage. Amy crossed out those lines and wrote 'We are not an orphanage' [p. 22]. These words are not in the other editions of *After Everest*.

1006. This sentence Amy wrote as a remark in Somervell's *After Everest*, 23.

1007. Cf. *Lotus Buds*, 217. 'Simple, effortless intimacy, that closeness of touch which is friendship, is surely possible' [p. 217]; 'he spring of heart to heart that we call affinity, the knitting no hand can ever afterward unravel – these experiences have been granted to us all through our work together, and we thank God for it' [p. 218].

1008. *Lotus Buds*, 221.

1009. Cf. Trehane, *The Timothys*, 15–17, 101. Amy saw the babies as 'missionaries of the future' (in S. Blanch & B. Blanch, ed., *Learning of God. Readings from Amy Carmichael* [Fort Washington, MD: CLC, 1985], VII).

‘Love one another as I have loved you’. Such love took for granted flawless loyalty. In practice we found that prayer was hindered if even the lightest shadow fell upon love. (For how can one pray freely with another about whom there is a doubt, or of whom a critical word has been spoken?) As the roots of the Fellowship ran deep into prayer, this matter of loyal love was seen to be vital.¹⁰¹⁰

Instead of travelling all over the district Amy stayed in Dohnavur and when she worried about the many who had to be reached, she got God’s reply: ‘I will bring them to you’.¹⁰¹¹ The culture Amy created in Dohnavur was not geared towards connecting the children to modern urban life. This does not mean that modern inventions that could be helpful were not introduced; she was the first to introduce electricity into the buildings and a modern hospital with Western doctors and medicine, even X-ray equipment, was available. For special treatment, children were sent to the CMS hospital in Neyyoor. In education they did not follow the Western style, where the individual had a say, but encouraged imitation of the cultural hierarchy of the extended Indian family and living in close harmony with nature, ‘the existence of God, Who is also Lord over the nature’.¹⁰¹² All this had to do with the overall thought:

We are living in eternity now. God save us, then, from the trivial, the fearful, in prayer as in life. It is an inspiring thing to live in the Presence of the Eternal.¹⁰¹³

The work of the Accals and convert workers was not seen as honourable. This work had no clear ending; it was work in which these girls had to love with the tireless love of the mother. Amy quoted Père Didon who wrote, ‘I do not want people who come to me under certain reservations. In battle you need soldiers who fear nothing’.¹⁰¹⁴

This work in the nurseries that was so demanding, however, was also full of compensations, ‘for the touch of a little child is very healing’.¹⁰¹⁵ Amy thought a lot about the work with the little children; this day-to-day work could be dull, tiresome and so demanding that many did not appreciate this work. This drove her to write a chapter about ‘The Glory of the Usual’.¹⁰¹⁶ Those working in Dohnavur had to learn and to teach a new and difficult lesson: ‘the sacredness of the commonplace’. The secular is not to be divided from the spiritual:

The enlightening of a dark soul or the lightning of a kitchen fire, it matters not which it is, if only we are obedient to the heavenly vision, and work with a pure intention to the glory of our God.

In order to give love to each baby individually, nothing should be done artificially; ‘feelings of personal gratitude come when help of this kind is given’. Very often, the Dohnavur staff experienced almost visibly and audibly that in obeying the Lord’s command, He confirmed His word to the staff and

1010. *The Starry Cluster*, 5.

1011. *The Starry Cluster*, 5.

1012. Here Curtis sees the influences of Ruskin and Coleridge, who privileged an experience of nature as confirming the existence of divine power [Curtis, *Amy Carmichael’s Aesthetic Legacy*, 3.

1013. *Ploughed Under*, 151.

1014. See *Lotus Buds*, 227.

1015. *Lotus Buds*, 227.

1016. *Lotus Buds*, Chapter XXVI, 239–246. The expression she borrowed from C.H. Morrison, who wrote in his *The Unlighted Lustre*, ‘No matter how stirring your life be, it will be a failure if you have never been awakened to the glory of the usual. There is no happiness like the old and common happiness, sunshine and love and duty and the laughter of children. [...] There are no duties that so enrich as dull duties’.

children, strengthening them when they were weak and comforting them when they were sad or lacked spiritual strength.

Being content with the place and the work the Lord assigned for them was what the lovers of his name accepted in peace. Amy's ideas about beauty came from her Presbyterian background and were based upon associating a rustic existence with both moral purpose and aesthetic value. Indian rural life as it had gone on for ages corresponded more with her insights than introducing modern products from the West. Here is what she thought of mass-produced commodities coming from Western countries:

Civilisation, so called, has muddied the Eastern taste, which, taking it all around, is a far finer thing than the Western type as commonly imported. For just as some Eastern nations export things that they would never use themselves, so do we of the West export rubbish to the East; and very often the children saw the opposite of all that we had taught them to care for, made much of and admired. It is a curious fact that the kitchen in a well-to-do Eastern house is sometimes the only room in the house where one can be without seeing some Western vulgarity. The kitchen keeps to its old ways, and its beautiful earthen or brass or copper vessels are still its unconscious adornments, unless the cheap and the nasty invaded it in the shape of enamel and other ugly ware. Except for this counter influence, we found no difficulty in leading our little ones into the paths that we ourselves had found so pleasant.¹⁰¹⁷

In outreach programmes, adults and children did practical work and this gave them an opportunity to witness for the Lord in word and deed. Godfrey Webb-Peploe gives a vivid account of the work the boys did in Dohnavur. Along with their schoolwork, they learned carpentry, gardening and on Saturday mornings the cleaning of the compound. The elderly people even worked with them. 'A willingness to do anything joyfully is what we want the boys to acquire, so we have to start in ourselves to show the way.'¹⁰¹⁸ Amy leaned heavily on the Accals, especially on Ponnamal 'who goes through all the nurseries like a fresh wind'.¹⁰¹⁹ Once a visitor, who had noticed that unkind words were never spoken of the absent and that those who met at meal times were always glad to meet, asked 'Are you always so absolutely happy in Dohnavur?' The answer they gave her speaks for itself: 'Dohnavur had its troubles; sometimes it seemed to have rather a large share of many and grievous troubles; but it was always happy, perfectly happy within itself.'¹⁰²⁰

Eileen Kuhn, who served as a missionary in Thailand, once visited Dohnavur and was asked about her most distinct impression. She needed no time to think about the answer; her immediate answer was 'peace'. The highest compliment for the work.¹⁰²¹ Amy describes Dohnavur some years after it began in these words:

Perhaps no safer and no healthier place could have been found for our little children. No place on the plain is very healthy, the insanitary villages are all too near; but we have a big beautiful field where the air blows, if there is any air to blow, straight across the open country from a gap in the hills. We did not choose Dohnavur. We were living here, itinerating in the whole country round, an almost entirely Hindu tract, with many whole Hindu towns and villages scattered about upon it, when the work for the little children grew up about us, and

1017. *Kohila*, 12–13.

1018. In *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, 25, 29.

1019. *Lotus Buds*, 219.

1020. In *Walker of Tinnevely*, 352.

1021. See E.R. Skoglund, *Amma, The Life and Words of Amy Carmichael* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 18.

The beginning of the Dohnavur Fellowship

before we knew it we were a family. [...] There is a sense of detachment from the noisy modern world. There is time to be quiet, and to think, as well as do.¹⁰²²

She created a place where children (Figure 14) felt at home. The children loved her and even in their old age they still say: 'Amma was a wonderful, loving mother for us'. All the children had crept into the cockles of her heart.



Source: © Dohnavur Fellowship. Permission to reproduce was obtained from Jeremiah Rajanesan. Photographer unknown.

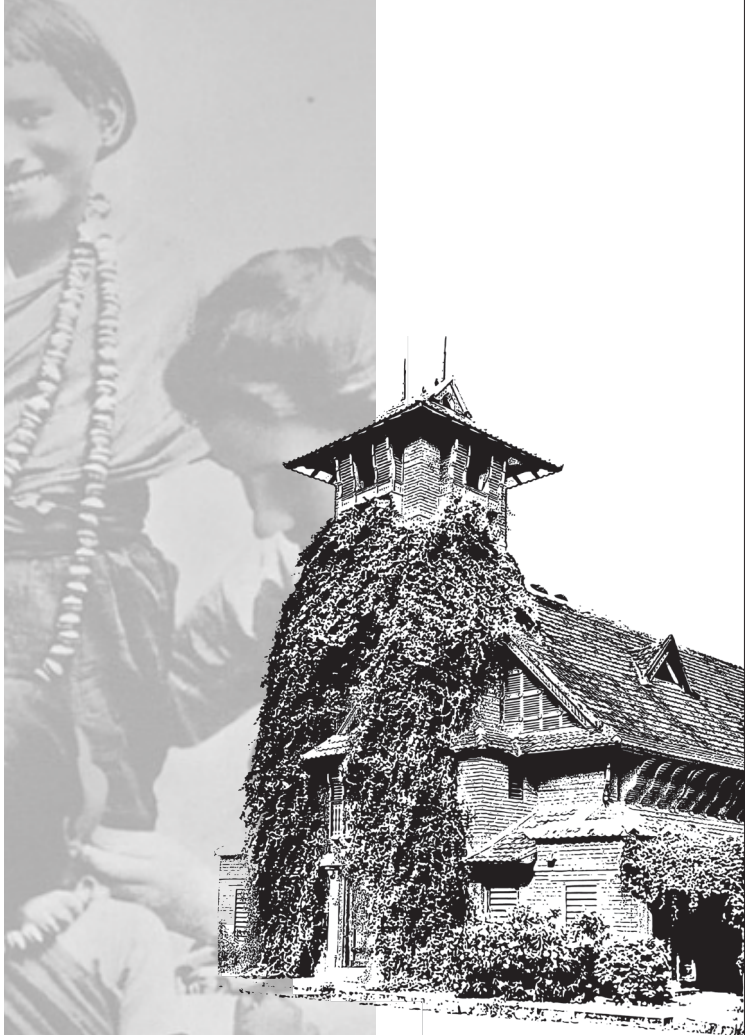
FIGURE 14: Three girls amusing themselves.

1022. *The Beginning of a Story*, 9–10.

Shepherd of Israel, what can baffle Love,
Or because Divine compassion to remove?
Out or a fall, Love makes a stepping-stone,
And quite reverses all the foe has done.

Love, only Love, these mighty things can do,
What Love has purposed, Love will carry through.
I, even I, will sing unto the Lord.
For ever and for ever the Adored.

'Wings', Dohnavur Songs, 32.



Under the shadow of his wings

The education of the children

India is a complex land, and her people are not like the open page of a book, to be read at a glance. But her children are frank, delightful things, and the people have a saying, 'The drink of which one never tires is water – the fruit of which one never wearies is a child'.¹⁰²³

The work that laid before her was nearly too hard for her, but she was strengthened day by day. 'He that sent me is with me. "Go ye..." I am with you always. So "Go" is really Come.'¹⁰²⁴ Amy became rooted in India's soil and when more children came, she and her fellow workers had to think about schooling them. Some other missions sent Amy candidates to assist her in the work, but generally Amy did not accept them:

'I do not want people who come to me under certain reservations. In battle you need soldiers who fear nothing.' So said Père Didon, so say I. [...] All work that had in it the seed of eternity was bound to pass through a baptism of suffering and be misunderstood and judged by its apparent failure or success. [...] What made it so difficult that there was a constraint laid upon us to keep the work pure. [...] For this work which gives so much more than anyone not in it will ever know – asks much, even all.¹⁰²⁵

Many who were willing to come were – in her eyes – accustomed to walking on the beaten track. Only the Cross had to attract them. With this insight she could expect opposition and she was aware that not everyone would welcome her way of working. She was of the opinion that God, just like Moses, had shown her 'the pattern in the mount', and therefore she could say:

1023. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 12.

1024. In Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of John 8:29, 'And He who sent Me, is with Me; He has not left Me alone'.

1025. *Ponnamal*, 48, 49, 51 and 58.

In each case truth was the rock upon which they foundered. If our children were to grow up truthful they must be taught by those who had a regard for truth; and not just a casual regard, a delicate regard. On this point we were adamant. It was then we began to know that we were committed to things that we must not expect everyone to understand. It would not be fair to expect it.¹⁰²⁶

And in her own story of the Fellowship she wrote, 'it matters that we should be true to one another, be loyal to what is a family – only a little family in the great Household'. People from outside started to question her: 'What are you going to do with them?' The whole enterprise in Dohnavur seemed 'unpractical and foolish'. And Amy? First, as always, she brought everything to the Lord:

'Thou knowest, Lord; Thou hast not shown us yet, but Thou knowest', we used to say to Him, and found it comforting. 'Only teach us how to train them in honesty and thoroughness, in detachment from the spirit of the world and in a pure indifference to all its tinsel allurements. Give us some to help us who will understand about the gold and silver and precious stones. Let us not be disappointed of our hope'. And He answered with a word of strong consolation; for He Himself knew what He would do.¹⁰²⁷

The education of the children was a matter of great concern for Amy:

There is nothing so demanding as the spiritual training of the young. It asks for everything we have to give, and for everything always. There is not the relaxation that work which can be closed down at times can offer.¹⁰²⁸

Her aims were clear. Like any mother she wanted her children to turn out well. She prayed earnestly for them all and wrote down her prayer for them. The gist of her prayer was this:

- Make them to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ, winning others for Him.
- May they be loving, serving others rather than wanting to be served.
- Make them trustful, trustworthy and loyal.
- Let them be ready for hard work – doers, not mere talkers
- May they see the beauty of the world around them and have hearts to worship the Creator,
- may they be gentle with animals, never cruel.
- May they learn to depend on God and never come under bondage of earthly things.
- Let them grow up healthy, happy, friendly and keen to make others happy.
- May they walk in the light of the Lord.¹⁰²⁹

Amy was convinced that the Dohnavur children should retain their Indian roots while being brought up as Christians. Tamil was the first language, although English was taught alongside. This was done very seriously and even nowadays, the very old in Dohnavur know English very well. In Dohnavur Amy created an atmosphere of joy and happiness for the children. Nesaruthina Carunia (Figure 15), who was brought to Amy when she was just a few days old, said that Amma, when she wrote to the children at boarding school or in Kanyakumari at the holiday home (Joppa), closed the letter with 'Your very own mother'. When some children asked her why they did not live with their own mothers she gave them this reply: 'I came here to save you. I am now your mother.' In 1949, Nesaruthina wanted to go to a boarding school, 'but Amma did not like it':

She was afraid we would be spoiled in the outside world. We never left the compound. Amma was very protective. Amy said 'Give me a lily' and she put a dot on the clean nice lily. 'You cannot wash away the dot with

1026. *Gold Cord*, 66.

1027. *Gold Cord*, 93. In 1910 Frances Beath joined Amy and took over the education of the children.

1028. *Windows*, 17.

1029. See *A Century of Answered Prayer*, 12.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 15: Nesaruthina with the author's wife in Dohnavur.

water, only the blood of Jesus can wash away your sins.' And then she continued, 'Darling, do you really want to go out? I want you to be here.' Then another missionary told Amma, 'She will serve the Lord. Trust Him.' Amma said, 'You pray, but remember. This is your place.' And when the day came for the girls to catch the bus, Amma said, 'I want to see you in the bus' and when the bus was moving, Amma wept.¹⁰³⁰

Amy once heard a remark 'Christianity is a dull religion' from one of the children, who had come fresh from Hindu life with its festivals, and compared these with the silent and orderly atmosphere in the Christian church. 'And I sympathised', Amy wrote. 'Therefore in all our plans for the children we let the gaiety of birds and all the young things of God's creation have a place in the scheme of things.'¹⁰³¹ So on the birthdays of the children (their coming days) the rooms were decorated, some extra delicious food was given and on Amma's birthday in December there was a big event, held in the open courtyard where the clock tower is, and food was presented on banana leaves. Flowers played a big part in all the decorations and with strings of flowers over the children's heads, everything and everyone looked 'glorious'. 'And there was always the hope that they would be part of the crown of flowers that our Lord would wear one day.'¹⁰³²

1030. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1031. *Gold Cord*, 324.

1032. *Gold Cord*, 81.

Every little child in danger of being given to the temples was welcomed, irrespective altogether of its caste, as the DF did not profess to keep caste.¹⁰³³ Amy avoided letting the children grow up in an English style; as she once said 'we are very Indian here'.¹⁰³⁴ All the babies brought to Dohnavur got Indian names.¹⁰³⁵ According to the custom of the country, the babies were anointed with oil before being put to sleep.¹⁰³⁶ It was also the custom to call most of their possessions by names other than their own. These names were entirely private:

We have to keep to this rule of privacy, otherwise we get shocks. 'O Lord, look upon our beloved Puppy, and make her tooth come through; and bless Alice, whose inside has gone wrong', was the petition offered in all seriousness, which finally moved us to prudence. We do not feel responsible for these names, for they come of themselves, and we see them when they come. [...] The Rosebud is like her name, small and sweet. [...] Most babies are complex characters, and are not known in an hour.¹⁰³⁷

It happened when a child needed to be corrected, that a little 'morning glory' was required: they were put in a corner to think about their behaviour; it is 'a privilege reserved'¹⁰³⁸:

We try, of course, to fit the penalty to the crime, so that the child's sense of justice will work on our side; and in this we always find there is a wonderful unconscious co-operation on the part of the merest baby. But the older children used to be rather a problem. Some have come to us after their wills had become developed and their characters partly formed. [...] Discipline under these circumstances is not entirely easy.¹⁰³⁹

The children, when necessary, were punished. When the Accal sent a naughty girl or boy to Amy, they feared a little bit because they knew a kind of remonstrance was awaiting them. The word punishment was not used by Amy, instead it was a 'morning glory':¹⁰⁴⁰ they were put in a corner, to think about the mistakes or received some strokes with a cane on the hand. Yet, the question of discipline was not an easy one. Amy wanted to fit the penalty to the crime, so that the child's sense of justice would work on her side. During the 1906 revival in India, which also affected the children in Dohnavur, it was seen that the tone had been higher and the life deeper, 'so that there is something to which we can appeal confident of a quick response'.¹⁰⁴¹ She knew all the children very well, especially in the first years, and each night she gave them a good night kiss; even when there were a few hundred of them, she knew their characteristics, and tried to see each child once a day. Children under 5 in Dohnavur were called the 'teddlets', and lived in a place called the Square. In the Square (Figure 16) were 13 nurseries, with a big patch of the grass in the middle where the teddlets liked to play. The little babies were in three nurseries, five nurseries were for the little boys, the Teddy Bears, and in five other nurseries were the little girls, the Lotus Buds. At about nine o'clock the bells of the House of Prayer bell would ring indicating it was time for prayer and after the prayers the lessons started.

In terms of education, they were not governed by the laws of India initially and were therefore uninspected. Sometimes they received help and advice from outside, and those coming to Dohnavur at that time wondered about the high standard of education. Amy herself had no teacher's training

1033. Cf. *Lotus Buds*, 92.

1034. *Nor Scrip*, 113.

1035. *Lotus Buds*, 128.

1036. *Lotus Buds*, 175.

1037. *Lotus Buds*, 180–182.

1038. *Lotus Buds*, 226.

1039. *Lotus Buds*, 222 and 223.

1040. *Lotus Buds*, 222.

1041. *Lotus Buds*, 223.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 16: Some of the Dohnavur nurseries.

background; in *Kohila* she tells how she was led in the early days in planning the education for the children. The *Home Education* series of books published by the Charlotte Mason College in Ambleside in the Cumbria Lake District (UK) ‘was an immense help’.¹⁰⁴² Many English words were learned from the rhymes Amy taught the children about birds, flowers and beasts. Action songs were sung during various games. The place around the clock tower was an ideal location for games.

Amy, as an adherent to strict Christian principles, structured the education for the children on Christian principles. ‘She wanted them to be as trees planted by the streams of living water.’¹⁰⁴³ In 1987 an old student wrote:

In the early days of the family cultivating character, honesty, hard work, service to others, and knowledge were more important than getting certificates. Loving God and becoming His children was the object of the upbringing. Educating the whole person-spirit, mind and body was the objective.¹⁰⁴⁴

1042. *Kohila*, 20.

1043. Williamson, *Amy Carmichael*, 101.

1044. See D.A. Devapiriam, *Vanacharbu – Woodland* (Bangalore: Chriscom & Forerunner Publications, 1987), 19.

School life was under the care of God and Amy, who so valued times of silence, also sought this for the children. Regular prayer times accustomed the children to times of silence and concentration upon God:

Sometimes it has seemed to us that we were to set to learn and to teach a new and difficult lesson, the sacredness of the commonplace. Day by day, we learn to rub out a little more of the clear chalked line that someone has ruled on life's blackboard: The Secular and the Spiritual may not be divided now. The enlightening of a dark soul or the lightning of a kitchen fire, it matters not which it is, if only we are obedient to the heavenly vision, and work with the pure intention to the glory of our God. [...] Our Dohnavur text, which hangs in every nursery, looks down upon the workers, and, as they put it, 'keeps them sweet in heart': 'Love never faileth'.¹⁰⁴⁵

Amy left room for the children to come with their own initiatives. That meant that in the education there was a lot of space for inspiration and the relaxed atmosphere in the school classes allowed the children to walk in lands of new ideas on the borders of their world. There was also literal exploration: one day on a school excursion, the class saw for the first time a cobra. The children came near to see, but Amy jumped in a circle around the enraged cobra and frightened the snake:

Blessed be the guardian angels upon whose assistance we do most sincerely count, for we are very short of nurses; but blessed, most blessed, be the Lord of all angels, Whose face the good angels do ever behold on behalf of these little ones committed to their care.¹⁰⁴⁶

The children were taught the names of the flowers and insects; they went with Amy into the field, just as her father had taken her and her brothers out into the fields around Millisle and along the coast. Rev. Walker even gave them a microscope. Returning from leave in England in 1911, he knew what it would mean to her to have a microscope to show the children the small wonder world of tiny creatures unseen, so he brought one for her. No doubt it was a great delight for the children. Amy introduced many new games to the children, many based on the living things the children were so familiar with, for instance the Lizard Game. Amy herself wrote of her way of teaching: 'It was a merry kind of schooling, and left many gaps, but it had some uses'.¹⁰⁴⁷ In her choice of songs, she intimated that she thought about the psychological effects words could have upon the children's minds. We see that she wished to avoid exposing the children too early to the upsetting and negative aspects of human life, when necessary:

Did He, who said 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me', wish that a child should be taught to say such words to Him? As for a hymn translated into definite Tamil in their hymnbook, 'Earthly friends may fail or leave thee, one day kind, the next day grieve thee' - was it necessary to teach the very young that depressing fact? So, as the simplest way to help those children who at that time had no teachers, we began to make rhymes and songs for them, little things that they could sing truthfully. And then the dear gift was given of musical Sittie. If it had not been for Mabel Wade our children would never have learned to value music as they do.¹⁰⁴⁸

Under Amy's leadership music and singing were a most important characteristic of the community. In her own words:

One of the greatest pleasures we can give our children is to gather them for an hour's singing. We are glad and grateful that it is so. We have none of the diversions or excitements of cities, but we have books, mountains, forest, sea, music, song. 'And that is pōthum', said one, after hearing of other and different delights; and pōthum means 'enough'.¹⁰⁴⁹

1045. *Lotus Buds*, 239 and 240.

1046. *The Continuation of a Story*, 31.

1047. See Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 64.

1048. In *Though the Mountains Shake*, 210.

1049. *Though the Mountains Shake*, 212.

For her the strain of work became too much, for she used all means to wrap as much truth as possible in a form the children could bear. In 1913 her prayer for someone to take over the educational responsibility was answered in the coming of Agnes Naish, who had by then 15 years of experience in teaching at the Sarah Tucker College in Palamcottah.¹⁰⁵⁰ From the very beginning, Rukma and Purripu were Agnes's trusted helpers. Amy had written Agnes (Nesa Sittie) a letter in 1913 in which she emphasised the 'need for us to train our children for eternity and not just to enjoy the lost world. So we would ask your prayer that we may live accordingly'.¹⁰⁵¹ In these few lines, we exactly read the fundamental principle on which the educational system in the Fellowship was founded. Houghton says that some of the finest women in the family were those to whom Amy was mother and nurse and teacher, all in one.¹⁰⁵²

There were children who were very intelligent and in Dohnavur they thought about their future at a very early stage. 'India needs leaders, medical women, nurse evangelists and teachers. Such workers require a special course of training.' Training was done outside Dohnavur in a 'more liberal view', so there had to be good talks with government officials. Amy asked for prayer: 'ask Him who has so marvellously redeemed them what His purpose in their redemption is, and in what share in that purpose He would have you take'.¹⁰⁵³ For the schooling of the children, Amy used the Cambridge System. Up to class 5 the Bible study was in Tamil, from 6 onwards everything was in English. Asked 'To what end are you educating your children?', Amy's answered in 1947 (but by then she knew that great changes in the field of education were near at hand):

Principally, ardently, above everything' that they be faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and a blessing to their land.

How many respond? Many do. Some do not.

What do you do about those who do not? We try to give them a start in life elsewhere.

Have the boys any practical training before going out? Training in weaving, carpentering, farming, simple mechanical and electrical engineering, and motor driving is given here. Some are trained as nursing brothers.

What about the girls? Some are married. Their homes are scattered about India, Ceylon and the Strait Settlements. They turn to us in times of trouble. All who are married here, become fellow-workers. Many give themselves to be sisters to the younger children and nurses to the ill. Those who are unfit or unable in any way, we take care of here.

Why do you not prepare your children for Government examination? Because we should have to use books which we do not think would help them, and employ teachers who could not co-operate with us in our one and single aim.

Are you open to any change in this matter? Yes, if the providence of God leads otherwise, we are ready to follow. For the present we have clearness in working in this way.¹⁰⁵⁴

1050. The Sarah Tucker College was established in 1895 by the Christian Missionary Society, as the first college for women in south India. It is named after Sarah Tucker, a physically challenged woman confined to her room in England. Moved by reports of the appalling condition of the women in this region due to their illiteracy, she stepped in to provide education for them. The institution began with four students. The motto of the college is 'So run that ye may obtain the incorruptible crown'. See also *Gold Cord*, 106.

1051. Nesaruthina Carunia, in a monthly newsletter of the Dohnavur Fellowship, 1993 [in Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 65].

1052. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 240.

1053. *The Beginning of a Story*, 21.

1054. *The Starry Cluster*, 9.

Amy gave priority to Christian character building.¹⁰⁵⁵ In helping the children to face the difficult future, her aim was 'to have the children from the earliest days surrounded by wholesome, healthy influences, and brought up in absolute straightforwardness'.¹⁰⁵⁶ The children should be as free as possible to seek God's guidance for their own lives. After their education, the Accals returned to Dohnavur for permanent service. Amy saw to it that her grown-up young convert girls 'may be kept safe and fitted to be a blessing to others'.¹⁰⁵⁷ For her it was important that the results are weighed, not counted. The all-over aim of the education system was:

[T]o train our children in truth and in love, and trust Him to open the way before them. We never deceived ourselves by imagining it would be easy for them. We were trying to prepare them to endure hardness, every kind of hardness, as good soldiers.¹⁰⁵⁸

In choosing the teachers, Amy had her special wishes. The rock upon which the Fellowship was built was truth as revealed in the Scriptures. Thinking about the children's education, she said:

In each case truth was the rock upon which they foundered. If our children were to grow up truthful they must be taught by those who had a regard for truth; and not just a casual regard, a delicate regard. On this point we were adamant. [...] So we were forced to be more than ordinary careful about the foundations of character. And we wanted those foundations to be laid in truth.¹⁰⁵⁹

Practically no fairy tales were told to the children; questions were never suggested and never any answered that they did not ask. It was, and so Amy liked it, a merry kind of schooling. Often Amy took the children for outings (Figure 17) in the neighbourhood and showed them all the plants, flowers and birds. She even taught their names; she also went with them to a goldsmith so the children could see the process of refining gold. Every day the children had their 'Sabbath rest' and children learned to sleep lightly with one ear open, and while asleep the children's angels ('we think'¹⁰⁶⁰) were sent to waken them. For an outsider this all might be seen as narrow-minded, but she had learned that 'to cling to a creature is to fall with the sliding creature'.¹⁰⁶¹ From the beginning, the children did the work of the compound: 'we teach them to keep their little world orderly because of the cloud of witnesses'.¹⁰⁶²

Nesaruthina Carunia said that 'Indians have a strong character; they can hide the truth'. Amy taught the children in a very original way to be honest, sincere and open. In her room were several fish bowls and Amma brought the children to these bowls and said, 'Look at the fish bowl. How do you see the fish? Through the glass. That is how your heart must be. People must be able to see into your heart.' 'Pretence is untruthful'; 'don't hide if you are angry, ask forgiveness'; 'don't say if you don't mean'.¹⁰⁶³

1055. 'Miss Carmichael and her fellow workers at Dohnavur have rescued hundreds of high-caste Hindu girls from this life [temple prostitution], and the work that is done there, with its building-up of fine Christian character and its insistence on the highest standards of love and friendliness and service, is the best bit of mission work I have ever seen.' In another situation far in the north, Somervell said: 'I suppose this place [the school of Mr Graham in Kalimpong] shares with Miss Carmichael's work at Dohnavur the honour of being the best mission institution in the whole of India' (in Somervell, *After Everest*, 252 and 110).

1056. In *The Continuation of a Story*, 44.

1057. *The Beginning of a Story*, 24.

1058. *Nor Script*, 123.

1059. *Gold Cord*, 66 and 67.

1060. *Gold Cord*, 70.

1061. *Gold Cord*, 66.

1062. *Gold Cord*, 76.

1063. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.



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FIGURE 17: Amy with some girls at the coast in Madras (now Chennai).

India became independent in 1947. From then on the government set the education rules:

Now we were able to go to school. We said everything to the teachers, because we were taught to be honest, to be open. Our English teacher said: 'Don't say everything'. People outside our compound could not understand our English.¹⁰⁶⁴

In Dohnavur Amy advocated an education that sharpened the intellect and formed the character. Education without the religion would produce bitter fruits:

Education cannot be an end in itself; it must lead to something else; and so we train the boys, always keeping as our aim that, in the end, they may be equipped to help their own people to know Christ.¹⁰⁶⁵

This is Nesaruthina's story:

Amy's vision was that the children should be taught the love of Christ. That had priority, and holiness, sin and resurrection. We were brought here to become missionaries. We all were here brought up by

1064. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1065. *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, 82: 'Also our thought is to give them a good knowledge of Tamil, their own language, and of arithmetic sufficient for all ordinary purposes, and enough English to enable them to gain help spiritually and practically from English books.'

our own sisters, and by the missionaries. We were happy here with nothing. And we were deeply taught by the missionaries of the love of God and the fear of the Lord. Amma's aim was we would be evangelists all over India. We were happy here with nothing. There was here a blind lady, she is married now and serves with her husband the church and she cares for other blind children. That was Amy's vision.¹⁰⁶⁶

Daily prayers went up for the children:

Father, hear us; we are praying: Hear the words our hearts are saying;
We are praying for our children.
Keep them from the power of evil, From the secret, hidden peril;
Father, Father, keep our children.

From the treacherous quicksand pluck them, From the whirlpool that would suck them; Father, Father, save our children.

Through life's troubled waters steer them, In life's bitter battle cheer them:
Father, Father, be Thou near them.

And wherever they may bide, Bring them home at eventide.¹⁰⁶⁷

'Is it impossible to make the idea of entire consecration the foundation of education?' This question of Andrew Murray¹⁰⁶⁸ was deep in Amy before she had even heard of Murray. She wanted something new because she saw that one could not build a Christian character by evolving the old systems that produced poor students. She wanted New Testament convictions and the New Testament attitude towards life in general had become part of the children in the school. 'Something that could not be torn out or laughed out of them.'¹⁰⁶⁹ She uses this example:

In our mountain ravine, just above our swimming-pool, a small tree grows on the rock in the mid-stream. When the river is in flood and a roaring torrent pours over the little tree, whipping off its every leaf, it stands unmoved. Its roots grip the rock. We wanted the children to be like that. 'Give them time to root', we used to say to our advisers. 'We are training them for storms and floods.'¹⁰⁷⁰

Our way of education is planned so as to prepare in spirit and in mind our boys and girls for the service of the King of kings. It must therefore from the first to the last serve the Lord and be spiritual education. As we see things it is not worthwhile to spend time, strength, money, energy, on anything less than what will prepare the child to serve the Lord Christ, All our plans therefore are bent that way. It is that thought which governs the choice of lesson books and everything else. Because of that we are very careful of the influences that surround a child (the mind of a child is 'wax that turns to marble'). So we cannot have unconverted teachers. This fact long ago settled the question of coming under Government.¹⁰⁷¹

In the education, the Bible was always open in a setting where study of the biblical text was an integral part of the whole education process. Not to impart knowledge, but to see lives changed by God's Holy Spirit. Always Amy tried to be 'practical and natural' in explaining God's Word. Nesaruthina gave an example – Amy would say:

1066. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1067. *Toward Jerusalem*, 116; *Gold Cord*, 142; *Mountain Breezes*, 149–150.

1068. In *Gold Cord*, 89.

1069. *Gold Cord*, 89.

1070. *Gold Cord*, 90.

1071. Amy to Margaret Wilkinson (in Trehane, *The Timothys*, 15–16).

Look at that mountain beauty. Our life is a mountain climbing. One day we will be at the top. [*The mountain top meant for her 'heaven'*] And if you cannot climb on your feet, climb on your knees. You kneel down and ask God to help you.¹⁰⁷²

Amy did not reject ideas from someone who was not a Christian, but had proved principles. For instance in Plato's *The Republic* she found ideas she could implement in Dohnavur's education system. She read about the preparation of children for war:

But war implies soldiers, and soldiers must be carefully trained to their profession. They must be strong, swift, and brave; high-spirited, but gentle. But how must they be educated? – In the first place, we must be very scrupulous about the substance of the stories, which we are taught in their childhood [...] Truth, courage, and self-control must be inculcated by all the stories that are employed in their education.¹⁰⁷³

Because of the practical skills the pupils learned – most of the arts and crafts of the civilised world – many of them after being married and settled as a Christian family in a certain place, would prove to be loyal, trustworthy citizens and useful workers. The Gospel does not save souls, but it saves people. Amy's policy for all the Dohnavur family children was that they were educated in an unrecognised family school. The underlying aim of all the education and training given to the girls and boys is that the children grow up to such a life of service 'by introducing them personally to the Lord Jesus'.¹⁰⁷⁴ The forming of a steady character was done gradually, by praying during their stay in Dohnavur with their teachers in private, learning to listen to the Word of God and to obey:

In such little things as these God goes on giving victories; and it is in the accumulation of these very things, small in the eyes of some, but great on God's side; that characters are built.¹⁰⁷⁵

Within the Dohnavur family there was no such thing as sex education. Girls coming to maturity hardly knew what happened when they had their period. Even their Accals did not explain it to them. Did they themselves have any idea? One can say that it was not done at that time. It was hidden, and nobody talked about it.¹⁰⁷⁶ Indian villages were full of phallic symbols, but even in the villages no girl was instructed. It made them very vulnerable to sexual assaults. Asked why nobody told them the answer was 'it is the husband's duty to teach his wife'.¹⁰⁷⁷ During the 1940s, Amy saw the necessity of having this kind of education, too. This after a medical doctor told her that even married couples led a monastic life. Her attitude towards sexuality and marriage can be attributed to her Victorian upbringing but, in my opinion, she herself struggled between two realities. There were the children she had to mother, but as children grow and become teenagers and adults she had to assist them in this stage in life as a mother. On the other hand, there was the 'other life', her life with the Sisters of the Common Life who were concentrated upon Christ and his work. It is said that even Amy herself did not know the affairs of sexuality, but she knew too well and she knew enough to know the iniquity and the agony many girls suffered physically behind the heavy temple doors and what they had had to go through when married

1072. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur. After the interview Nesaruthina said: 'Her talks never left me.'

1073. Note in *Gold Cord*, 107.

1074. See *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, 50.

1075. *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, 74.

1076. Talking about sexuality or pregnancy was not done or it was done in a way shrouded in the mist. Cf. the way Père Didon – often quoted by Amy – wrote about the pregnancy of a lady he knew: 'Do you know that Lucie has *hopes*? [...] Poor Lucie was getting impatient for the arrival of what she has been expecting. She would like me to baptise it' (in H.D. Nash, ed., *The Spiritual Letters of Père Didon* (London: Forgotten Books, 2013), 290 and 293.

1077. Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 262.

to elderly men. Often she was torn in two and in such circumstances she asked the Lord what to do. All her cares, also of the education she laid at his feet. 'Across the will of nature leads on the path of God. Not where the flesh delighted, the feet of Jesus trod.'

She refers to a day in Japan, when pictures were used to explain the message:

[A]nd among them was one of our Saviour. The people looked eagerly; care was taken to guard them from misinterpreting it, but the fact remained they had seen a picture of the foreigner's honourable God. From that time doubts as to this mode of work in heathen lands, came to me. [...] I discontinued using any pictures of our Lord, [...] but trust entirely to the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to do the whole work.¹⁰⁷⁸

One of the few rules for education was that the children were not allowed to take playthings to school. These things would distract the children from the subject of education at that time in class and could not avoid the children from becoming naughty because 'children are as ingenious in their iniquities as ever'.¹⁰⁷⁹ Amy created an atmosphere where love was the driving force. In every nursery, the Dohnavur text 'Love Never Faileth' was present. This text looked down upon the workers and the children, and, as they said, it 'keeps them sweet in heart'.¹⁰⁸⁰ There were certain rules to be learned, like obedience and always speaking the truth. Amy loved children dearly – 'those happy little sunbirds'.¹⁰⁸¹

It happened that babies died and to explain to the other children where they were now, it was said that 'they have gone to the nursery out of sight', where 'Jesus plays with our babies there'.¹⁰⁸² 'God's love holds us to the highest.' Amy prayed for this kind of love and taught the children what love really is, namely the love with which God loved us. 'Hold one another to the highest,' she told them. 'God's purpose is to lift us out of ourselves. We have to help others toward faith.' Prayer supporters in England prayed for the Fellowship, and the children themselves had prayer supporters. Often they got letters from them. When gifts were included, these were used for the need of the day:

We have no supported and unsupported children; for they all share alike what their Father sends. [...] And we seek to be guided in the spending so that gifts may return to the givers in joy and blessing for ever.¹⁰⁸³

For the children their *coming day* was very special to them. Their anniversary of arrival in Dohnavur is observed as their 'birthday'. Amma loved to mark special days, and made the *coming day* very special for each child. The nursery where the child lived was decorated with lots of flowers and the child may look in the special cupboard in Amma's room where the presents were stored. This was always a feast for them. It meant choosing some presents and being specially dressed that day and walking with flowers in your hair the whole day. As the family grew larger, it became a custom for all whose coming day fell in any particular week to celebrate them together on the preceding Sunday. As has been said, the celebrations were never without a lot of flowers. Amy liked beauty and she taught the children to have attention for beautiful things like animals, trees, and (tiny) flowers. 'This nursery, like the other, looks out on the glorious mountains. If beautiful things can make babies good, ours should be very good.'¹⁰⁸⁴

1078. *From Sunrise Land*, 152.

1079. *The Continuation of a Story*, 19.

1080. *Lotus Buds*, 241.

1081. *Ploughed Under*, 21.

1082. *Lotus Buds*, 12.

1083. *The Beginning of a Story*, 22.

1084. *Lotus Buds*, 148.

Amy may have learned this emphasis on beauty from the missionary David Livingstone of whom she had heard and read so much in her youth, who wrote in his journal on 13 October 1853:

Missionaries ought to cultivate a taste for the beautiful. We are necessary compelled to contemplate much moral impurity and degradation. We are so often doomed to disappointment, we are apt to become either callous or melancholy. Or, if preserved from these, the constant strain on the sensibilities is likely to injure the bodily health. On this account, it seems necessary to cultivate that faculty for the gratification of which God has made such universal provision. See the green earth and the blue sky, the lofty mountain and verdant valley, the glorious orbs of day and night and the starry canopy with all their ecclesiastical splendour, the graceful flowers so chaste in form and perfect in colouring. The various forms of animated life present, to him whose heart is at peace with God through the blood of His Son, an indescribable charm. He sees in the calm beauties of nature such abundant provision for the welfare of humanity and animated existence, there appears on the quiet repose of earth's scenery the benign smile of a father's love.¹⁰⁸⁵

As a rule, conflict at bedtime was avoided. 'The days should end peacefully for babies.' When sometimes the children were naughty or disgraced themselves, they were taught the 'rules', but Amy did not go as far as Mrs Wesley who taught the children 'to fear the rod and to cry softly'. 'We cannot compete with that august lady in our training.'¹⁰⁸⁶

On 21 August 1912 Amy got a telegram that Thomas Walker, on journey in Telegu country to take meetings, had died. His wife was still in England when he went 'upstairs'. In Telegu country he fell dangerously ill and died there among the people he served with the Gospel. She always had a lot of support from Thomas Walker. For Amy he had been of immense value, as teacher, spiritual father, counsellor, adviser and above all as a dedicated missionary with a lot of insight and knowledge of the Tamil language and culture, a Bible expositor and prayer intercessor and as a man who fought with her in the battle saving the children. Humanly speaking she was now on her own, outwardly still very confident, though in her heart of hearts, it would seem, quite the opposite. It was Ponnamal, when she saw Amy full of grief – 'stripped as a verily felt I was at that moment of my strongest earthly stay' – who said: 'It must be that you are meant to lean on God alone'.¹⁰⁸⁷ Amy wrote, 'We had to learn to "do without"'.¹⁰⁸⁸ In those days of tension and much prayer, she learned the truth that nothing can assail: 'I am the Ground of thy beseeching'. What the Walkers had been for her and the Fellowship is expressed in these dear words:

And all through those first wrestling's with the enemy and first gladness in the triumph of our Lord, and on through the years that followed till he was taken from us, stood Walker Iyer, faithful strength, and his gentle, loving wife, with whom everything was shared. Often as I look at the joy the later years have brought, the joy of the larger family and the Fellowship of Gold Cord, I wonder if ever it would have been mine if it had not been for their friendship and comradeship. Their works do follow them.¹⁰⁸⁹

In the education of the children, Amy looked forward, although in the beginning she was rather reluctant to send the children outside Dohnavur to institutions for further training. When she was convinced, she allowed them to go. Nesaruthina told us that Amma had tears in her eyes when the bus that would take the girls to their place of education was due to go.¹⁰⁹⁰ Once Amy wrote:

1085. In Mackenzie, *David Livingstone*, 140.

1086. *Lotus Buds*, 118 and 121.

1087. *Ponnamal*, 89.

1088. *Gold Cord*, 106.

1089. *Ploughed Under*, 74.

1090. In an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

If we are to flow out, we must have a strong spiritual base. To save children from torture and sin is not enough. We do need those who are ready to lay down their lives to lead them into true soldiership and a true following of the Crucified. This is much the most difficult work we have, and only the few can do it.¹⁰⁹¹

Education for her meant that every boy and girl would grow up as a strong man and woman based in the Scriptures and be a real follower of Jesus Christ and to be strong in this world with so many temptations. Real followers of Jesus would mean strong Christian families in India that would raise their children in the fear of the Lord. Amy saw a lot of potential in the children:

We, whose very own these dear children were, knew their limitations, but we knew, too, that they could offer truth, willingness for hard work, a freedom from the dominance of money, and very loving hearts. We have not yet tapped the deep springs of pure and passionate love that lie in Indian nature. We have given too little and asked for too little.¹⁰⁹²

Life in the Fellowship was geared towards all-round development. The most important aspect of education was spiritual development. Thefus, a grandson of Mimosa, educated in Dohnavur, writes:

Morning devotions and evening prayers have stuck with me – sometimes even the timings! The glory of worship, the melodious songs, the memorable picnics, the richness of routine and regularity laid a solid foundation for life.¹⁰⁹³

Amy prayed for her children:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Christ our Captain, hear our prayer, | Lovers, who in love abide, |
| Warriors we ask of Thee, | In the secret place of rest, |
| Comrades, who shall everywhere | Yielded to be crucified, |
| Stand for love and loyalty. | That Thy life be manifest; |
| Servants, who with souls aflame, | Labourers, who joyfully |
| Kindled from Thine altar-fire, | Choose rewards unseen today. |
| Live to magnify Thy Name, | Cause us, O our Lord, to be |
| Live to meet Thy least desire. | Like to these, for whom we pray. ¹⁰⁹⁴ |

A new chapter in the history of the Dohnavur girls began after India became independent in 1947. The new Indian government was expanding its education policy. In primary and secondary schools, the teachers needed recognised teaching qualifications. Amy had to give consent for the girls to go outside the Dohnavur compound for further education. The boys had already found a place in the government secondary school in Dohnavur village. They found out that teenage girls could get an education in line with Amy's standard at a girl's high school at Trichy, more than 200 miles away. The principal was a daughter of Amy's first convert in India. Nine girls were selected to go to Trichy where they lived in the YWCA hostel. One of the Sitties went with them.

She was deeply concerned for the spiritual soundness of the family over which she now presided, almost in a manner of a medieval abbess. She hated praise; it is said that she was pathologically averse being photographed (there are very few surviving photographs of her); even her writing she barely acknowledged as having any style or value. In 1919 she was awarded the Kaiser-I-Hind medal 'for her services to the people of India'. Her first reaction was to refuse it, on the grounds that Jesus was despised and rejected, and she deserved no better. In the end, she was persuaded that her

1091. Amy in a private letter (in Trehane, *The Timothys*, 98).

1092. *Cold Cord*, 278.

1093. In *A Century of Answered Prayers*, 28.

1094. In Trehane, *The Timothys*, 101.

response might be read as rudeness and she accepted the award, but nothing would induce her to receive it in a public investiture.

In the 1980s, the Fellowship management saw that it was part of their mission to train people to serve God in India and new developments were undertaken, which Amy had never foreseen. The Christian education today in the secondary school annex at the Fellowship's compound is focused on a government academic standard in order to get young Christians from all over the country in key positions anywhere in India. For girls, a good education that opens doors for further training enhances a girl's marriage prospects. When they marry a Christian boy, they are able to bring up their children in a truly and stable Christian home. The influence of a young Christian couple on their environment will have a real impact on the lives of the people around them. In serving the Lord from Kanyakumari on the southernmost tip of mainland India to the Punjab in the far north, they will exalt his name.¹⁰⁹⁵ 'Is the work worth doing?' This question asked at the very beginning of the Fellowship is silenced, when Amy takes us with her to the lake and tells about a baptism. 'The work here is God's work', and we only have to obey to do his work:

It was the baptism of some of our older children, our first to confess Christ in baptism. They were standing in a semi-circle on the sand by the waterside, and round them a ring of converts, now workers, each with a little child in her arms; for the babies were with us that day so that their nurses could come. One by one the children walked into the water, and we on the shore were watching, when from the far West, over the mountains, a flood of glorious light streamed out upon us all, till the children in the water seemed bathed in liquid gold. It was so sudden, and so glorious that instinctively we looked up, almost expecting to see something seen but once-long, long ago; and the glory of it flashed through us, laying bare for one brief moment all the inwardness of joy deep under the reach of speech. Do not such moments come to all who have known something of a walk 'with Christ at midnight over moonless seas'. Moments when the joy is so exquisite that the heart knows well it is not of earth.

■ Precious jewels for God

In meditating about Job 28:3, 'He setteth an end to darkness', Amy describes the very reason why she is in Dohnavur. As the miner goes deep in dark places and lights them, 'and so ends the darkness', for in the searchlight of the lamp he finds the jewels hidden in the dark:

We are here to do that very thing. We have for light the presence and the promises of God. There may be someone whom we are trying to help; we are trying to help out of the dark mine of that personality precious jewels for our Lord.¹⁰⁹⁶

The Dohnavur children were for her the 'precious jewels of the Lord'. The little children, often given up by their parents, without wealth or status, were the precious riches of the community. The Christian names given to the first children reflect this: names like 'Jewel of Victory' or 'Jewel of Life'. The final section of *Wings* is entitled 'The Preciousness of Souls', indicating the centrality of this Fellowship thought. Amy chose with unerring insight Tamil names for everybody, not only for the children. Murray Webb-Peploe was called *Deva Mitthiran*, meaning God's friend; his brother Godfrey was called *Deva Samathanam*, God's peace, and Murray's wife Oda was *Deva Vara*, God's gift.

The saving and the care of the children was top priority in Dohnavur:

Our chief business is to save little girls from dedication to temple service, and little boys from adoption by the dramatic Societies of the South. Other work flows from this.¹⁰⁹⁷

1095. For matters matrimonial in the DF in the last century, see Robbins, *Not Forgetting to Sing*, chapter 19.

1096. *Whispers of His Power*, January 17, 20–21.

1097. *Windows*, 3.

Long journeys had to be made to save one baby. In Dohnavur it was said, that to save one baby, in terms of time, the journey lasted as long as the journey from London to Moscow and back.¹⁰⁹⁸ Amy saw the work, to teach and to bring the little children (Figure 18) up to be mature Christian men and women, as a battle, 'a battle for a child – a battle in the heavenlies, to be fought out on our knees; or something needing for its handling the very wisdom of God'.¹⁰⁹⁹ 'We had been appointed to save such children, girls and boys.'¹¹⁰⁰ In appointing new workers, she agreed with Thomas Walker, who looked after those workers, 'as to whose spiritual qualifications we have no sort of *bona fide* guarantee'.¹¹⁰¹ Amy looked after persons who could give clear evidence of true conversion to God and a real acquaintance with Christ, to keep out of the work every unspiritual applicant. The risks involved were too great for her to give anyone the benefit of the doubt. The conversion and the training of children, as she saw, was as vitally important as that of adults.¹¹⁰²

From 14 January 1918 the work in Dohnavur became co-educational, with the arrival of the first baby boy. In the margin of *Daily Light* Amy recorded the arrival of Arul as: 'First fruits of seven years' travail'. Just as it was with the girls, Amy had done some research into the way boys were used in dramas during festivals. One day Amy was with the staff and children in the forest and near the pool, she knelt with the others seeking God's will and the way the new venture, taking in boys, would go. There in the forest God's word came which settled all for her and her comrades:

I was standing by a waterfall, which we call by a Tamil name meaning Great Joy, when the question broke forth again, 'Lord, what of the little boys?'

Oh, there are heavenly heights to reach
In many a fearful place,
Where the poor timid child of God
Lies blindly on his face,
Lies languishing for light divine
Which he shall never see,
Till he goes forward at Thy sign,
And trusts himself to Thee.

But, Lord Jesus, where are the men? There was no answer that I heard. I was looking at the answer, the wonder of the ceaseless flow of water. Then the sense of it came. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, Can I who do this, not do that? Spiritually, in that hour, the work for the boys began.¹¹⁰³

However, the first boy arriving in Dohnavur in January 1918 came quite unexpectedly. A *bandy* arrived that day and a woman gave a bundle to Amy. Wrapped in a towel was a little baby. Amy gave it to Mabel (a CEZMS missionary) to take to the nursery. In five minutes, Mabel came back and shouted 'it's a boy'. Amy used to take Arul, which was his name, on her knee and say, 'You are my very first son'. So began the Fellowship's work with boys.

1098. *Lotus Buds*, 219. NB: note the travel circumstances in India at the beginning of the 20th century.

1099. *Ponnamal*, 72.

1100. *Ploughed Under*, 144.

1101. *This One Thing*, 136.

1102. Cf. Thomas Walker's view on this issue: 'God keep us from lowering His standard and from trailing it in the dust. Let us turn anew to Calvary, and learn afresh the tremendous cost of Christ's redemption. Let us realize, in view of His precious blood, the infinite value of immortal souls. Let us think of the needs of India, and the enormous issues involved in the welfare of its Church. Can we, dare we commit these congregations to the care of hireling-shepherds, or to the leading of blind guides? Are we not hindering God's gracious purposes in giving room to unconverted workers?' In *This One Thing*, 138.

1103. *Gold Card*, 221. Cf. too *Nor Scrip*, 69.



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FIGURE 18: Nesamitthirie with five of the children.

In India, boys were used in the temples to perform dramas during festivals and other *puja* times¹¹⁰⁴:

Why take them at all? Briefly, because no one else in these parts does. We waited for years, hoping someone would start work on the same lines as the Lotus Bud work; but the boys went on perishing just as the girls had for countless generations. And no one came. So could we refuse to launch out again, trusting for the means and the workers. Little boys who for any reason are without safe guardianship are in request by three different sets of people. Some are taken by the Dramatic companies of South India and trained for the drama which, as India is, cannot be clean. [...] Others (worst of all) become searchers [...] and gather up into their net any unprotected innocent they can. Others are adopted by Mohammedans.¹¹⁰⁵

Already in 1911 she had discussed with Walker the possibility of taking boys as well. At that time, Walker did not think that Amy had to do this work. He fully sympathised with the idea, but 'You haven't strength enough for both' was what he said. Many other things came in between, but Amy had never abandoned the idea. In later years her judgement was that it had been good to wait, but when suddenly the first boy came, she immediately opened her heart for him, and so the work in Dohnavur continued, now with girls and boys. They lived in a separate compound next to the girls' one, for in India at that time both sexes lived separately. Then Amy herself received a legacy and she donated it for the first boys' nursery. To start this new work in the last year of World War I was really a work of faith and trust that the Lord would provide. Godfrey Webb-Peploe gives his story about the beginning of the boys work (Figure 19). He, too, saw that the brothers of the Lotus Buds were in danger:

It was a life of undiluted evil for them; and much prayer went up that someone would start a nursery for baby boys such as there was already for Girls in Dohnavur.

Is not God always working in an amazing way? In his dealings with his people, are not many times for us his footprints unseen?¹¹⁰⁶ After World War I, someone 200 miles away from Dohnavur, a Christian man, had already 'talked' with the Lord:

Twelve years ago, God caused a dream to come to a Christian man two hundred miles away, and in this dream He directed him to take a boy to Dohnavur. 'But, Lord, they only take little girls there'. 'What is that to thee?', was the answer. 'Do thou obey'. And, wondering much, went about his daily work knowing nothing of how the vision would be fulfilled to him and when. Within a week he knew, and obeyed. Alone with the boy, given to him as evidently as if an angel had appeared to give it, he set forth, and arrived at Dohnavur, to find that the bars were down which had kept boys out so long. That was at the beginning.¹¹⁰⁷

All over south India the practice of using small boys as actors in drama or as musicians in the temples had been known for a long time. For them it was a life of undiluted evil. For a long time it had been the desire to start a nursery for baby boys, such as there already was for girls at Dohnavur. For the boys:

Their future? It is too soon to say. But shall we not be led? [...] So we need not fear. Has our God ever failed us? Is it possible to trust Him too much, to adventure too much for Him.

Whatever profession the boys would enter, in or outside Dohnavur, Amy had just one goal: 'We want every boy to be a warrior of the king of kings'¹¹⁰⁸:

1104. A Hindu religious practice. Puja is the act of showing reverence to a god, a spirit or another aspect of the divine through invocations, prayers, songs and rituals.

1105. *Tables in the Wilderness*, 95–96.

1106. Cf. Psalm 77:19–20.

1107. G. Webb-Peploe, *Brothers of the Lotus Buds* (London: SPCK, 1950), 18.

1108. *Tables in the Wilderness*, 97.



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FIGURE 19: Boys in Dohnavur. Through the moongate the 'House of Prayer' is visible.

But the path to the accomplishment of our purpose is no easy one, and Apollyon straddles quite over the whole breadth of the way. So we expect battles, and we get them.¹¹⁰⁹

There were 30 nurseries in 1923 for girls and boys and in the following years, there was never a time when new buildings were not under construction. The rapid growth in the number of children since 1918 required more staff and in 1926 God gave in Godfrey Webb-Peploe the man he had chosen for supervising the boys work in Dohnavur. He and his brother Murray, the medical doctor, who came to Dohnavur in 1928, were grandsons of the famous H.W. Webb-Peploe (1837–1923), whom Amy had known as a speaker at Keswick. She saw in both of them future Fellowship leaders.

Godfrey, who was a missionary in China, visited India in 1924 to assist in the work of the Children's Special Service Mission (CSSM). Three months he spent in the district of Tinnevely. While in India, Godfrey had twice been to Dohnavur. Amy liked him very much; he was a man who seemed to have a 'freshness of the presence of God' about him. His brother, Murray, a medical doctor, was also to go to China and he planned to go together with his mother, Evelyn. He and his mother planned to make a stopover in Dohnavur, because Amy had asked them to pay her a visit. In a letter to them, dated 16 January 1925, Amy wrote:

My dear Mrs Webb-Peploe,

1109. Webb-Peploe, *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, 18–19.

Your Godfrey is just about to leave us. I need not tell you what he is. You know far better than I the quiet depths of that beautiful nature; I can only say that constantly he reminds me of his Lord. Dear friend, you are a rich mother. You have much to give. When you go to China, as I hear you may, would it be possible to go via south India? It would be a joy to see you and Godfrey's brother, and it would bind us all the closer to China – land of my first desires. Lovingly and gratefully yours, Amy Carmichael.

Godfrey left Dohnavur on 31 March. Many years later Amy wrote a short letter to Godfrey in which she wrote:

This day in 1925 we said goodbye to you, as it seemed for ever (in this world). [...] A broken day. 'Let me not live in vain, let me not fall. Until I yield it to the appointed soul'. And now? Oh what a God. But may He strengthen you, beloved Godfrey.¹¹¹⁰

Murray got the chance to visiting his friend Howard Somervell at Neyyoor in Travancore, just across the mountains. Howard Somervell took part in the 1922 attempt to reach the top of the Mount Everest, but at nearly 27 000 feet, he and the others were compelled to retreat. Somervell was also in the party of climbers on the 1924 expedition up Everest.¹¹¹¹ Murray and his mother stayed in Dohnavur for three months. Due to the Communist revolt, Murray had to leave hospital work in Hangchow (China) and after a short stay in Shanghai where it became clear that he could not return to Hangchow, he went back to Dohnavur. Godfrey also had to leave China, where he had worked in Nanking and, together with his mother Evelyn, he went back to Dohnavur. Amy was very glad and wrote on an undated scrap of paper to Evelyn¹¹¹²:

Oh, these two, what gifts to the world they are, worth all your life of loving sacrifice, worth anything – never have I seen two like them, it is rest and strength and comfort just to have them in the house.

By 1925, at least seven new reinforcements had come from various parts: Ireland, Scotland, England and India. The work of the Indians was especially promising. Some of the elder girls, grown up in Dohnavur, wanted to stay and proved the real persons Amy needed for the continuation of the work. In the first years, it was difficult to find enough staff and, as Houghton noticed, 'the difficulty was increased because Amma aimed high'¹¹¹³:

We are trying to form a new mould so that the type of character evolved may be different from that which for so long has been a grief of every man and woman missionary who thinks deep thoughts. We are trying to see to it that the training is of the kind which may be expected to produce new results.

Amy did not ask people to come to Dohnavur and join her in the work for the children. But one time she wrote:

Will men who are drawn to what the D.F. stands for write to Mr Godfrey Buxton, London and will women write to Mrs Streeter, Oxford or if in Ireland to Miss Waller, Dublin. But let no one write who is not prepared to be on the missionary scrap-heap.¹¹¹⁴

Did Amy see in her own father the character in which she tried to mould the boys? In 1925, when her youngest brother Alfred died in South Africa, a friend of his wrote about him in a way in which Amy saw the pattern at which she aimed:

1110. Amy in a letter to Godfrey, 31 March 1940. Letter in the Dohnavur library.

1111. He declined to go in 1928, citing that the climate of south India had made him unfit for climbing Mount Everest. Jacky Woolcock of the Dohnavur Fellowship Corporation told me this information in July 2015. The book of the 1928 expedition led by Hugh Rutledge is in Dohnavur.

1112. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 83.

1113. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 212.

1114. In 'Dohnavur Letter, no. 9, July 1926' (PRONI D/4061/30/1), 16.

Of his personal character, so sincere and so transparently honest, and of his simple and reverent faith [...] his wonderful courage and indomitable will. [...] He was patient and courteous even in provoking circumstances. [...] There was something very generous in his attitude to others. I never heard him say an unkind word of anyone. Of one who had wronged him he spoke without a trace of bitterness. [...] Always full of dignity he loved a joke as much as anyone. [...] He had an almost childlike faith in prayer and a passionate belief in immortality. [...] I have never met a purer minded man. I have never met a man with a higher ideal of love and service.¹¹¹⁵

Eight years later, there were nearly 100 boys, making entirely new demands on the Fellowship, not least in respect of male leadership. The Keswick Missionary Council reported in 1928 the receipt of an interesting letter from Amy, in which she wrote:

There are now about one hundred on the boys' side, counting a number of boy babies; and knowing our need, our God has given us an earnest Indian Christian man, who has been a blessing to the men, and Mr. Godfrey Webb-Peploe, who, even before he has had time to get the language, has been a strength to us all. We have lately bought a beautiful stretch of land on the northern side of the girls' compound and hope to put up buildings there for the boys and men, Indian and English. So the work grows quietly, and step by step as we go we find our Lord before us.¹¹¹⁶

An important event at that time was the coming of Mimosa, the sister of Arulai. She did not come not alone, but brought with her two sons and a baby boy. All three were lovingly welcomed and one can admire the work of God, for in the boys – Mimosa had gone back home to collect a son left behind – he gave the Fellowship some of his finest instruments for the future leadership of the DF in the years to come.¹¹¹⁷

After 1960 the boys coming to Dohnavur gradually diminished and for various reasons no more were taken in after 1969. The last boys left Dohnavur in 1984. Those who grew up in the intervening years are scattered all over India. Some are pastors and evangelists, others combine secular work with a preaching ministry. Some of the boys and girls who grew up in Dohnavur were not satisfied with what has been done for them by the Fellowship but to this day the majority have a happy relationship with those who brought them up, gratefully thinking of Dohnavur as their home. In her own copy of *Gold Cord*, by a photo of some of the boys (Figure 20), Amy has written: 'They have all had a chance'.¹¹¹⁸

The Fellowship has a place called *Muppanthal*, which means 'Three Pavilions'. It is located about 16 miles south of Dohnavur and is a home for children with physical or mental handicaps or disabilities. In former days, many of them worked in the fibre-work cottage industry. The 60 acres of land on a rocky hillside was bought in 1925. The place overlooks the Pilgrim Way, the Grand Trunk Road, which runs from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas. Here in the past the kings of Tinnevely, Travancore and Tanjore used to meet, hence the name Three Pavilions.¹¹¹⁹ The priests of the roadside shrine, who stop all the travellers by car to collect some rupees and sprinkle the cars with Siva's ashes, saw the coming of Christians so nearby as a danger for their lucrative business. They tried to stop the purchase of Three Pavilions, even talking with the Rani of Travancore to forbid the purchase, but they did not succeed in preventing the purchase.¹¹²⁰ A house was built, and first used on 17 December 1926:

1115. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 213. It is not difficult to see in these words a portrait of Amy herself!

1116. In Sloan, *These Sixty Years*, 95.

1117. 'Four of her sons are with us now, trusted and loved fellow-workers', in *Mimosa*, 146.

1118. See *A Century of Answered Prayers*, 33.

1119. See *Gold Cord*, 249–252.

1120. *Meal in a Barrel*, 57–58.



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FIGURE 20: A boat trip with the boys on Red Lake.

We built a house for workers and a delightful nursery-school, and sent our delicate little ones there in charge of faithful Accals, and the children thrived. [...] Illness is practically unknown on that high land, and the battle with the wind seems to put new life into the children. [...] Tired girls for whom we planned quiet rooms, and who found among the rocks the blessed solitude of a cave, came back refreshed, and talked of the wonderful feeling of spaciousness after our crowded Dohnavur, they found Pavilions enchanting. Some convalescing after operations were sent, and all came back well.¹¹²¹

The hope Amy had for this place is a working fact. Three Pavilions is the home of a small group of children who need special care and training. Weaving, gardening and making baskets of all kinds and measures were the things done at Three Pavilions.

The DF maintained no caste distinction. Most Indians have in their last name an indication of the caste to which they belong. In Dohnavur all had their last name as Carunia, a Tamil word which means 'loving kindness'.¹¹²²

A suitable leader for 'the boys work' was Godfrey Webb-Peploe. To Amy and to the children he brought 'times of great spiritual uplift and refreshment'.¹¹²³ Godfrey was respected within the Fellowship.

1121. *Gold Cord*, 250.

1122. In 'Amy Carmichael and the Origin of the Dohnavur Fellowship', *Mission Frontiers* (01 January 1999).

1123. K. Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 74.

In a CSSM publication, Godfrey once had written, 'We cannot be of much use to God unless we are fresh through living in the presence of God', and for Amy 'Godfrey seems always to have had this "freshness of the presence of God" about him'.¹¹²⁴ He often led the church service and during the weekdays he educated the boys. He had a special interest in nature; flowers and animals had his special attention.¹¹²⁵

Godfrey Webb-Peploe and Barbara Trehane have given us, in *Brothers of the Lotus Buds* and *The Timothys*, vivid descriptions of the education the boys and girls received in Dohnavur. They were in Dohnavur, because God called them to sow the seed of the Gospel. We go, not to preach, not to condemn, but to present the positive message of the Lord Christ who gives real forgiveness and who can set men free from the power of sin. The moon arch divided the two compounds where the boys and girls lived. On Saturdays everything had to be cleaned up and the compound swept in readiness for Sunday.

Most of the boys and girls had no home but the Dohnavur family, so they were there all the time, with none of the hindrances of a long holiday in an atmosphere where truth and purity are of little account. This would be their lot if they were merely boarders for a term. The prayer was that the children would grow up 'straight, honest, and true'. The girls and the boys, when they reached 13 or 14, were able to see how they were likely to develop. Some went for further studies and others had a special cleverness with their fingers:

There will be plenty to do for those who are utterly straight and prepared for hard work, and the only way for them to grow up to such a life is by introducing them personally to the Lord Jesus; and that is the underlying aim off all our training here at Dohnavur.

The training was focused, for boys and girls, from their earliest days, on finding joy in all manner of work. The children scrubbed their own floors, helped to cook their own food, weeded in the garden or laid gravel on the roads in the compounds and the girls helped the sick in the hospital. Using your hands is not a disgrace. Although scrubbing floors at that time in India was recognised as women's work, it was good discipline, and everybody spent half an hour, morning and evening, sweeping and scrubbing the red tiles of the floors, until they shone. Regular discipline was sometimes difficult to learn:

One of the hardest things for the boys to understand is that instant obedience to a command or to a signal is the only true obedience. Speed is not in the Indian make-up, and it takes long to learn this lesson.

Amy's aim was that the children learn obedience, even in small things, 'small in the eyes of some, but great in God's sight that builds character'. It should be obedience in love. Philippians 4:13: 'I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me' – not like the Israelites who said, 'We will do all things which are commanded'. Education in Dohnavur could not be an end in itself; it had to lead to something else. 'And so we train the boys, keeping always as our aim that, in the end, they may be equipped to help their own people to know Christ.' There was no desire to educate them merely for a B.A. or academic title. Knowing the Tamil language, having arithmetic knowledge for all ordinary purposes, and enough English to enable the students to gain help, spiritually as well as practically, from English books. The compound was full of flowers. Abundant water was the secret. For what purpose were all those flowers? The children sang this Dohnavur Song as they watered the plants:

We grow beside the shining sea
Set round with hills in Galilee.
We often saw our Lord, and knew
He saw us – and he loved us, too.

¹¹²⁴. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 74.

¹¹²⁵. Cf. his 'Field Notes on the Mammals of South Tinnevely, South India', in *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* (April 1947).

For he loved all the little flowers
That smiled at Him through sunny hours;
And when the sky was dark and grey,
Still smiled and did not go away.
We tried to make the world more sweet

For Him who walked with holy feet
Along its way – and by its sea
Set round with hills in Galilee.¹¹²⁶

And we often pray that when He is weary with the sin and sorrow of the world, He may walk in our garden as the day draws to its close, and find rest and joy, not only in the flowers, but in the family which He has gathered to Himself from the dark places of the earth and planted here.

From a very young age the love and the leading of Christ was in all the education; the aim was that the children would grow up in their simple way to love and to be unafraid in the company of Christ. The prayer was always to make them willing in the service of the Highest. Barbara Trehane sums up the missionaries' part in the education of the children: 'Our goal is service; our task is to make disciples; our desire is to send out witnesses; our vision is India for Christ'.¹¹²⁷

The coming day is a very great event. It was impossible to know the real birthdays of most of the children, so they kept a day on which the child joined the family, a special day each year. On his or her coming day the child was specially treated:

On such days God often draws near; [...] it was plain that beneath all the merry light-heartedness of the child there was a deep longing to know the Lord Jesus more intimately.

Sixteen December was always very special, for it was Amma's birthday.

Sundays were a joyful day for all. In the services, sometimes as many as 40–50 Hindu or Muslim men and women entered the House of Prayer. It was a great evangelistic opportunity. The initial barrier was broken down. However, it was a long and difficult path to baptism. Some said they were secret believers, but did not really admit his claim to be the one Lord, of the one faith, by baptism into His death. Were they willing to take up his cross and follow him? If not, 'they are not worthy of Me'. These words are words that scorch:

And when He said those words long ago, He knew what it would be like in India today. And still He calls out men and women, boys and girls, to follow Him.

Sunday evening after the singing hour, when the last verse of the vesper died away, from the tower came the notes of 'Abide With Me', played on the tabular bells. Sunday was a different day, not dull, or full of services, but different. Not only the older ones looked forward to it; all are brought up to love it as a day of delight.

Babies and older children sometimes died in Dohnavur. They left for what the Dohnavur children call 'Jesus' upstairs nursery'¹¹²⁸:

And we thought of them too, as lambs folded by Death, who, like the Good Shepherd Himself, gathers the lambs in His arm and carries them in His bosom to Love's own Country. In the days to come we were often to stand together in the still, green place we call God's Garden and sing with a sure hope:

1126. *Mountain Breezes*, 432.

1127. Trehane, *The Timothys*, 101.

1128. *Overweights of Joy*, 279.

Out of the heat and out of the rain,
 Never to know or sin or pain,
 Never to fall and never to fear,

 Could we wish better for one so dear?
 For the pure powers of Calvary
 Bathe little souls in innocence;
 Tender, tender Thy love-words be,
 'Dear little child, come home to Me'.¹¹²⁹

Ministry to prisoners was one of Amy's desires, and when she met them, she used every opportunity. In *Raj, the Brigand*, the way she evangelised is told of and so are prisoners who gave their life to Jesus. She also talked for a long time with a man who was in prison for killing his wife. Amy went as far as going into his cell and telling him of Jesus. The man confessed his sins and believed in Christ.¹¹³⁰

In Dohnavur all was done for the children and a special prayer for them came to God every day. She wrote to a member of the Fellowship in 1939 that she asked in two sentences of all the seniors who were looking after the children, what she expected from them: 'Love them dearly. Hold them to the Highest'.¹¹³¹ Often on sleepless nights Amy walked up and down the veranda, and many a prayer for the children went up to him, who is at his father's right hand and is always there for his (little) children. He who neither sleeps nor slumbers.

Through life's bitter battle cheer them
 Through life's bitter battle cheer them,
 Father, Father, be Thou near them.

 Read the language of our longing,
 Read the wordless pleadings thronging,
 Holy Father, for our children.

*And wherever they may bide,
 Lead them Home at eventide.*¹¹³²

■ Joppa and the Forest House

Several times Amy was offered a house or a plot by the sea, but 'there was an inner prohibition and absence of liberty to go forward'.¹¹³³ Twenty days after *Three Pavilions* was bought, she was offered the opportunity to buy land at Cape Comorin and build a house there. Unexpectedly, money was donated 'for a house by the sea', a 'quiet place for healing'. The land was bought, so the Fellowship could offer a haven for the Accals who needed to rest or for the sick to have a quiet place to recover. The house by the sea was built in August 1926 and was called Joppa (Figure 21),¹¹³⁴ 'because we want it to be a place of vision and enlargement to those who stay there'. In the Joppa logbook is the reason for building this house¹¹³⁵:

1129. *Ploughed Under*, 52.

1130. See *Souls Set Free*, 18.

1131. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, XV.

1132. *Gold Cord*, 142.

1133. *Meal in a Barrel*, 62–63.

1134. Referring to the house at the sea in Acts 9 and 10, where Peter got a vision.

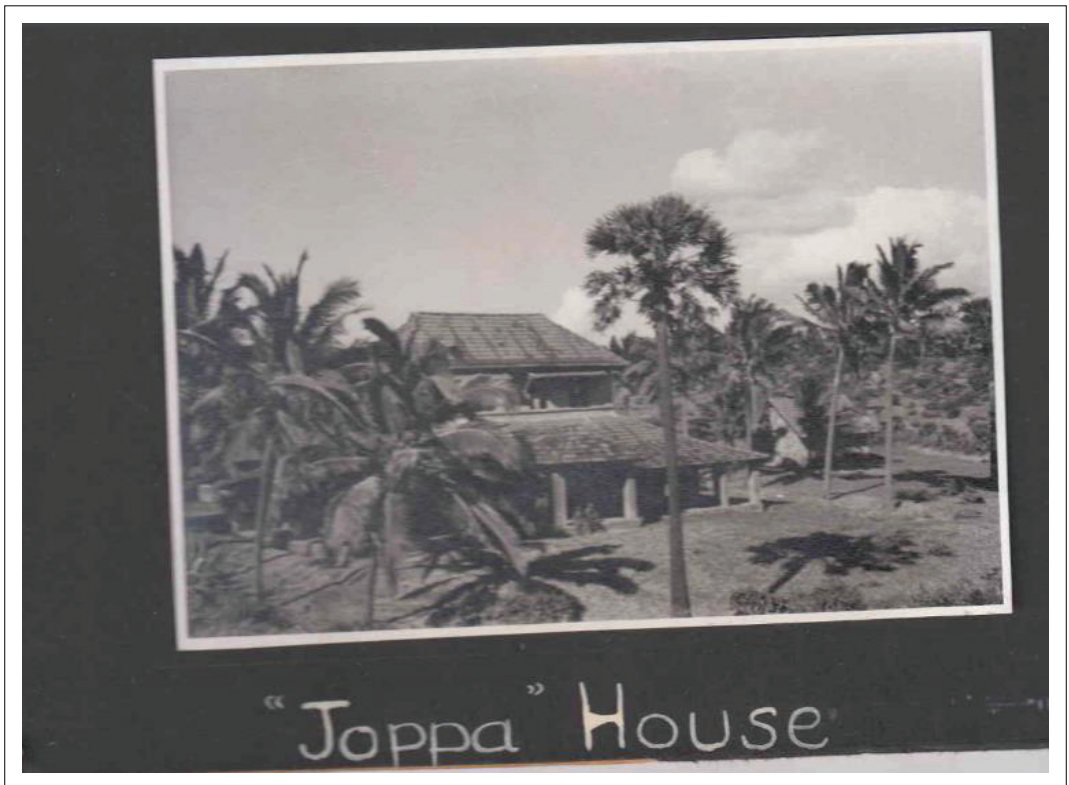
1135. The logbook is in 'Joppa', Kanyakumari, India.

The distance between Three Pavilions – Muppanthal and India's southernmost point, Cape Comorin is fifteen miles. In 1925, through the help of a Syrian Christian, an official of the Travancore Forest Department (whose cousin Koruth became a full member of the Dohnavur Fellowship in 1928), Amma bought a small plot of ground by the sea. Amma believed that God would make it a place of Vision for tired workers from the Dohnavur fellowship. More than that, she saw it as a place of witness to pilgrims. There is a temple at India's 'Land's End'. In the years that followed Amma and many a group of her fellow-workers found refreshment by the sea, but she never forgot the challenge of the temple, representing unseen powers that hold a (sway) away.

There is no footprint on the sand
Where India meets her shining sea;
But, Lord of all this ancient land,
Dost Thou not walk the shore with me?

And yet the goddess holds her state
Along the frontiers of the sea,
And keeps the road, she bars the gate
Against Thy tender Majesty.

O Purer than the flying spray,
O Brighter than the sapphire sea-
When will she turn and flee away,



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FIGURE 21: The old 'Joppa' house in Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin).

And India walk her shore with Thee?¹¹³⁶

The poem was composed by Amy on 10 October 1924.¹¹³⁷ Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin) is one of India's well-known places where yearly, from all over India, pilgrims come to visit the temple at the most southern tip of India's south coast. Amy refers to that temple in the second verse of 'No Footprint'. In 1913 she wrote another poem in which she refers to that temple. The first part of the second verse goes:

For at the end of India
A temple stands on a rock,
As if to block
The way of the God of the sea
From entering in at His gate

The last verse is:

So, at the end of India
Where the rocks run into the sea,
The wonderful, blue-green, boundless sea,
Mystery touches mystery;
And every shud on the waves on the shore
As they break in might,
And leap in white
Of majestic, prevailing purity,
Is a solemn stroke on Eternity's drum,
Saying, 'Lo, I come;
In the roll of the book is written of Me'.¹¹³⁸

Joppa became Dohnavur's holiday location for the children as well as for staff members. They saw it as a place from which evangelistic work could be done among the many pilgrims coming to the temple at India's 'Land's End':

Down on the shore below the striped temple wall I stood one day, desperate because of things seen in the court above, broken by the sense of my own impotence. [...] And my heart cried out to my Lord, 'O Lord, how long?'¹¹³⁹

After the accident¹¹⁴⁰ in 1931 Amy was not able to go to Cape Comorin. She used to write letters to the children who were there for their holidays and often received letters from the children from this house. On 27 December 1936, Amma wrote to the children in Joppa:

1136. 'No Footprint', in *Meal in Barrel*, 62; *Toward Jerusalem*, 110.

1137. *Towards Jerusalem*, 110; *Mountain Breezes*, 136-137. There is a very slight difference between the written and the printed version. In the written version where the first verse has 'shining sea', the printed has 'sapphire sea'; in the last verse is written 'When will she turn and flee away'; the printed has 'When will the goddess flee away'. For the handwritten copy of this 'Prayer Song', see the *Joppa 1925/1925* songbook (p. 2), which is in the bookcase at Joppa, Kanyakumari. Kanyakumari is one of the most beautiful places in south India. Kanyakumari is a district located at the southernmost tip of south India. It was also called Cape Comorin, during British rule. Cape Comorin is also called as 'Kumari Munai' in Tamil. The name Kanyakumari comes from Goddess Kumari Amman, who is popularly known as 'Kumari Bagavathi Amman'; her temple is situated on the seashore. Amman has a shining diamond nose ring which is visible even from the sea. In Kanyakumari you can find people from different religions.

1138. In *Made in the Pans*, with Amy's own annotations, 26. Amy wrote in the margin, 'At Cape Comorin, January 1913. With the children on the shore.'

1139. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 252.

1140. See Chapter 12.

My beloved Joppa children,

I was delighted to have your letter and I thank you all for it and for your love writing it just after you arrived. This is the first Sunday of the new ways of services, this first Sunday Service in this Suha Se'lthi; which he held today. I like to think of your worshipping the Lord of the Sea along His all beautiful Sea. Don't forget to use the house bell. That is a custom. I hope none of our houses will forget. Goodbye my

Your own Ammai.¹¹⁴¹

On 29 December 1939, the children received this letter from her:

My darling children, big and little, I have just read your dear letter. I longed all for them. As I read and [...], Purripu, Prasie, Radania, Fullarripu, Preenapu, Piriapu. I read each of you separately. I had the shells and the flowers, and I kept one shell and send the rest to those of the home keeping. [...] Dear Purripu, to [...] and I will pay it to the account when you return. Pick up as many as you can and clean them. You need a pin to get out the sand. Choose only perfect ones if possible. Know I should like to be with you as you search along the edge of the sea and go to the [...] beaches and search with the shell fishing people. They would be good natured and help I think. Now God bless you all and give you a happy new year. There are many whose new year will be full of sorrow. On Christmas Day a submarine torpedoed a ship without warning (this is against sea-law). One of the passengers ran to save his wife. She is safe now but he was drowned. Pray for her on this sorrowful New Year's day and pray for those who do such cruel things, that they may turn from such great sin.

Your own mother.¹¹⁴²

Every day there was a lot to do for the children in Joppa. We get some impression of what happened daily as from the first Joppa logbook (Figure 22):

In 1927: March 18th. Windy Day. In the morning, we saw the moon setting down and the clouds near it were pinkish red: it was a glorious sight. The sea was very rough and we saw big waves. We saw many beautiful sea anemones, they were of many different colours, some were purple, some green or brown. In the morning we went out for a walk to the Residency garden and in that garden we saw many kinds of Crotons, a Pink pagoda tree, and other trees which we had never seen before. There was a big windmill in the centre of the garden, which draws up water for the garden. We saw a sailing boat.

April 16th: Hot all day, cool wind in the evening. Amma, Alec Annachie, Beatrice acca, Preena acca, Kanmanie acca, Shanti, Neela, Ruchipu, Nundana and Marahalha went home. Went for a long walk.

April 17th: Easter Day. Windy day, but hot in the afternoon. Cloudy evening. We sang 'Lo in the grace He lay' in the early morning. The sea seemed to praise God with us. All went and sang on the sand in the bright moonlight.

In 1928: January 1. Sunday. Fine all day. New Year's Day. Worship at 10.30 A.M. Roman Catholic girls came at 11.30 A.M. and we sang to them Rukma a. told them Bible stories and they listened well. In the evening, we went for a walk as usual and we sang hymns after dinner.

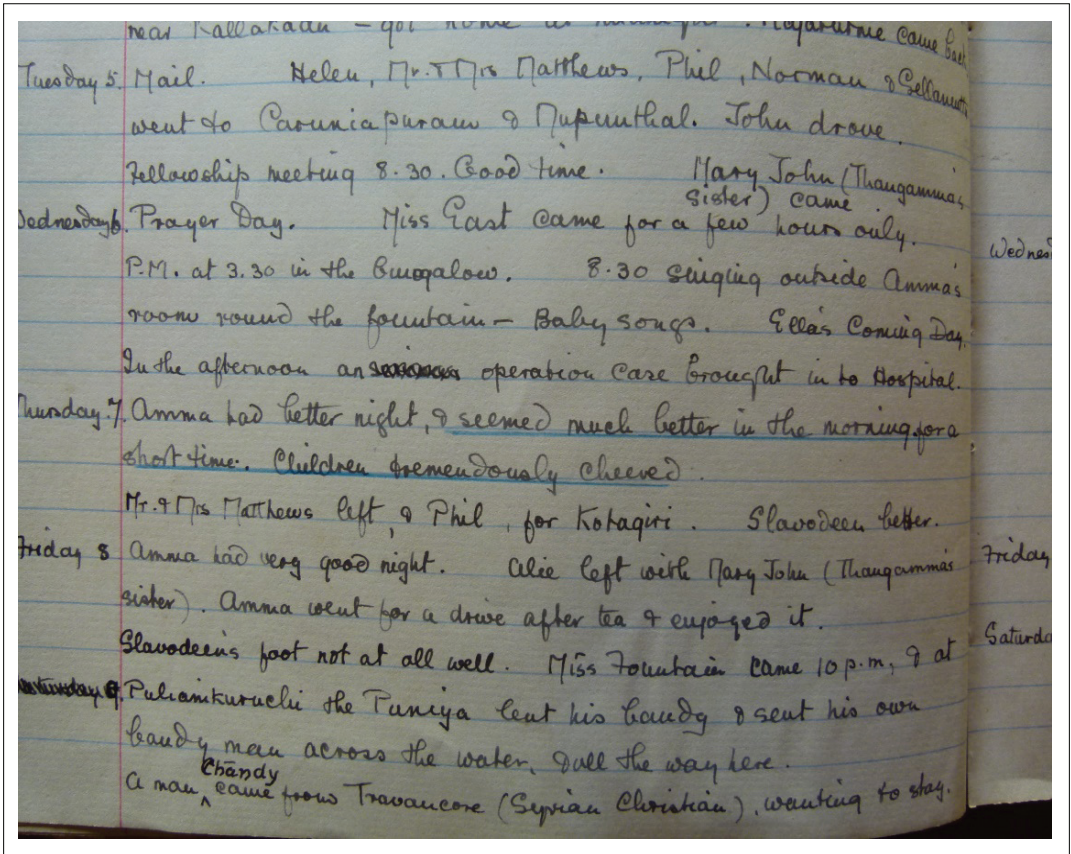
January 2nd: Cloudy in the morning and very hot at midday. Sea rough. We found a dead, white feathered and webbed-footed bird on the beach when we went for a walk in the evening.

January 3rd: Cloudy, but fine. Very hot at midday. The tide was very high in the morning. Manorama Sittie [*May Parker*] and Mariammai went to Caruniapuram a 3 P.M. by public car. We met three friends, who had been in Dohnavur the day before, on the sea shore as we were out for a walk.

Friday 14th: A.N., Purripu, Yeshoda, Ingeetha, Leredamuttu and Samathana came with Amma and Murray Annachie – also a mongoose – Amma, Murray Annachie soon returned home.

1141. This letter the author discovered in one of the books in the Dohnavur library.

1142. This letter is in the Joppa logbook for the year 1939.



Source: © Dohnavur Fellowship. Permission to reproduce was obtained from Jeremiah Rajanesan. Photographer J. (Hans) Kommers.

FIGURE 22: A page in the Joppa Logbook from 1932.

December, 31st: Friday Holiday. Sea calm and motionless. Amma, Murray, Nesa Sittie, Preena and Swami arrived about 3.45 in the car.

May 1931: When we arrived it was evening. [...] In the morning, two HUGE ELEPHANTS, belonging to the temple, were feeding just about the house. Tremendous excitement.

In 1932: July 17th. Sunday. Sunny and calm. We saw a small steamer, we bathed, and had a Tamil service at 10.30. Had a quiet day and sang sea songs and Tamil psalms at night.

Sunday 23st (no month here), Nice and cool morning. Breezy all day. Worship at about 10.30 A.M. The chief points were; True Christian life, Christian love, Christian holiness, Christian truthfulness. Matthew 5.

Amy was happy when others found happiness and she could 'see' and write about the love two young people felt for each other. She tells about Alec Arnot and Gwen Jones, two of the Fellowship, who:

[O]n November 19, 1926, after a long day's scrubbing and colour-washing, went down to the shore together as the full moon rose. And Jesus our Lord Himself drew near and walked with them, and He gave each to the other, down there by the sea. They were married on Nov. 17, 1927.¹¹⁴³

1143. In *Meal in a Barrel*, 70.

After nearly 80 years the state of the old Joppa house was too bad to be used for holiday purposes. A new house was built on the same spot and from 08 to 22 March 2013, the first group of Accals and Thungachies occupied the newly built Joppa house. In the 'New Joppa' logbook we read:

'The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea than the mighty waves of the sea'. Psalm 94:4.

May 8th of 2013 is an eventful and historical day for the Dohnavur Fellowship. The old irreparable Joppa house with tiled roof was demolished and a new modern building with beautiful wooden doors and wooden rails round the front and back veranda was welcoming. I large dining hall with 4 tables and the bed rooms were all very inviting. The motto for the party was PEACE, PRAISE, PRAYER. [...] This new Joppa house certainly beats the 'Five Star Hotels'!!¹¹⁴⁴

To escape the heat in the hottest season, Amy sometimes went to Ooty or to a house in the mountains nearby, which belonged to the Forest Department. On the evening of 11 June 1917, she found a letter had unexpectedly arrived, and in it was a £100, given by a friend from Cork in Ireland. Then she saw that it was earmarked 'For a Forest House'.¹¹⁴⁵ After a long search and waiting for God's guidance, they found a convenient place to build:

Four miles from the Dohnavur Nurseries, the Western Ghauts rise almost straight from the plains. Hidden behind the foot-hills is a narrow valley that leads into a deep ravine carved by the river in the heart of the mountains, rising to these parts to a height of 5,449 feet. Half-way up, the mountains form a horse-shoe curve, and on the only suitable level place our forest house is built.¹¹⁴⁶

Naraikadu (Grey Forest) about nine miles west of Dohnavur, once was a coffee estate. Amy visited the place for the first time on 11 July 1916, and nearly one year later on 11 June 1917 she bought it for the family. Mr Devapiriam, once a member of the DF evoked many happy memories of the joys of Naraikadu holidays. One of the first rules the children learned was that the children should not hurt 'the forest inhabitants, whether they are thought to be poisonous or dangerous, unless they come in our living quarters, for the forest is their home also'.¹¹⁴⁷ Naraikadu was a perfect holiday place with its river, pools, waterfalls, mountains, trees, birds, and all kind of animals. 'In this Cathedral not made with hands we feel His presence more intimately and so we are led to worship and adore Him more'.¹¹⁴⁸ Often overworked workers of the Fellowship went into retreat for a short period of rest and for Bible study and meditation. Amy herself also went to Naraikadu, where in full rest she could meditate. For the quiet time she often could be found in the 'Cave of Coolness'. Even nowadays, there is a huge boulder, called 'Ammal's Rock', from where one can enjoy the beautiful scenery. Naraikadu was also the place where Amy wrote some of her books and many poems about this place – about 60 – all bursting into song:

Dim, green forest
Of a thousand secrets,
When you were planted
Did the angels sing?

1144. In the new Joppa logbook, 08 May 2013, in the new Joppa house, Kanyakumari, India.

1145. *Gold Cord*, 190.

1146. *From the Forest*, 30. About the forest house, in *From the Forest*, Chapter V, 29–26.

1147. D.A. Devapiriam, *Naraikadu. Story of God's Provision of Dohnavur Fellowship's Holiday Resort* (Bangalore: Pauline Printing Press, 1984), 3.

1148. Devapiriam, *Naraikadu*, 5. An old member of the DF remembered the time he went with other boys to Naraikadu for two weeks: 'The two weeks in Naraikadu was like living in a paradise, far away from all undue stress. Those were the happiest days in my life' (Devapiriam, *Vanacharbu*, 55).

Many things I wonder
 Are they all your secrets?
 Won't you ever tell me anything?

Great, white waterfall
 Breaking through the forest,
 Where do you come from?
 Where do you go?
 Had you a beginning?
 Will you go on forever?

Great, black, glistening wall
 Veiled in shining glory,
 Piled among the waters
 Rock upon rock,
 O, to have stood and seen
 Hands at work upon you
 Shivering you and shattering, shock on shock!

Deep, dark, silent pool
 Hollowed at the fall's foot,
 What do you think of
 All the long day?
 Do you hear the thunder
 Of tremendous waters?
 Do you hear the laughter of the spray?¹¹⁴⁹

1149. In *From the Forest*, 29. In *Mountain Breezes*, 409; this poem has the title 'I Wonder'.

The leading song of the
Sisters of the Common Life.

Across the will of nature
Leads on the path of God
Not where the flesh delighteth
The feet of Jesus trod.
O bliss to leave behind us
The fetters of the slave
To leave ourselves behind us,
The grave-clothes and the grave!

We follow in His footsteps
What if our feet be torn?
Where He hath marked the pathway
All hail the briar and thorn!
Scarce seen, scarce heard, unreckoned,
Despised, defamed, unknown,
Or heard but by our singing,
On, children! Ever on!

Gerhard Tersteegen.

This song is in the *Green Book*
of the Dohnavur Fellowship.



Leadership

■ The unseen leader

God was in Dohnavur at the soul of Amy's leadership. Everything was set out to lead toward a vision. 'Someone unseen but intimately concerned is in command.'¹¹⁵⁰ She wrestled with God for her children and all the decisions made were grasped from the Word of God. Her intimacy with God fed her own soul. She relied heavily on the Bible stories as a window into the different aspects of leading the DF. In reading, studying and praying over a Bible word, she longed to receive a word from God spoken to her own heart. God's Word was the light on her path, and God's presence and his promises were sure. It takes practice to become conversant in the language of the soul. After the coming of the first girl she learned by doing and God taught her to wait for him. The Lord taught her to pray, to stay faithful, to lead and to let go, how to deal with money and with other (foreign) helpers.

For those, who were especially in her heart, she had some advice because she knew that they longed to know the voice of the Lord. It is so easy to be misled by the devil who will lead those who want to follow the Lord into the marsh. Therefore, she gave the following advice for guidance:¹¹⁵¹

The Word of the Lord in the Bible. The Word of the Spirit in our heart. The circumstances of our lives, which have been arranged by God. All three must point one way. It is never enough for any two of these be taken as showing God's will. If the voice is God's all three will agree.

On the eve of leaving Bangalore, 29 November 1896, she asked prayer supporters in England to give thanks for a girl who attended a Bible class in English, and who had heard the call to do village evangelistic work. This stirred Amy to ask her friends to pray:

[T]hat He may fit and choose out some Indian Sisters to work with us [...] only those who know something or are willing to learn something of definite trust in God for daily needs. Here it is most sorrowfully true that 'What pay shall I get?' is almost always asked when Mission work is mentioned. Many say it will be impossible

1150. *Nor Scrip*, 120.

1151. In 'Amma's Message About Guidance', paper in the Dohnavur library.

to get any other than the old lines. But it would roll away a great stone of stumbling if we could all answer [...] the invariable question, 'How much do you get for coming to talk to us?' by saying, 'We don't get pay. God supplies our needs through His servants [...] but we come for love of God and you. So do pray. Pray for the burning love- the life-consuming love of the Master. Pray that Jesus' love- His own dear love- may shine and burn through the awful darkness of heathendom.'¹¹⁵²

'I am not here because of choice', she writes. To avoid disappointments for those who were thinking of joining her in the work, she explains that rest of the heart is the medicine. 'Anything less is torture.'

We pray for the call, the thrusting forth. Should any read this who are at the parting on the ways, I want to say very earnestly, Be sure of your call. Our Lord deals variously with souls, but the soul must be sure that He and He alone is the Chooser of its path. [...] Do not feel the call of God is always as it were audible. It is more the quiet sense of peace that comes when one is on one's knees before Him and as one goes about one's daily work; peace, but also outward attack. Has anyone come to us un-attacked? I do not know of any. Certainly all who are to bear the burden of leadership know it. [...] A call is a quiet, steady pressure upon the spirit from which there is no escape. It is an assurance, a conviction. Then there is the leading of God at the other end. If both coincide and the way opened, let the soul go in peace.¹¹⁵³

New helpers, Indians or from overseas, had to answer 25 questions, before they could be admitted and join the family. Questions such as:

- Do you truly desire to live a crucified life? This is to be prepared to do very humble things.
- Does the thought of hardness draw you or repel you?
- Do you realise that we are a family, not an institution?
- Are you willing to do whatever helps most?
- Apart from the Bible, can you name three or four books which have been of vital help to you? Apart from books, what refreshes you most when tired?
- Have you ever learned any classical or continental language?
- Can you mention any experience you have passed through in your Christian life which brought you into a new discovery of your union with the crucified, risen and enthroned Christ?
- Have you ever had an opportunity to prove our Lord's promise to supply temporal as well as spiritual needs?

All the questions have one focal point: Do not come to Dohnavur unless you can say to your Lord and to us, 'the Cross is the attraction'. Be prepared to meet difficulties, and therefore Amy asked for co-workers with 'steel'. Do not expect gratitude but know you are entering a battlefield when coming to Dohnavur:

Not a word of attraction can I write to such a one. It will be desperately hard work, iron would snap under the strain of it. I ask for steel, that quality which is at the back of all going on, patience, which cannot be tired out, and love loves in very deed unto death. If anyone expects gratitude, he will be disappointed. We are here not to receive gratitude but to do the will of our Father. But very often, far beyond our deserving, we find response and love.¹¹⁵⁴

In the first 50 years, from 1900, the family grew, children as well as workers. In such an enclosed environment with so many expatriates in a small area, with few possibilities to have outside contact, and due to the strain of the work, frictions were inevitable. In the case that someone had to depart, Amy's lips were sealed. Love covers everything and she could not always tell the full story. This gave rise to the thought that she was an autocrat who would tolerate no one who refused to obey her. She had learned

1152. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 91.

1153. *Fragments That Remain*, 15.

1154. *Fragments That Remain*, 16.

this from her parents; in the Millisle home there was no compromise, principles were principles. She did not have people who could match her or trusted people from whom she could ask advice. Thomas Walker had died in 1912 and that year her spiritual mother, Mrs Hopwood from Ooty, also died. Mrs Hopwood could cheer her up and give her strength; she prayed for Amy and gave her motherly counsel. Her own mother died in 1914.

She was always ready to gather what the Lord gave her and she shared these thoughts with her family. Every morning during the 20 years of her sickness she wrote down some of the thoughts from a Bible verse on a piece of paper and this paper was handed over to one to read it for the children and the other staff members.¹¹⁵⁵ She wrote to her family:

It is a great cheer to know that these notes are sometimes a help. There are so many of you, and your needs are various and your ages so different, that it is impossible any word should be for everybody. No archer ever shot several hundred targets with one arrow. But if any arrow finds its target I am content – and grateful. I do not want you to be spoon-fed children, but to get your food direct from your Heavenly Father. But this is my only way to reach you, my own dear children, and I often read things I long to share with you, and sometimes our Lord Jesus speaks a word to my heart which I would speak to yours.¹¹⁵⁶

One of her most trusted co-workers was Ponnamal – her name means gold – and Amy wrote of their working together: ‘and thus was the awakening of a spirit that was to travel far in the fields of joyful adventure’.¹¹⁵⁷ It was Mrs Walker who took care of Ponnamal when she was still young so that she was allowed to go to church and Sunday school.

Ponnamal was for Amy not just one of the workers. Since 1897 she had itinerated with Amy’s band of women and she was a ‘fellow-worker, not an under-worker’. Everything concerning the Fellowship Amy shared with her:

Those years lie in memory like a handful of jewels that sparkle as I turn them over. Why do past years sparkle so? They were full of ordinary things while they were being lived; they were often so dusty and dull, but they are jewels now, many-coloured, various; lighted with lights time cannot dim nor tears drown.

Mabel Wade, who joined the Fellowship in 1907, was also someone Amy could rely on completely.¹¹⁵⁸ Just as it was with Ponnamal, money had ‘no power over her’. ‘This in her was most precious to me.’¹¹⁵⁹ Amy, grown up in the Victorian era, resembled women like Elizabeth Fry and Florence Nightingale, who recognised and accepted their social responsibility in a dark sinful world, caring for those who have no helper, and for unloved little ones, often children in mortal danger. In 1917, she read Fullerton’s *At the Sixtieth Milestone*¹¹⁶⁰ and on 30 August that year she wrote on the first page ‘I am here on business for the King’.

After 1930 Amy, being an invalid and ageing, was unable any longer to participate in all the activities with the children or go out with them exploring the environment. Yet her spiritual gifts and vision shone out undimmed. She had led the Fellowship through many and great experiences; could she not

1155. Cf. Editor’s foreword of *Edges of His Ways*, V.

1156. Letter from Amy to her Dohnavur family. From the introduction to *Whispers of His Power*, 5.

1157. *Ponnamal*, 2.

1158. When she came to Dohnavur, she knew that this was the place for her. ‘It is as if I had found my spirit’s home’ [*Gold Cord*, 65].

1159. *Overweights of Joy*, 82.

1160. Fullerton, *At The Sixtieth Milestone*.

lead them still? Amma's prayer always was that an Indian should be appointed as official leader of the work her labours had brought into being. Nesaruthina said that Amy did not want English leadership: 'India is from India'. But – as she continued:

[M]issionaries kept Indians from further knowledge. Women were put behind men. 'No need for them to learn', the men said. Therefore we were not developed. We were afraid when they called us and if you were too friendly then you were placed in another compound. There was no respect for us. Only Amma understood us. 'One day', Nesaruthina continues:

I had lost a ribbon, and was very afraid to tell my housemother for she would beat me. I went to Amma and said: 'My sister is very harsh to me, because I lost my ribbon.' Then Amma gave me six ribbons, and said, 'One you give back and keep the others for yourself.'¹¹⁶¹

For a long time the family members would not hear of new leadership, for Amy was their leader, and was she not their mother? Who would alter that! Was somebody else ever in a position to take her place? Amy absolutely did not want the Fellowship to be built around her personality. Already in the mid-1920s, when the Fellowship had grown considerably, the need was felt to constitute a society so that the Fellowship could legally hold property and land. After registration, its Memorandum affirmed that:

The Leader with the help of the Council shall direct the conduct of the Fellowship according to the plans that God shall reveal. It is agreed that the supreme authority is vested in the Unseen Leader, the Lord Jesus Christ, while the human leader seeks, in co-operation with the other members, to carry out the mind and will of the Divine.¹¹⁶²

Often Amy had sleepless nights thinking of the future of the Fellowship and who would lead when she left. One night she went out of bed and sat before a window:

I saw a few stars through the trees. That was all. Then, as I sat there, wave upon wave came over me. I thought of so many of our beloved D.F.s, tired and getting near the end of the day's work, and others not very strong. How could the family go on? I thought of the forces against it, some openly ill-wishers, some secretly so, and the one who would have stood like a rock through any storm and strengthened the hands of all, perhaps going from us. How could we go on? And if we could not, or did not what then? So much seemed to hang on a few. The line seemed a very thinly held line that night. And the grief and everything was just too much – till I looked again, looked up again, saw the stars. 'I am the God of the stars' – it was like a word spoken aloud in my ear.¹¹⁶³

Her fear, expressed in the above words, concerned Arulai's health. Some years before, in a special meeting in God's Garden with the Sitties and the Accals Amy had proposed to choose Arulai as future leader, and all agreed unanimously with her choice. Now Arulai was severely ill, Amy's 'most precious thing' she had on earth. In a letter to Frances Beath, who would visit Arulai in the hospital, she wrote:

[T]ell her, that after I see His Face the first face I shall want to see will be hers, and forever and forever we shall be together then. [...] Tell her that my longing to be with her.

Amy had sought – to make a transition easier – the possibility of a co-leadership, a European with an Indian. One of the Webb-Peploe brothers was her wish, but in 1947, Murray Webb-Peploe had to leave the country for family reasons. Murray's wife, Oda, had taken their twin boys to England for further education. More and more Oda felt she could not be away so long from Murray. Also Murray's mother stood behind her. To Murray she wrote: 'Years ago you sought my counsel, but those days passed, and

1161. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1162. In Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 73.

1163. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 357.

another woman [Amy] took that place, though you may not have realised it'.¹¹⁶⁴ In this matter Amy sought the will of God. In her opinion, was not Murray's commitment to the DF a commitment for life? Murray's mind at that time was not settled about the matter, until an urgent letter came from Rev. Aldis, in those days the home director of the CIM and chairman of the Keswick Convention, telling him to come back to England. Reluctantly, Amy said goodbye and Murray left Dohnavur in 1948¹¹⁶⁵:

I remember well when that anxiety was heavy on me and I felt if only you and Godfrey were here it did not matter what became of me, and I told the Lord so. He has taken me at my word. He always does I think, and I feel now as I felt then – nothing matters if I have you two beloveds for the leadership of this far-more-to-me-than-my-life Dohnavur. As I see the future, it is you Murray dear, as leader in general (Servant of all is my name for that), Godfrey with the boys and others too, and May with Arulai, Mabel and others as able with the women and children, doing what neither you or Godfrey could do. And with you Oda, mothering all, loving all, not thinking of any as outside the circle of special tender love.¹¹⁶⁶

In a letter, two days before Murray left, Amy wrote to the whole Fellowship – to all her 'warrior comrades':

A voice spoke in my soul, 'Dohnavur is built upon God'. After that, what could I do but look up to our Lord and say, 'Thou remainest', saying it not as a sigh but as a triumph song? If we appear to have suffered a defeat and Satan says, 'You see, you have had to fall back after all', our reply is, 'Then we fall back upon God'. [...] During this time of spiritual strain may He keep us from spiritual defeat. I pray that we may be led on into spiritual triumph. To help towards that, will you read words written long ago out of the midst of battle and suffering. II Corinthians 4:8–11 and 16–18 are vital to us now. Notice the while of verse 18. It is only while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen, that the things which are seen can work for us as far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And let us use this whole matter as an occasion for proving afresh the certainty of the promises, the certainty of the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Founder of this work, and its true Unseen leader.¹¹⁶⁷

An interesting paper found in the Dohnavur's office reveals Amy's views for future leadership.¹¹⁶⁸ This paper was written under a good deal of pressure:

Before so entirely changing the spirit of Dohnavur, the one who will have to carry on in the future should know India, work in other places, and study the underlying life of that work. This cannot be done in a hurry. Only if India be known will it be understood why we built up the work here on quite different foundations (from the usual) and aimed at something different from that is often counted enough. [...] Our way asks for something much more costly – travail until Christ be formed in our boys and girls – and men and women too. We ask far more than the usual of them, and this way of working asks for more of us. It is, as you know, founded on the tradition of the Indian family, into which the thought of 'pay' does not enter at all. [...] Personally, I could not carry on, on any other lines. I should lose my way. I am sure of this: once paid work begins in Dohnavur, the family love will die. It will, slowly but surely disintegrate, and the parts will never be put together again. So I earnestly say, be very sure of what you are doing before you change the Pattern.

Amy also confesses in the same paper that on board ship to India she already had her doubts as to how the CEZMS's work was run:

1164. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 158.

1165. In England he worked as a physician in Hampshire, at Barton on Sea, and died in 1982.

1166. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 134–135.

1167. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 360.

1168. Amy's notes on future leadership in 'About Changing the Pattern' in the Dohnavur library.

And felt I could not fit into that way. I watched in silence for two years, first at Bangalore, then in Tinnevely. And at last I was sure. I believe and have proved that this way of working, this which the word 'Sontham' (own) connotes, draws the best out of our Indian brothers and sisters. The other way may be the only possible way for a mission – I don't know – but we are a family. But it is costly. I have never disguised that fact. It asks for all we can give it – and sometimes it may seem as if it asked for more than we have to give – till we go to our Strength. Now the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ – the steadfastness.

Murray's much loved brother Godfrey, leader of the boys, who took the prayers and the worship in the House of Prayer, trusted and loved by all, would be an excellent leader. On the girls side Dr May Powell, for years Amy's deputy in practical matters, had earned the trust of the women workers. These two were well equipped and loved by all and this in a time when the role of foreign administrators seemed to grow anachronistically. Towards the end of 1947, two days were set apart for quiet waiting upon the Lord. Two days instead of the one day each month, but this was something extra, planned to meet a deep felt need. 'We needed light', Amy wrote.¹¹⁶⁹ Light was given and his guidance was sought intensely during this time, because everything had started to shake severely. At the end of January 1948, India was shocked by the assassination of Mahatma Ghandi at the hand of a religious fanatic. 'The sky is cloudy over India now', Amy wrote in a letter of 04 February. In that year – it was summer – another blow fell for the Fellowship. Amma slipped in her room and fell heavily. She was gravely injured. During the last two and a half years of her life, pain and weakness increased. Still, from her bed she was writing, talking and praying, while her eyes could rest on a rough carved plank, on which the words were painted, 'Good ... Acceptable ... Perfect'. In God's will she rested. For Amy, amidst all these crushing events, she held herself to the promises of God, which never fail. Arulai, the first proposed leader and whom she so dearly loved, was gone; Murray, whom she regarded as the spiritual leader of the family, had to leave; she herself, now 80 years, bedridden and physically weaker and weaker, no wonder many questions came to her thoughts. But Amy strengthened herself in her God: 'Christ our Lord is with us!' She kept the faith, also, when another blow struck the family.

The sudden death of Godfrey Webb-Peploe, the proposed successor of Amy, in February 1949, shook the whole community. Just before Christmas, Godfrey, whom she called Benediction, became seriously unwell with thrombosis of the veins in the right leg. Godfrey at that time was thinking much about the Lord's return:

I am asking the Lord to use this illness to help me pray more. For me it is but 'a day', for you it is always, and yet not always, for joy cometh in the morning, and that morning may be very near when our Beloved One will come.¹¹⁷⁰

He saw his Beloved on 19 February. Mary Mills brought Amy the news of his death with the words 'God has trusted us with a great trust. Godfrey is in heaven'. She gave Amy the keynote of her message to the family written that same evening: 'Our God trusts us to trust Him [...] Let us not disappoint God. Let us rise to this great trust'. The next day Amy took up her pencil again and wrote:

Tears are not sin. Jesus wept. But to go on lamenting would be sin. It would be as though we doubted the love of our most tender Father. To wonder why this has been allowed to happen would be to dishonour Him. I found myself doing this very thing. 'Oh, why am I left – I who am useless to you all – and he, who could do so much for you, taken?' Suddenly I knew that even to think such a thought for a moment, was sin. Thank God for the cleansing Blood. But do not let us grieve His love by wondering why. Faith never wonders why. Faith trusts [...] My children, my heart goes out to you all. Let us help one another. Let us

1169. Cf. Robbins, *Not Forgetting to Sing*, 43–45.

1170. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 362.

look up and see our Annachie rejoicing in the presence of His Lord, and with our own dear unseen family too, and be glad with him.

Referring to Murray in this same letter she went on:

They have both gone, and I am left quite broken, but content, for I know that we are safe in the Hand of the mighty and loving One to Whom this Fellowship belongs.¹¹⁷¹

However, God is a God at hand and he drew near. In the event, Amma's retirement from active leadership was compelled by the accident she had and the members of the Fellowship realised that they must come to accept the fact that their Amma had to hand over all leadership to another. Amy always prayed for workers 'with a spirit of Epaphroditus'. That spirit would be required, for the life of utmost service was not called comfortable:

Comfort, that stealthy thing that enters the house as a guest, and then becomes a host, and then a master. [...] Verily, the lust for comfort murders the passion of the soul, and then walks grinning to the funeral.¹¹⁷²

Scattered in the south Indian plain lies the DF compound, as a sanctuary far from the bustling towns, but very near to villages from which the sounds of the temples come over the walls. Here Amy focused on a cultural family structure, which one can say was more or less inspired by both her happy childhood reminiscences and the intimacy of south Indian culture.

The atmosphere is one of love and the Bible is the guiding principle. Amy's desire was that Dohnavur might be the place where the Lord himself would feel at home. Here they wanted to live in obedience to his commandments.

In all the nurseries, in the hospital, in the office and in the houses Bible texts adorn the walls and they are there as 'nuggets of gold', encouraging all who read them to be steadfast in the Lord and always to look upon him, in any need, in any joy, in whatever circumstance (Figure 23). Here the Holy Spirit brings back to remembrance a certain word of the Lord and applies it to the daily particular circumstances in which they are. For them the point is to obey God, the unseen leader. When they stand with the strength and the courage of God, the devil cannot gain one inch at all. Here they draw from Jesus the holiness, manifested in him, and he manifests it in them. The Fellowship's hope is built on nothing less than Jesus's blood and righteousness, banking in unshaken faith on the redemption of Jesus Christ and exercising themselves along the line of his Word in patience, godliness and love. Here in Dohnavur the Lord made the place of his feet glorious.

Amy went to India in 1895 as a CEZMS missionary, and after being settled in Dohnavur she always went with the children on Sundays to the Anglican church next to the Fellowship's compound. The CEZMS was responsible for her missionaries and for guidance and counsel, but since 1925 Amy had been thinking more of God to whom she could look for counsel and who was always near and who could tell her and the others what to do from hour to hour. 'It was His word which had caused the work to begin, and only He (we write reverently) knew what we should do.'

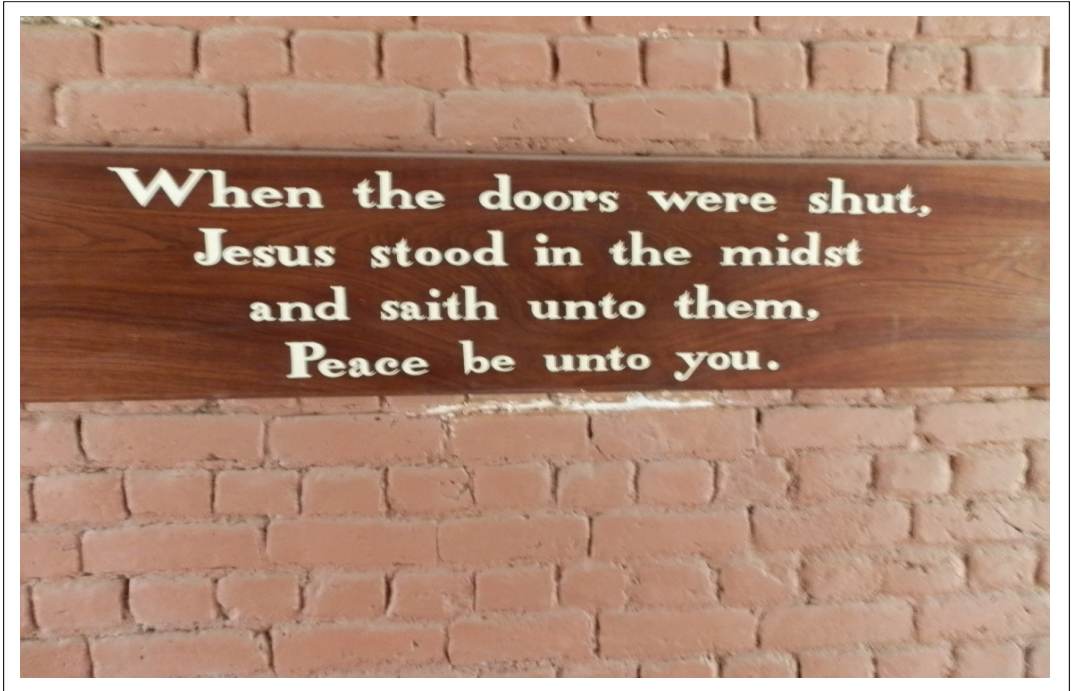
Then, too, we always had a feeling that there was more to each apparently small decision than we could understand. We dared not move in anything without a sure direction. Our friends at home were very kind.¹¹⁷³

In one of her letters home, she wrote:

1171. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 363–364.

1172. *Gold Card*, 336. Amy quotes the Lebanese poet and artist, Kahlil Gibran (1883–1931).

1173. *Gold Card*, 177.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 23: Comforting words in the house of Heavenly Healing (the hospital).

Since I last wrote, the three of us who belonged to C.E.Z. have resigned. For a long time we thought of it, but hesitated lest we should break any cord of affection. But the work had been led out of C.E.Z. paths, and it has seemed more straightforward to be called what we really are, a fellowship rather than members of a society. We have Moule's motto: 'I believe... I belong'.¹¹⁷⁴

Amy built the Dohnavur Fellowship – officially registered in 1927¹¹⁷⁵ – on the pillars of the Bible, the power of God, and the love for one another. It was registered with the vision:

To save children from moral danger and from the evil one; to train them to serve others, to succour the desolate and the suffering; to do anything that may be shown to be the will of our Heavenly Father, in order to make His love known, especially to the people of India.¹¹⁷⁶

The management of the Fellowship was entrusted to a president assisted by a committee:

The leadership will be guided by God and God alone on whom the President, the Committee and the Members shall wait in prayer. It was started as a Faith Mission and the life and experience since its inception has justified it.

Margaret Wilkinson was of the opinion that Amy resigned from the CEZMS, but was not breaking in fellowship, for she only wanted to make clear that there was no 'sending mission behind the work'.¹¹⁷⁷

1174. In Dohnavur letter no. 6, September 1925, 16 (PRONI D/4031/24/1A).

1175. The society was formed and registered on 08 August 1927 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. See the official Constitution of the Dohnavur Fellowship [Tamil Nadu-627 102].

1176. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 118.

1177. In *At BBC Corner*, 76.

Sarah Curtis sees Amy's move to separate from the CEZMS as 'her need to have control over the children's welfare',¹¹⁷⁸ and so to formalise her position as the home's first president. These events happened during the time of the departure of the Neills and their son Stephen (see further in this study).

From various sides Amy heard critical voices about the Fellowship. Usually she did not react, but once she wrote something against these critical voices. In 'The Calm Community of the Criticised' she mentioned what the Fellowship stood for. She doubted a long time whether to publish it or not,¹¹⁷⁹ but finally it was printed. Then she wrote in the margin, 'Had heard all sorts of comments on us. This came. Did not want to let it go into the book. I was over-persuaded. Rightly? Wrongly?'

The Fellowship did not break away from the Church of the diocese, but it was a gradual loosening of the outward links. When, for instance the House of Prayer was dedicated; the Bishop of Tinnevelly, Dr Tubbs, was officially invited and he did the dedication.¹¹⁸⁰ Later on she would write:

When the local Bishop has been a friend whose coming we felt would help towards the spiritual life of our company, we have asked him to come to us from time to time.

Someone else, not officially ordained, but fearing the Lord, could do the work. Amy, who was a companion to all that fear the Lord, and of them who kept his precepts, did not turn away someone who had received only 'the Ordination of the Pierced Hands'.¹¹⁸¹

Dohnavur was far away from the headquarters of the CEZMS in London, so communications were not always easy. The CEZMS board could ask questions she could not answer, such as, 'How much did they plan to expand? What financial liabilities would they incur?' As the Fellowship looked for God to give them guidance and to provide the means, Amy was more and more convinced that for counsel, there was one who was near enough to tell them what to do from day to day. Contacts with the CEZMS remained good – 'sometimes they inquired through their Secretary' – but from then on, the Lord was seen as their unseen leader. This did not mean that the leadership was something wrapped in vagueness, but it remained practical and open in all its doings:

So we went on looking to Him to tell us clearly what we were to do. I do not mean by that anything mystical, but something as practical as possible. We do not live in the clouds – we have never lived there: our way is in the dust of the ordinary road. But it is not presumption to count upon a promise being fulfilled.¹¹⁸²

The Fellowship continued fully independent from any Church denomination. Connections with the Anglican Church until now had always been good, but as it was noted in the legal document that 'our Unseen Leader' was in charge.¹¹⁸³ CMS property, part of the compound and the house, was given to the Fellowship. 'This house in Dohnavur is ours now, given to us by the CMS with brotherly words which added to the pleasure of the gift.'¹¹⁸⁴

1178. In *Amy Carmichael's Aesthetic Legacy*, 10.

1179. See *Made in the Pans*, 37.

1180. The author personally witnessed in 2013 in Dohnavur that the local pastor was invited to preach in the House of Prayer.

1181. Cf. the words of the Keswick speaker F.W.H. Meyers in his *St. Paul*.

1182. *Gold Cord*, 177.

1183. *Gold Cord*, 331. 'In the document the Lord our Saviour, the Leader of the Fellowship, is clearly mentioned. For example, there is this sentence, "It is agreed that the real Authority is vested in the Unseen Leader, Christ, while the human leader seeks in co-operation with the other members, to carry out the mind and the will of the Divine" [in *Meal in a Barrel*, 108].

1184. *Meal in a Barrel*, 107.

The Fellowship was not a ‘mission’ or a kind of ‘faith mission’, but they continued – just a family, a fellowship, ‘free to fill any gaps we can’.¹¹⁸⁵ Convinced of the urgency of the Great Commission, Amy adopted the faith principle for the operation of the Fellowship. The evangelistic work around Dohnavur continued, but ‘our first business all along has been true to our trust towards the children for whose salvation we were called into being’.¹¹⁸⁶ Amy saw in the institutions in Friedenshort (Germany) a kind of example along which line she wanted to operate.¹¹⁸⁷

■ Sisters of the Common Life

Across the will of nature
Leads on the path of God
Not where the flesh delighteth
The feet of Jesus trod.

This song of the German mystic Gerhard Tersteegen was the leading song of the Sisters of the Common Life.¹¹⁸⁸ For this reason Carla Brewington sees the DF as a ‘friaristic model’.¹¹⁸⁹ A place separated, a dispersed order; a community of believers who take vows and who are bonded together. Amy knew very well the work of the Dutch mystic Geert Grote and the French abbess Madame de Guyon, people who favoured the searching of their own hearts and who formed fellowships practising this kind of life. Quaker communities in Cumbria’s Lake District sympathised with their thoughts and Amy had something like this in mind with the DF. ‘We had at that time seven Indian girls who were seeking to live a life of unreserved devotion, a life without fences.’

Something was required to unite and fortify them. Jonathan, Saul’s son, arose and went to David in the wood and strengthened his hands in God. We needed to meet one another in Jonathan’s wood.¹¹⁹⁰ We did meet there; we shaped ourselves into a group, and called ourselves Sisters of the Common Life.¹¹⁹¹

Amy says that this name came from the Brotherhood of Common Life, founded by Geert Grote, of Holland.¹¹⁹² Her intention was that in Dohnavur they would live and work in the same way as the Brotherhood of Geert Grote and rub out the distinction between sacred and secular:

Our thought in taking the name was that the line so often drawn between spiritual and secular has no place with us if we follow him who not only withdrew to the mountain, but also went about doing good.¹¹⁹³

1185. *Gold Card*, 331.

1186. *Gold Card*, 331.

1187. The Friedenshort Institution was started in 1890 by Eva von Tiele-Winckler (1866–1930) in Miechowitz/Oberschlesien as a place of Christian welfare for those in need. Christian lifestyle as well as practical skills went here hand in hand. ‘Mother Eva’, as she was called, made a home for homeless children.

1188. See full details in Chapter 11.

1189. In *The Sacred Place of Exile*, 104–106.

1190. C. Brewington, *The Sacred Place of Exile. Pioneering Women and the Need for a New Women’s Missionary Movement* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 105.

1191. *Gold Card*, 158.

1192. *Gold Card*, 158–159: ‘The Brothers worked with their hands and gave themselves to the training of “such as sought, apart from the evil about them, a pure and godly life.” Communion with God and laborious work filled their days. They lived the common life, but they lived it with God for common men.’

1193. *Gold Card*, 159.

The Sisters had to learn how to take a towel, like Jesus did¹¹⁹⁴ and also according to a translation of 1 Peter 5:5, 'Put on the apron of humility to serve one another'. Every Saturday the Sisters of the Common Life used to meet.

These women knew the cost of exile, even in their own country. Most of them had been rescued from sexual and physical abuse, some were abandoned by their families and left to die. The women chose to live together and devote their life to him who loved them. The meetings of the Sisters of the Common Life were mainly in English and usually they met on Saturday mornings. They read the Bible and Bunyan *Pilgrim's Progress* in Tamil. Other books they read were written by Rolle, Suso, Tersteegen, Thomas à Kempis, Samuel Rutherford, Père Didon and contemporaries like Bishop Moule and Josephine Butler.¹¹⁹⁵ All these authors 'offered just what these women began to want', and they gave 'the still dews in the century of turmoil', 'brave and burning souls of every age, these had left torches'.¹¹⁹⁶ A small booklet for the Sisters of the Common Life has several poems and words from the Bible and well-known authors, like Bishop Creighton, Reimund Lullius, Thomas à Kempis, Père Didon, T.T. Lynch, and others. They liked to quote Père Didon: 'This sacred work demands not lukewarm selfish slack souls, but hearts more finely tempered than steel, wills purer and harder than a diamond'. Also some of Andrew Murray's books were read and one of these books was translated by the Fellowship into Tamil.¹¹⁹⁷ Amy quotes Lilius Trotter (from her private diary) as to the kind of people that God gives power:

So many questions lie ahead concerning the work, and a great comforting came this morning in the chapter of Job (Job 28) about 'the way' of wisdom and 'the place thereof' (verse 23). It tells how God finds the way for the wind and the water and the lightning, and it came with a blessed power what those ways are. The way for the wind is the region of the greatest emptiness, the way for the water is to the place of the lowest depth, the way for the lightning, as science proves, is along the line of the greatest weakness.¹¹⁹⁸

These Indian Sisters meant a lot to Amy and to the Fellowship because they knew how to deal with many different characters. 'Nothing but the love of God can control and fuse into a happy unity such diversity as this'.¹¹⁹⁹ From the very first the first words for the Fellowship were, 'the Cross is the attraction'.¹²⁰⁰ The sisters could always be asked to do a task from which the flesh would shrink. Since the first meeting of the Sisters of the Common Life, on 18 March 1916, until Amy wrote *Gold Cord* in 1932, between 20 and 30 girls signed the following confession of love and agreed with the following declaration:

My Vow. Whatsoever Thou sayest unto me, by Thy grace I will do it.

My Constraint. Thy love, O Christ, my Lord.

1194. See John 13:4.

1195. Josephine Butler (1828–1906): a Victorian era religious evangelical Anglican, well-known as a social reformer who was especially concerned with the welfare of prostitutes.

1196. *Gold Cord*, 161.

1197. A. Murray, *Humility. The Beauty of Holiness*, translated into Tamil in 1936 by the DF. Other translations in the Dohnavur 'Fullness of Life' booklet series, are *The Winning of Souls* and *A Pure Heart*.

1198. *Gold Cord*, 92.

1199. *Gold Cord*, 160. Amy also quotes Père Didon to underline what was to be expected from the Sisters of the Common Life: 'This sacred work demands, not lukewarm, selfish, slack souls, but hearts more finely tempered than steel, wills purer and harder than the diamond' [*Gold Cord*, 161].

1200. *Gold Cord*, 161. 'For "the symbol of the Christian Church is not a burning bush nor a dove, nor an open book, nor an halo round a submissive head, nor a crown of splendid honour. It is a Cross"'. Amy here quotes C.M. Clow's expression [see *Gold Cord*, 161].

My Confidence. Thou art able to keep that which I have committed unto Thee.

My Joy. To do Thy will, O God.

My Discipline. That which I would not choose, but which Thy love appoints.

My Prayer. Conform my will to Thine.

My Motto. Love to live: live to love.

My Portion. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance.

Teach us, good Lord, to serve Thee more faithfully; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labour and not ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do Thy will, o Lord our God.¹²⁰¹

The girls were free to marry, and some did. Some lived out in the villages, but the greater number of those who had not married stayed in Dohnavur, serving in various parts of the work, as comrades and companions in the Fellowship. To be a Sister of the Common Life was for Amy to have a life of joy, but they knew it was soldier's life:

The nearer the soldier is to the Captain the more he will be attacked by the enemy. [...] To belong to the Sisters of the Common Life will certainly bring the devil's fire upon us. [...] As Sisters of the Common Life we are trusted to be very careful about our inner discipline, and continually expose every part of our inward life to the searching light of God. [...] We are trusted to spread the spirit of love. Tenderness in judgement, the habit of thinking the best of one another, unwillingness to believe evil, grief if we are forced to do so, eagerness to believe good, joy over one recovered from any slip or fall, unselfish gladness in another's joys, sorrow in another's sorrow, readiness to do anything to help another entirely irrespective of self – all this and much more is included in that wonderful word love. [...] Not one of us liveth to herself. We owe it to the younger ones to teach them the truth that united prayer is impossible, unless there be loyal love. If unlove be discovered anywhere, stop everything and put it right, if possible at once.¹²⁰²

It is often said that Amy opposed marriage for the Sisters of the Common Life. On the contrary, she could enjoy the happiness of a married couple, but the Lord had shown her: 'I have something greater for you to do'. Then she goes on:

This life is not greater than the other, but it is different. That is all. For some our Father chooses one, for some He chooses the other, all that matters is that we should be obedient unto all meeting His wishes.¹²⁰³

Since 1927, the Dohnavur children and the staff have worshipped in their own church, the House of Prayer, in the middle of the compound. Church attendance at the Anglican church in Dohnavur was so high at that time that there was hardly any space for the DF children, so the separation also had a practical side.

One wonders why Amy took this step. The trend in those days was to amalgamate institutions like Dohnavur with their denominational societies. This happened with women's societies in England and America, but the final outcome was that women running societies and institutions declined drastically. The end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th centuries had proved that women could perfectly do this work. 'They had carved out their own niche and their structures had been more collegiate than the men's.'¹²⁰⁴ For Amy the wide network of the CEZMS disappeared, but there was still so much prayer support from that church and many other Christians all over the world. They, too,

1201. *Gold Card*, 161–162.

1202. Amy, in a little manuscript prepared for the Sisters, in the DF office. In the 1950s there were three groups of Sisters of the Common Life in Dohnavur: a group that used the English language, a senior and a junior Tamil group.

1203. In a printed document written by Amy, 'Taken Out Of The Autobiography' (in the Dohnavur library).

1204. Griffiths, *Not Less Than Everything*, 337–338.

never failed to support the DF and never did the Dohnavur children and staff go to bed without any food. The Lord cared. The 'freedom' Amy had after 1926 gave her the opportunity to run the Fellowship on the primacy of the Bible, evangelism, service and child welfare. Amy's executive and managerial skills can still be seen in all the buildings, nurseries, the church and the hospital on a compound that expanded nearly every year; one wonders what it all must have been like in Amy's time when everything was in full operation. It all developed from the vision of that once physically frail missionary, medically unfit to go to the mission field, but the Lord decided differently. It was he who used Amy as his instrument and led her all those 56 years. With small provisions in a small place, she gained the highest.

The Fellowship did not have a board or committee in England to direct them. Asked, 'Have you no one anywhere responsible for you?', she replied:

The leaders and those most able to give counsel frequently about the affairs of the Fellowship. When a decision has to be made which concerns all, as many as possible meet to ask for guidance for those who must take action. Those on whom the responsibility lies meet for prayer, and light is given. We have no one on earth who is responsible for us; but we have our Father in heaven.]

It is written that He knows what things we have need of before we ask Him. But we work in closest co-operation with our Home Secretary in London, and our Travelling Secretary in Australia. And our father has given us others who act as Secretaries in various countries and who for love of Him, gather any who care for us to meet in prayer for the work. They send out to us any gifts which are given to them, circulate D.F. letters and sell D.F. books.¹²⁰⁵

Amy was very realistic and did not want those who were to be the leaders of the Fellowship after she passed away to look back over her decisions:

[A]nd wonder what I would have done. Look up, and light will come to do what our Lord and Master would have you do. It may be that decisions which seem to change the character of the work will have to be made. But if the root principles which have governed us from the beginning are held fast, there will be no real change. The river may flow in a new channel, but it will be the same river. If you hold fast to the resolve that in all things Christ as Lord shall have the pre-eminence, if you keep His will, His glory, and His pleasure high above everything, and if you continue in His love, loving one another as He has loved you, then all will be well, eternally well.¹²⁰⁶

Never were the Dohnavur premises guarded by guards. They knew of 'the Wall of Fire' around them.¹²⁰⁷ The sisters Evangeline and Francesca French, with Mildred Cable, visited Dohnavur in 1928 where they gained the impression that they were in 'a garden of Paradise where exquisite children play with joyous *abandon*, sheltered from the gross of the evil world; but on the footing of comradeship in spiritual campaigns'. After having met the women in their flowing saris, they thought that they were:

[T]aken out of this century of vulgar exaggeration into the quiet austerities of an earlier age. We were housed in a red-tiled bungalow with shady veranda resting on granite slabs. Masses of gorgeous flowers lit up the quiet room, and during the days we spent there our whole beings seemed steeped in the sense of peace and beauty.¹²⁰⁸

1205. *The Starry Cluster*, 12. 'We do not have committees at Dohnavur' [...] 'And still we waited. When at last we rose from our knees we all knew we had received the thing that we had desired of the Lord, even clear guidance'. In *Nor Scrip*, 72.

1206. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 258–259.

1207. *Lotus Buds*, 236.

1208. In E. French, M. Cable & F. French, *A Desert Journal. Letters from Central Asia* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1949), 23–24.

Still one aspect of the leadership has to be tackled. Some have argued that Amy acted like a dictator in Dohnavur, that she opposed marriage and did not want to hear any critical voice.¹²⁰⁹ True she had a stern Irish character and strong convictions and was not married herself – there was no partner to correct her – but, to say she was a ‘hard taskmaster’ for the Dohnavur people is too harsh. Today the very old Indian women in Dohnavur who can remember her speak with great love about Amma.¹²¹⁰ Only once did an Indian co-worker openly oppose her and she herself chose to go away, while Amy still loved her and felt very sorry that she had gone away. The DF had little or no contact with other mission organisations. The outside world was kept out to prevent contamination. For Amy many missionaries were half-hearted. Her experience with some made her say that all were like that. Sometimes she was too forthright in her opinions, which others did not like. Ruth Tucker says ‘she was more often ignored than opposed by other missionaries’.¹²¹¹ About the stormy relationship between Amy and the Neill family, new details can be read in Daugherty’s *Bishop Stephen Neill*.¹²¹² She had a strong character and her Irish background, being a ‘Dalziel’, meant she must have been one who could hardly deal with someone next to her. Like C.T. Studd, who withdrew from the CIM and started his own mission in the heart of Africa. Studd and Hudson Taylor, both strong independent characters, could not easily go through one door. Often God’s servants live on a lonely height, which gives them many inward struggles difficult to understand for those living near to them.

Amy’s conviction was that she was called by God and divinely directed to this work. In her decision-making, she asked from all members of the Fellowship obedience as she herself saw it as her highest calling to be obedient to God and his Word. Obedience was her secret of being conscious that God was guiding her personally; therefore, she often did not discuss the decisions that were taken. This, however, could give others the impression that she did everything on her own without consulting them. God is the unseen leader of the DF, the greatest testimony to Amy’s leadership capacities is the fact that the DF survived both the ending of British rule in India and her own death in 1951. Continuity of the Fellowship was ensured by adapting both the ethos and the work of Dohnavur to the modern India in the first decades of the 21st century.

1209. Cf. Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 198, 201.

1210. See R.A. Tucker, ‘Amy Carmichael’, in *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 301. She herself did not go on furlough, but when others needed rest she arranged for them a retreat in the mountains, in Cape Comorin, or, as for Murray and Oda, a longer rest period in Australia.

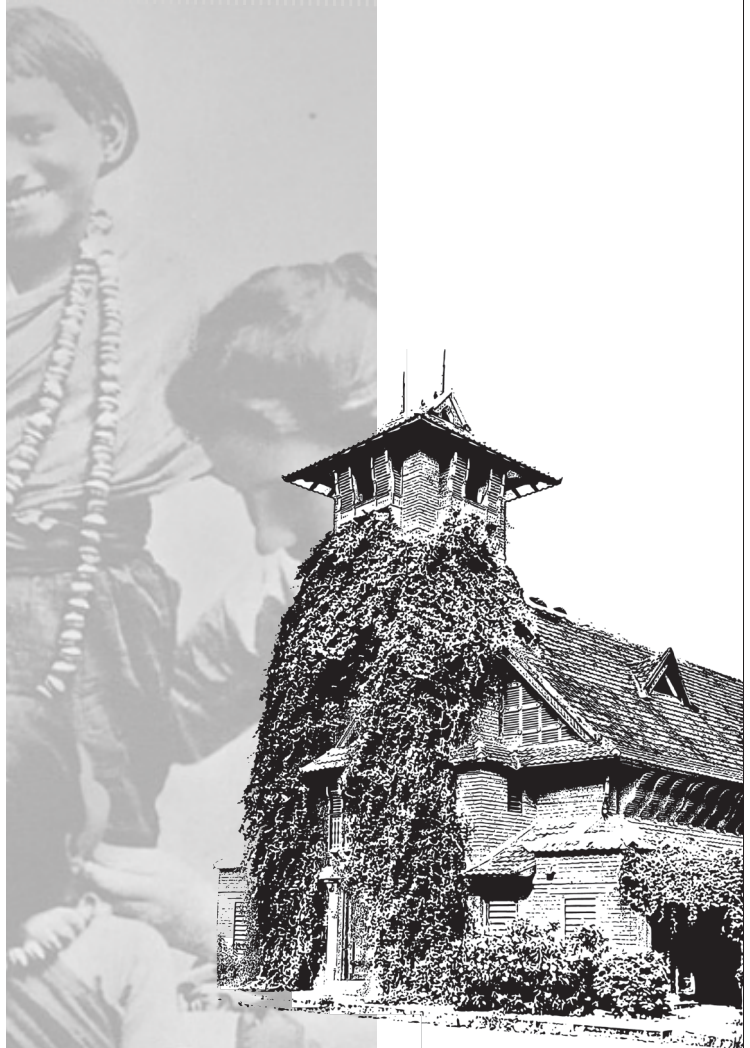
1211. In ‘Amy Carmichael’, in *Daughters of the Church* 302.

1212. See also Chapter 13 in this book.

'But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise'.

Isaiah 60:18 (KJV).

Above the moon gate of the DF compound, one reads as one enters *Salvation* in Tamil and Praise as one leaves.



The sanctuary in the desert

Abounding love

God sows his servants often in useless places according to the judgement of the world. Why send Amy to this desert-like place far down in the south of India? There, where he had placed her, she would glorify God, and we are not at all to judge where that is. In his sovereignty, he sacrifices his servants as he likes and they go where he sends them. Amy understood that God wanted her in Dohnavur. In the words of Oswald Chambers:

Our Lord in one of His parables reveals that God sows His saints in the places that are most useless according to the judgment of the world; He puts them where He likes. Where God is being glorified is where He puts His saints, and we are no judges of where that is.¹²¹³

Dohnavur, this desolate terrain, far from cities, this barren place, was a kind of place of exile. Amy resembled her very distant ancestors, who went into the desert to start their communities. In retrospect, we can say it has to do with her making the Cross of Christ paramount. In following Jesus, she followed the one, who went ‘outside the camp’,¹²¹⁴ carrying his cross. The scandal of the cross became the hallmark of the early Christians.¹²¹⁵ In Dohnavur the association with the desert fathers and mothers is not far away. They chose their places in the desert because its values matched their own. In the Bible, the desert is the place where people often met God and often God sent his people into the desert to meet him there. Since Christ suffered (cf. 1 Pt 2:21), he left us an example. To live in the midst of an isolated place, indicates one is open to hear God’s voice and is prepared to do his will. Here in the ‘desert’, and led ‘outside the gate’ the Lord met and talked with Amy:

Jesus died outside the gate, and in so doing changed the place of salvation and clarified the meaning of mission, No longer can I see God’s grace as an individual benefit, a privileged possession or a religious whitewash that

1213. In ‘So I Send You’, in *The Complete Works*, 1325.

1214. Cf. Hebrews 13:12–14.

1215. Carla Brewington brought me to the idea of Dohnavur as a ‘place of exile’. Cf. Brewington, *The Sacred Place of Exile*, chapter 4, p. 34.

enables me to feel good and continue to live the old way because my bad conscience has been soothed and my guilty feelings washed away. On the contrary, because salvation is saved by grace in Him is to experience transformation that makes me a 'debtor' to the world (Rom 1:14) and calls me forth to share in His suffering by serving, especially the lowest representatives: the poor and the oppressed.¹²¹⁶

It is interesting that ages before, in the time of the early church, there were women who chose to live in the desert:

We are discovering, often through painstaking, detailed examination of primary texts [...] that women played an essential role in the early years of Christian faith. [...] They were seeking to live out the faith in Christ crucified, resurrected, and living in ways that were authentic and true to the gospel. They were spiritual guides. They were teachers. They were leaders of their monastic communities. And some of them, as Christianity became an official religion of the Roman Empire, became what are known as the 'desert mothers' or 'ammas'.¹²¹⁷

She, as the outsider, initiated a change and, with some other women, came to a commitment and strategy because they believed that a great need had to be met and this banded them together. This grew into the DF as it gained momentum. They embraced the call, misunderstood by many, but they believed they were strongly called for this by God. The hour had come for the rescue of many children in danger and it required action. Led by the Holy Spirit they never regretted having to stand in the gap, ready to be used by God to start this history of love, saving, healing and giving a future to those who would have otherwise ended in a life of shame and ultimately of death. Christ's love gave them love for others to serve focussing on Him who went before. Dohnavur was for them a safe haven where they dwelt with those who were misused in name of the religion around them. It was here they sought the union with God and found his very presence.¹²¹⁸ In Amy's life exile played an important role; even though she did not use the word exile, the idea was there. Amy too was called *Amma*, a Tamil word meaning mother.

The reason for the desert fathers and mothers in the first centuries of Christianity to go 'outside the gate' had to do with the fact, especially after 321 when the church became controlled by state and culture, that it would be forfeiting its prophetic role; the church had become domesticated, tamed and controlled. Hunger for holiness amid a culture of compromise drove women and men into the desert. The desert women and men chose to go into the wilderness and live there with other like-minded women and men or else live solitary lives in the desert. There they lived their pious lives and often became mentors for others. In Amy's DF, history repeated itself; although the Fellowship was not a replica, it looked like a monastic-missionary community. Here a movement grew energised by the love and mercy of God and here Amy became part of women's public missiological agenda. Any work for God that had less than a passion for Jesus Christ as its motive would end in crushing heartbreak and discouragement.

'I am here on business for my King', Amy wrote on 30 August 1917.¹²¹⁹ The first purpose she saw for herself was evangelistic. There, where the Lord had placed her, she had to work out the sanctified life. Missionary enterprise on the line of education, healing and social amelioration was magnificent, but secondary for Amy. She never gave it priority. 'The missionary must be a sacramental personality, one through whom the presence of God comes to others.'¹²²⁰ There was joy in just obeying:

1216. O.E. Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate*, 194 [quoted in Brewington, *The Sacred Place of Exile*, 37].

1217. M.C. Earle, *The Desert Mothers: Spiritual Practices from the Women of the Wilderness* (New York: Moorehouse Publishing, 2007), 1–2 [in Brewington, *The Sacred Place of Exile*, 46–47].

1218. Cf. Hosea 3:14. Here the desert is a place of repentance, restoration and of intimacy.

1219. Words written by Amy on the inside of the cover page of Fullerton, *At the Sixtieth Milestone*.

1220. In 'So I Send You', in Chambers, *The Complete Works*, 1335.

He said 'Go, tell', and we had come and were telling, and we meet Him as we 'go and tell'. [...] Our aim is great – It is *India for Christ!* Before the gods in possessions here, we sing songs unto Him.¹²²¹

What began with a few children, the DF would grow during Amy's life up to 900:

A work was beginning which in the purpose of our God was to grow beyond our thoughts for it, and during those first years, we were feeling our way back through innumerable obstacles to the simplicity of New Testament Christianity, to an ideal which has for its very special central word, Sacrifice.¹²²²

What made Dr Barnhouse say in 1938, that Dohnavur was 'perhaps the most beautiful mission station in the whole world'?¹²²³ If you asked Amy, her answer was short. The overall motto of the DF was – and still is – love. The Bible portion for family prayers every Monday morning was 1 Corinthians 13 – Paul's ode to love, which ends, 'Love never faileth':

From the beginning we have had one chief word: Love Never Faileth'.¹²²⁴

'What called you together? Love; Divine Love.

What holds you together? That same Love.

What will hold you in the future? Again and only, that Love.

What is most attacked in your Fellowship life?

Love and the kind of prayer that means traffic with Heaven hindered access to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ.¹²²⁵

Atharavu, one of the girls who from a baby was brought up in Dohnavur, writes: 'Dohnavur was the place where the love of God was showered upon me'.¹²²⁶ Amy called love 'our tap-root which is vital to our Fellowship life'.¹²²⁷ Love required in her eyes resolution and the Biblical appeal to 'love one another as I have loved you' is the fundamental Fellowship principle. Amy knew that believing this was one thing, but to live it out was different. To illustrate what could happen when missionaries lived together, she had a small poem:

To dwell above, with saints in love, is full of grace and glory.

To dwell below, with saints we know – Ah, what a different story!¹²²⁸

Workers who were wholly the Lord's did the work. Because it was work whose needs were supplied by the Lord himself, it was necessary that all were aware that the work, even the hidden work of management, was open to the eye of God. What was achieved was an answer to prayers based upon the Word of God, 'upon which He has caused us to hope'. 'This was the pattern which was shown us in the Mount; Lord grant us grace to remember it and follow it.'¹²²⁹

Amy's life's work, known to us as the DF, is based in a small village on the plain east of the Cardamom Hills, some 30 miles from the southernmost tip of India. Entering the premises of Dohnavur through the moon gate there is an eruption of a sense of sincere surprise. Going through the stone moon gate (Figure 24)

1221. In *Things As They Are*, 24.

1222. *From the Forest*, 72.

1223. See Dr Barnhouse's message at the 1938 Keswick Convention (in Stevenson, 'The Day-By-Day Christian Life', in *Keswick's Authentic Voice*, 380).

1224. *The Starry Cluster*, 19.

1225. *The Starry Cluster*, 21.

1226. In *A Century of Answered Prayers*, 18.

1227. *Roots*, 3.

1228. In *Roots*, 2.

1229. *Roots*, 3.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 24: The cross at the end of the 200 foot long Path of Quietness.

there is the experience that Dohnavur is a place where you can touch heaven from your feet. Going through the gate, we read in Tamil characters the word *Salvation* written up high without, and on the other side *Praise* within.¹²³⁰ The whole setup of the compound where Amy and the children lived is 'Indian in feeling':

Most of the buildings have the deep-eaved Travancorian roofs, and some have the curly corners that the Chinese carpenters brought to the west coast of India, and all, even the moon-arches are pure China, find themselves at home with one another: and, like our composite family, drawn from a score of different races, communities, and castes, are very comfortable together'.¹²³¹

All the buildings were built in Indian style and the children are housed in 'family' units. Each house takes care of eight to ten children with a 'mother' living with them and supervising them. The girls and the boys sections are separated by some distance. Part of the boys ministry is nowadays used for other purposes. Here hundreds of children during the past 100 years have found love, care, education and, as was the first aim, Christ. 'The story of the children is the story of answered prayer.'¹²³² Dohnavur, the place where children could 'blossom', but also literally a desert area that was transformed into a real garden with an abundance of flowering trees and plants. Amy loved nature and always had an open eye for God's wondrous world. We thank God that she never lost the intense joy in life and beauty, or ceased to stop and recognise it.¹²³³ One can ask, 'Why are they here in Dohnavur?' Let Amy herself give us the answer:

1230. *Nor Scrip*, 1.

1231. *Windows*, 105–106.

1232. *Lotus Buds*, 91.

1233. Even in 2013 during a visit to Dohnavur I saw that on 09 November, Amy's coming to India was remembered and all over the place there were flowers, in the church as well as on the tables in the houses.

To please our Lord in everything.
 To lead as many as we can to Him.
 To prove by our peaceful life together that it is possible truly to be one in Him.
 To prepare to be a company of people who will be ready to welcome our Lord, and serve during the Thousand Years – and afterwards.¹²³⁴

She was so eager to save the lives of young girls and boys that she did everything to make it known what was happening in the temples. ‘You cannot photograph the child’s soul that is being slowly murdered. You cannot even describe it in words. They would burn the paper if you tried.’¹²³⁵ This is what Godfrey Webb-Peploe experienced and saw:

A big happy family of boys and girls, saved, for the most part in infancy, from a peril far greater than any danger that can happen to the body. It is God’s family, Indian and European, living as brothers and sisters, and it works out in harmony, for India understands such relationships. Out of the family we are training a fighting force in the greatest of all wars, under the Captain who goes forth conquering and to conquer’.¹²³⁶

The Fellowship lives in an area of about 400 acres with a hospital, 16 nurseries and other compounds. The Dohnavur nurseries are quite different from other places. They live in small communities more like a large family. The whole residential area is built as small cottages (nurseries). Each cottage has a mother, elder sisters and younger ones and together they live like a family. Each cottage gets its own share of food, clothes and other provisions. The mother shares it and takes care of all the needs of her children. Amy brought in this concept of a family living together.

As the Fellowship grew many called it Utopian. Never could they continue and be one family and all of one mind, people said. But, would God make an impossible pattern? All was in God’s hands and the objections of many people were met with a smile; but behind the smile was a prayer: ‘not Utopia the place that is not, but Eutopia, the Happy Place – make us that at all costs, keep us that, O Lord’.¹²³⁷ Amy was well aware that within a community such as the DF a terrible strain was placed upon the loyalty of its members. In the margin of Temple’s commentary, she wrote about this issue:

Just as in a community. This failure of one tests the loyalty of all. Thanks God when there is not a scattering – but that is what the devil is out to effect. (Proved 1928 and 1937 and though in another way in 1946–7).¹²³⁸

For Amy this pattern was God’s and the responsibility was his. It was pioneering work but God’s pioneers were preparing the way for the coming of the Lord of hosts. In the Fellowship there were times of silent retreat:

The early morning hour of each day is kept sacred for quiet alone with Him. Other times during the months are set aside for quiet. And once a year there is an opportunity for each one who values it, to be alone with Him whom His soul loveth in the silence of the Forest. But we also believe that continual communication is possible. Do you mean that you are always thinking about God? No; for a Christian must often give his whole mind to his work, but deep within him is, as it were, a secret call, where the Spirit dwells. And though hands and feet and brain may be busy, the spirit may be upon its knees in adoration, unceasing and undisturbed.

1234. In *Whispers of His Power*, 18 December, 265.

1235. *Nor Scrip*, 105.

1236. In Webb-Peploe, *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, 14. In 1929, the Fellowship consisted of nearly 700 persons. See *Windows*, 3.

1237. *Windows*, 12.

1238. In W. Temple, *Readings in St. John’s Gospel* (London: Macmillan, 1940), 215.

Do you mean that though you are not always consciously loving and worshipping, yet you are always in love with your Lord? Yes, that is just what we mean. A mother is not always consciously loving her child, but she is always in love with her child. Never for a moment is she out of love. Where the Holy God is the beloved One, love and worship mingle and rise like incense in the quiet air.¹²³⁹

Amy was a Bible student. She used various translations and commentaries to get a good overview of what was really written in the Bible. She valued Westcott's notes on the New Testament and in one of these notes – on John 17:22, 'That they may be one, even as we are one' – she saw the way the DF had to live as a unity to the end:

There is so to speak, an interchange of the energy of the divine Life (Thou in me, and I in Thee), which finds a counterpart in the harmonious relations of the members of the Church. The true unity of believers, like the Unity of persons in the Holy Trinity with which it is compared, is offered as something far more than a mere moral unity of purpose, feeling, affection; it is, in some mysterious mode which we cannot distinctly apprehend, a vital unity (Rom 12:5; Eph 4:4). In this sense it is the symbol of a higher type of life, in which each constituent being is a conscious element in the being of a vast whole. In 'the life', and in the 'life only', each individual life is able to attain to its perfection. Such a conception, however imperfectly it may be grasped, meets many of the difficulties which beset the conception of an abiding continuance of our present individual separation.¹²⁴⁰

Amy's note on these words is, 'This is what we trust Him to cause the Dohnavur Fellowship to be to the end'.

Amy believed the Lord had linked them in a 'vital unity'. She could talk and rejoice in the reality of having 'such loyal comrades' or 'crystal quality of loyalty'. From where did the DF's pattern come? The Fellowship had a Biblical foundation, but Amy was also familiar with some English and French mystics, even with some from the Middle Ages. Here she discovered that in her shaping of the Fellowship, she was walking along a path already well-trodden by others. In her readings she was confirmed by the experience of holy women and men of former ages of the pattern she saw before her. Even a near contemporary like Père Didon influenced her with his spiritual letters.¹²⁴¹ The Lord himself was the unseen leader of the Fellowship, and all the orders had to come from him. So first Amy and the others listened to his Word, sought his guidance and they got the assurance to receive according to his will. Young Samuel's word was theirs: 'Speak Lord, for Thy servant heareth'.¹²⁴² This method of prayer, and this assurance that she might expect the Spirit to teach them what to pray for, had become axiomatic for the Fellowship.¹²⁴³ Everything that they did, built or decided, all was according to God's will and because the DF was his work, ultimately he would take care of his work for the children there in Dohnavur. Nobody received a salary and all needs were met in answer to prayer.

Until the end of her life, Amy was the undisputed leader of the Fellowship. However, she was a leader who leaned on the love of the others and on their loyalty. Amy had a nice gift, namely to develop

1239. In *The Starry Cluster*, 16.

1240. Westcott on John 17:22.

1241. Amy had a copy of H.D. Nash, *The Spiritual Letters of Père Didon* (London: Kegan, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd, 1906).

1242. 1 Samuel 3:10.

1243. Years later Amy read in the works of Lady Julian of Norwich: 'I am the ground of Thy beseeching: first it is My will that thou have it; and after, I make thee to will it; and after, I make thee to beseech it and thou beseechest it. How should it then be that thou shouldst not have thy beseeching' – in Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*, ed. G. Warrack (London: Methuen, 1949).

the gifts of others, and it was not difficult for her to give others the credit for what had been done. She continued her work, to the dismay of the Hindu priests. They often, especially in the initial years of the Fellowship, pressed charges against her.

During our visit in 2013, we found the house Amy lived in still in good repair. It is typical of the colonial-day housing. With its large, open doors and windows, it is very comfortable. The main central room is the dining room. It was here Amy had her meals until she was bed-bound by her injury in 1931. Off the dining room was her private bedroom, very spacious as well. The walls are nearly all lined with shelves, and I was astonished and wondered at the wealth of the fabulous missionary library. There are several smaller rooms (Figure 25) off this bedroom.

One room with a table was her study; her Bible was still open on the desk (Figure 26). The staff members could wheel her bed to the veranda, so she could greet, meet and speak with the children and the other women who lived in the houses surrounding the bungalow. Surrounding Amy's house were and are lovely gardens. As she was fond of birds, she had a number of birdbaths and feeders in the garden.

India was familiar with missionary workers. Usually they were paid agents of mission societies. It was observed that the question of the amount of their pay was of far more interest to their listeners than their message. There was also the wandering *sunnyasi* fed by the faithful, who revered their holiness, or feared their wickedness. Amy writes in *Gold Cord*:

India needs another type, at present all too rare and we want try it to show it to her – men and women trained to a glad readiness for all manner of service, with their hearts set, not upon pay, but upon pleasing God, and able, as was St. Paul, to support themselves by service of work other than that called religious.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 25: Inside Amy's living room in the bungalow on the northern side.



Source: © Dohnavur Fellowship. Permission to reproduce was obtained from Jeremiah Rajanesan. Photographer unknown.

FIGURE 26: Amy at her writing desk.

Such a life did not attract great crowds of willing workers. To have ‘faith in God’ those will experience ‘they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing’. In Dohnavur they have seen it:

To work on these lines is no impossible ideal, as the joyful devotion of many of our Indian comrades constantly reminds us. [...] The girls and the boys are His, and we are His, and out of us all, united in a joyous harmony, we want it to be possible for God to form something for His glory; that here among all castes, both high and low (as India counts caste), in spite of the presence of a most triumphant Hinduism, He may draw unto Himself jewels for His crown. [...] The workers had a willingness to do anything joyfully, which we wanted our boys to acquire, so we had to start in ourselves to show the way.

In all those Dohnavur years, Amy abided with all the Father’s children under the shadow of his wings. The Lord had proved that the darker the day the more illuminating were his words of delight:

You say that you stand for the hallowing of the common things; for what else do you stand?

- (1) For Pre-eminence of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things.
- (2) For obedience to His lightest known wish – ‘a wish is a command to one who loves’.
[Here Amy put in the margin Col 1:10 ‘unto all meeting of His wishes (Moule)’.]
- (3) For the truth that the Unseen, the Eternal, is of far more importance than the Seen, the Temporal.
- (4) For the necessity to weigh everything in the scales of the Sanctuary, as even the gold that was brought for an offering was weighed in those scales. This means, not ever, ‘What man or woman say about this or that?’ but ‘What saith the Lord’.
- (5) For restful dependence upon all the promises of God. It follows that we have full assurance in the truth of His Book. [...] Without that assurance this work could not continue for a day.
- (6) For the conviction that those who bear the vessels of the Lord must be clean, that a sin un-confessed, cuts the nerve of prayer and of power to serve. By sin we mean anything that grieves the Heavenly father, anything unworthy of the honourable Name by which we are called, anything that clouds the spirit, anything that dims the Cross of Calvary.
- (7) For dependence upon God for grace, strength and guidance that we may do the things which He planned beforehand we should do.

(8) For love, loyal love of one to the other.

(9) For the principle known as a vital unity. By this we mean that underlying unity of spirit which is not affected by race, name or sign. We have proved that this is possible for men and women, coming from different rooms of the Household of God, to live and work together in happiness and harmony. – all one in Christ Jesus.

(10) For the truth taught by our Lord when He said: Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, bringeth forth much fruit.

Have you any motto?

From the beginning we have one chief word: Love never faileth. All this sounds very beautiful and very simple, but in practice do you not often find life difficult? Yes, life is often exceedingly difficult, but we do not see in difficulty a reason to doubt our lord's Presence and Leading. Unless the difficulty be because of our own mistake it may be an assurance that we have not missed the way.¹²⁴⁴

■ The House of Prayer

On the highest roof from the House of Prayer (Figure 27) two needles point to heaven. Tamil houses have one needle, the little pointed shaft that ends many a gabled roof in Tamil Nadu. Purposely Amy ordered the architect of the House of Prayer to fix two needles; they represent prayer and service, the two essentials of the Christian life and the essentials of the DF. The reason for these two needles Amy gives in *Gold Cord*,¹²⁴⁵ where she explains the work of the Sisters of the Common Life in Dohnavur who meditate and work with their hands. They sit at the Master's feet like Maria. 'The Spirit can sit at the Master's feet while the hands are filled with work for others.' Never was Amy unmindful of the world Christ came to save. She says, 'His is no cloistered love'.¹²⁴⁶

The whole process for the House of Prayer is done in prayer. On 16 December 1924, Amy stood with her birthday presents in her hands and wondered what the Lord's purpose would be for the small silver coins. To her surprise, she prayed it would be used for a House of Prayer. Already for some time she had been praying to have a hospital for the family for this would be a big evangelistic opportunity. Every time she thought of the hospital, the Lord intervened in these thoughts and showed her that she first had to build a place of worship.¹²⁴⁷ The schoolroom where they had their Sunday meetings had long been crowded out, but she thought the sick must come first.

A Presbyterian herself, she never advocated for any one denomination. Those working with her from England and other countries were members from various denominations. She always wanted to practise as literally as possible whatever she found in the New Testament. She found no denominations there. To an Anglican priest who was thinking of joining her, she wrote:

We can do far more for the Kingdom by being as we are, loving all, belonging to all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity. [...] We have a welcome everywhere, all societies all over South India welcome anything we can give, for all know that we are not out to harm any.¹²⁴⁸

Officially Amy never left the church of her youth, but the traditional church was not her spiritual home anymore. Going back to the basics of Christianity was not really a new thing for her. For her it

1244. Amy in *The Starry Cluster*, 19. Many sentences have Bible references: 1 Colossians 1:10; 4. Exodus 38:14; 5. Psalm 119:160; 6. Isaiah 52:11 and 1 John 1:9 and James 2:7; 7. Ephesians 2, 10, 10. John 12:24.

1245. See p. 159.

1246. In *Ploughed Under*, VIII.

1247. *Gold Cord*, 281.

1248. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 237.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 27: The House of Prayer.

was the old true worship, the Christian life in its beauty and proper sense. So all the churches formed the Body of Christ and nothing existed independently. Due to her connections with Mr Wilson and the Keswick Convention the first lesson she had learned was:

[T]o drop labels, and to think only of the one true invisible Church, to which all who truly love the Lord belong. Suppose He came tomorrow, what would labels matter? I could almost see them dropping off as those who were waiting for their Lord rose in the spiritual home air to meet Him. They would never think of them then. Why think much of them now? [...] I grew to value the quietness of the Friends' way of worship, and also to care very much for the beauty of the Church of England's ways.¹²⁴⁹

1249. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 37.

The birthday gifts brought in again the wish to have a House of Prayer:

These gifts seemed to point towards a House of Prayer, but till that birthday morning there had not been a decisive leading, the assurance without which we never can proceed, and to my inward question, 'But Lord, what about the hospital?' The answer came back with clearness that settled doubt, 'When My House of Prayer is finished, I will provide for the Hospital'.¹²⁵⁰

The Lord provided the architect and constructor, Mr Dann and Mr Jackson, and the money to contract skilled carpenters from Kerala to build the House of Prayer. Both architect and engineer were Friends, 'and so by nature and by training were prepared to understand the inward movements of the Spirit'.¹²⁵¹ In the Dohnavur Letter of May 1926, Amy mentioned that the foundation of the Prayer House was nearly ready.¹²⁵²

Amy was very much encouraged by a letter from Miss Lilius Trotter from Algiers, in which she wrote that they had a place for prayer and were sending a gift for Dohnavur to build their House of Prayer.¹²⁵³ Even today, one wonders at what was achieved nearly 100 years ago. Amy loved the style of Kerala and Travancore architecture – it is more 'pretty' – and a practical reason vindicated the use of building people from Kerala – they were cheaper than those from Tinnevely.¹²⁵⁴ She knew that the architect and the engineer who had directed the work of a chapel for the Women's Christian College in Madras had put reverence and beauty into that building. It was in Indian style and feeling, 'the kind of thing we should have chosen to have'.¹²⁵⁵ Inaugurated on 16 November 1927, by Bishop Tubbs,¹²⁵⁶ the House of Prayer is more than the Fellowship's religious centre; it is also an architectural gem. To this day, it stands as the spiritual focus of the Fellowship. With no connection to any church denomination the Fellowship went on its own under the unseen leader. Amy wrote:

After a while it became clear that our God had another thought for us. And so, very quietly, it came to pass that we just belong to Him and to all who love His Name. An old CMS missionary put it very clearly: 'You belong to all of us', he said. He who leads our worship as a father would lead the worship of a family, may be one whom all recognise as having only the ordination of the Pierced Hand.

Living in a particular love among themselves, the Fellowship fought against the intrusion of the 'I and mine', or an over-emphasis on 'my views':

I am writing of this clearly, because no one would be happy with us unless he felt himself simply one of the Household of God, and so, quite simply, one with all who belonged to the great household. It seems to us that we have a wonderful opportunity to live the life of true unity, a unity far deeper and far more vital than any which depends on an outward ceremony. In other words we are trying to return to the very earliest days before labels were invented, and to be, as we surely shall be the moment our Lord appears, all one in Him, dividing lines utterly forgotten, utterly lost in the light of His presence.¹²⁵⁷

1250. *Meal in a Barrel*, 30. Chapters VI and VII deal with the provisions God gave to get the amount of £1000 required to build the House of Prayer.

1251. *Meal in a Barrel*, 32.

1252. In 'Dohnavur Letter, no. 8', May 1926, 8: 'The House of Prayer has been begun, the foundations are nearly finished.' See also the Dohnavur Letter of January 1926, [no. 7, 2].

1253. *Meal in a Barrel*, 30–31.

1254. *Tables in the Wilderness*, 135. The crinkled roof of the House of Prayer is also Travancorean.

1255. *Meal in a Barrel*, 30. The architect who designed the House of Prayer took its style from an old palace in Travancore, a city where from ancient times Chinese carpenters had worked.

1256. Norman Henry Tubbs (1879–1965). In 1923 he was ordained to the Tinnevely episcopate as the fourth bishop.

1257. See Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 77.



Source: © Dohnavur Fellowship. Permission to reproduce was obtained from Jeremiah Rajanesan. Photographer unknown.

FIGURE 28: Inside of the House of Prayer.

The doorposts have carvings of lotus flowers and on the lintel are carved in Tamil the words *Come Unto Me*. ‘Those words are to us all, and each time we cross the threshold of that House, our Lord says to each one – calling him and her by name – *Come Unto Me*.¹²⁵⁸ The tubular bells in the tower were given by a Dohnavur friend from Germany. At 6 a.m., 1 p.m. and 9 p.m. the bells ring out for prayer and for recollection, ‘God is my strong salvation’.¹²⁵⁹ And when they ring a stillness falls wherever they are heard.

But effect of the minute’s stillness is so very helpful to the life of the place that none of us, I think, will wish to part with it when that campaign is over.¹²⁶⁰

The House of Prayer is covered with flowers and greenery, blue thunbergia is climbing far up the tower, passion flowers (which open here at 9 a.m. the great hour of the Christians day) are looking in through the latticed windows and throwing tendrils down above the arches inside (Figure 28) the House, which they fill with their delicate fragrance, and the court leading back to the schoolhouse is a shadowy cool greenness of fern and moss, with blue water-lilies in a little water in the centre, and we thank our God for such a gift from His kind family.¹²⁶¹

The House of Prayer is the heart of the DF compound and the centre from which, since 1927, prayers have been sent up to the Lord. Above the House of Prayer the prayer tower gives the people an

1258. *Edges of His Ways*, 18 January, 9; *Meal in a Barrel*, 46.

1259. See *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 145.

1260. *Meal in a Barrel*, 43. In those quiet moments Amy had to think of Augustine: ‘But we, Lord, behold we are a little flock, possess us as Thine, stretch Thy wings over us, and let us fly under them. Be thou our glory; let us be loved for Thee, and Thy word feared in us’.

1261. Amy described the Anglican church with the usual gothic arches and pews in Doty as ‘depressingly English’. See Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 122; *Meal in a Barrel*, 47.

opportunity to be there alone with God. The tower windows look in all directions over the compound. Standing in the room at the top of the tower, high above the compound, we can still read the words of an old hymn around the four sides of the room on a hand-painted frieze with four stanzas:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Breathe on me, breath of God, Fill me with life anew, That I may love what Thou dost love, And do what Thou wouldst do. | 2. Breathe on me, breath of God, Until my heart is pure, Until with Thee I will one will, To do and to endure. |
| 3. Breathe on me, breath of God, Blend all my soul with Thine, Until this earthly part of me Glow with Thy fire divine. | 4. Breathe on me, breath of God, So shall I never die, But live with Thee the perfect life Of Thine eternity. ¹²⁶² |

These words express the longing of the DF. We can take Hatch's hymn simply as a prayer for the continuing ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives as Christians. The hymn is based on John 20:22, which records how the Lord Jesus met with his disciples in the upper room after his resurrection, and 'he breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit"'. No further explanation is given. This may have been a special endowment of power in preparation for Pentecost a few days later. Pentecost is presented as a historical incident. There is no evidence that Christ's action is ever repeated, or that it is something to be claimed by believers today. However, we know the indwelling Spirit of God works to produce the fruit of Christ-likeness in us.¹²⁶³ This was also Amy's prayer for the workers and the children in Dohnavur. Amy herself gives us the reason for the prayer tower:

Except the barn, there is not a two-storey building on the compound, and there is not a single room where one can be private without shutting all the windows, and when the windows are shut it is impossibly hot. In such a family there are often times when it matters very much to be quite alone with God. That Prayer Tower was worth much to the place. From the tower you see the nurseries, schoolrooms, medical compound, farm, boys' houses seen through the trees (their school is not yet up). You see through the moon gate the end of the Walk of Quietness, and your heart goes out in the beautiful words of St Augustine as you stand by the bells and look down over it all: But we, Lord, behold we are Thy little flock, possess us as Thine, stretch Thy wings over us and let us fly under them. Be Thou our glory; let us be loved for Thee, and Thy word feared in us.

From Algiers her friend Lilius Trotter wrote about her experience at a mission conference in Jerusalem, relating to the prayer tower in Dohnavur:

God gave us such a beautiful seal on our new hope and such a promise for the future. I opened the Syriac version of the New Testament, and asked Him for some word, and He sent this, Acts XVI 13: 'A House of Prayer was seen there'. We know this will be fulfilled. I wanted to tell you this to explain why I thought of your Prayer Room. May God be doing wonders for you, seen and unseen in all your work.¹²⁶⁴

On Sundays there are three services, one English and two Tamil in the House of Prayer. Before the service starts, a song is played on the tubular bells (Figure 29); every day the same bells play, remembering the family of the sweet name of Jesus. The Sunday evening singing in the House of Prayer is one of the favourite meetings of the Fellowship. The House of Prayer is decorated with flowers in big bowls and

1262. By Edwin Hatch (1835–1889). The hymn is based on John 20:22. Hatch was that happy combination of great learning and simple faith. James Moffatt said of him, 'profound as his learning was, his published sermons show that his piety was as simple and unaffected as a child's'. Dr Hatch was professor of classics at Trinity College in Toronto for a time, then rector of Quebec High School. He returned to England and to Oxford University in 1867, coincidentally the year of the birth of the Dominion of Canada.

1263. See 2 Corinthians 3:18 and Galatians 5:22–23.

1264. *Meal in a Barrel*, 35, 43 and 44.



Source: © J. (Hans) Kommers.

FIGURE 29: The tubular bells in the tower of the House of Prayer.

vases. Children clean the floor on Saturdays while they sing. On Sundays often during thanksgiving, the one who is leading also gives thanks for the flowers and the birds and that they may hear the dear birds sing. Until about 1950, during Christmas time the Christmas tree was decorated by the Friedenshort sisters; when they all left, the Accals took over this work. In the evening on Christmas Day the whole congregation moves toward the dairy farm with singing and music all along the way. There is a short service at the sheds. This is done by the Fellowship members to identify themselves with the poor and the downtrodden on this earth. Then Christmas Day is closed with a Tamil service in the House of Prayer. There is no abundant decoration with much colour; the elderly women make nice decorations at home from silver foil, which they save the whole year from biscuit packets, etcetera.

New Year's Day is a special giving day. During the service in the church all the children line up, each affectionately clutching some cherished toy, which are put into two baskets for the sick children. Easter Day is an exalted day. Before dawn it begins with the singing from the tower, which is met with the glorious greeting 'The Lord is risen', and all say together 'Alleluia'. Then they all go to God's Garden. 'We go there at sunrise and sing our Easter hymns.' All church occasions, even burials, are performed with the eye on the risen Lord. 'We try to make such occasions festival, not funeral in feeling.' Never is the devil 'off duty, souls lately plucked from their grasp are assailed and plots are formed for their undoing'.¹²⁶⁵

Once a month Holy Communion is administered. Often one of the pastors of the village church gives the wine and the bread. Amy herself always kept a good relationship with the Anglican church, but the fact that only an official ordained person can administer Holy Communion was something she

1265. For descriptions of these celebrations, see 'Exalted Days', in *Gold Cord*, chapter XLIII, 295–300.

could not believe. In Temple's *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, she put the words 'of the priest' in brackets: 'Still by the words of the priest He takes the Bread which He calls His Body'. In the margin, Amy wrote 'Where in the Scriptures is anything said about this?'¹²⁶⁶ Amy agreed with Von Hügel who wrote that the future of Anglicanism seemed to him 'very dark unless they can revive the sense of adoration'.¹²⁶⁷

Adoration played an important part in the services in the House of Prayer. Amy had, according to Nesaruthina, associates from different churches working with her like the Brethren, the Church of South India (CSI), Mar Thoma Christians and people from other churches. She accepted both child and adult baptism, and in the House of Prayer the communion service was conducted both in CSI and Brethren patterns.¹²⁶⁸ The Communion service always closes with the same hymn: 'Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts'. Amy wrote that the Fellowship family saw themselves as members of the 'Church which is His body – this is the church to which we belong. The household of God – this is the household of which we are members'.¹²⁶⁹ Today even the very old people living in Dohnavur remember that since their youth the main entrance of the church and the tower has been decorated with leaves and beautiful flowers. In the church, a visitor will not find a cross or any pictures hanging anywhere. In the windows with their iron frames, an attentive visitor will see the shape of a cross. Elisabeth Elliot visited the Fellowship in Dohnavur in 1993 and here is her story about the House of Prayer:

The House of Prayer is a beautiful terra-cotta-coloured building with a red tile roof and a tower which hold the chimes that play a hymn at 6.00 A.M. and 9.00 P.M. There is no furniture inside except a few chairs for older ones and decrepit foreigners such as we aren't used to sitting on the floor. Everyone filed in perfect silence, bare feet moving noiselessly over polished red tiled floors, and sat in rows according to age, the tiny ones up front, dressed in brightly coloured dresses. Behind them sat the next age group, girls in skirts and blouses; then came those in skirts, blouses, and half-saris; finally the Accal (older ones who look after the younger) in blue or purple or green saris. All had smoothly combed and oiled black hair, many of them with flowers in it. An Indian man played the little pump organ while they sang several traditional hymns in English, as well as songs written by 'Amma' (the Tamil term of respect, used for Amy Carmichael). There was Scripture reading, then a prayer of thanksgiving for the new child who had just come, a little girl of two whose mother could not keep her. Her new mother, an Accal, carried her to the platform and stood holding her while they prayed and then sang 'Jesus loves Me'. [...] The smallest children had been given coloured flags to wave in time to the music of certain songs, a custom instituted by Amma which I think should be adopted by every Sunday School and Church, for it enables the tiny ones to participate by doing something even when they are too young to know the words by heart'. Older ones played tambourines, triangle, and bells, while one drummed softly with a leather flap on the mouth of a clay pot.¹²⁷⁰

One of Murray Webb-Peploe's children, Michael, born 18 April 1935, later remembered Dohnavur's House of Prayer:

As for Dohnavur, I remember the House of Prayer, very impressive in its simplicity; also the Easter celebration in the garden. My memories are of Easter being a very special day. We would get up before daylight and proceed with lanterns to 'God's Garden', which was actually the burial ground. [*Both Amma and Godfrey are buried there*] There we would almost re-enact the first day of the resurrection and when you met another member of the Family you exchanged the traditional greeting, 'Christ is risen', to which the response was, 'he is risen indeed', then you both said 'Hallelujah' together. My uncle Godfrey I don't remember well; he was a respected but

1266. W. Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, 2nd series, (London: MacMillan, 1940), chapter 14.

1267. In G. Greene (ed.), *Letters from Baron Von Hügel to a Niece* (London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1928), p. XXXIV.

1268. In Matthews, 'The Theological Contributions of Amy Carmichael', Appendix X.

1269. See *Roots*, 45.

1270. In E. Elliot, *Keep a Quiet Heart* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1995), 144.

slightly remote figure. I do remember Jack Trehane, who once gave Hanmer [*his brother*] and me a well-deserved beating for being cheeky to one of the Indian annachies.¹²⁷¹

The House of Prayer was renovated in 2000 and to this day, many profess a sense of peace and happiness inside this beautiful building. Up in the tower of the House of Prayer, where the tubular bells are, I sat for a quiet moment on a Sunday afternoon and prayed the words which, since 1878,¹²⁷² have been for all who go the Walk of Quietness in this turbulent world.

■ Opposition. ‘Never promised fair weather’

Can one change a centuries old tradition?:

In a country where you could feel the deadness, the weight of the death of centuries, you would know that the winning of a single soul is a tremendous miracle.¹²⁷³

Nothing could hinder Amy in evangelising and to rescuing India’s children and finding a home for them, though the roads may have been rough and she tired:

We could not return that night, and the hotel was sure to be full. Altogether, it was impracticable. [...] All of which only made me more determined to go, if it meant sleeping on the road ten nights, instead of one; as for being tired, what did it matter? Oh don’t blame too much. It was an opportunity which doesn’t come every day, and only the Devil was buying it up.¹²⁷⁴

She would not enter temples – since that day in Kyoto (Japan) – but when she knew ‘He is going before’ she would follow fearlessly.¹²⁷⁵

Amy had entered a war zone. Behind what was seen, was the ‘Ruler of Darkness’, the existence of certain beings, described as ‘Powers’ in Ephesians VI:12. Sometimes she indicated it as ‘the Actual’. Many times, when windows were closed the Lord opened doors¹²⁷⁶ for her to continue her work. She knew that there was ‘this unhallowed correspondence between men and demons. Here in India it exists’. On the way back home ‘we felt we had been very near where Satan’s seat is.’ ‘*Nothing* can reach them, nothing but the might of the Holy Ghost’:

The devil’s favourite device just now is to move interested people to far-away places. We have had several who seemed very near to the kingdom. Then suddenly they have disappeared:

Young men, showing interest in the Gospel, were rushed into a marriage, ‘so now there is another key turned, locking him into Hinduism’. What was behind this when young seedlings were killed? ‘An Enemy has done this.’

When a young girl was interested in the Gospel, this especially seemed to touch the caste ‘at its most sensitive point’. ‘Men and demons seem to conspire to hold such a one in the clutch of the terrible.’ ‘Till God makes a way of escape.’

1271. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 152–153.

1272. The hymn *Spiritus Sanctus* was composed in 1878 by Edwin Hatch. Amy copied it in *Meal in A Barrel*, 48–49.

1273. *From Sunrise Land*, 126.

1274. *From Sunrise Land*, 127.

1275. *From Sunrise Land*, 128.

1276. A Lilius Trotter expression from her diary, 06 May 1906. See Huffmann Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible*, 196 and 202.

Amy's work had been a catalyst in rescuing young girls and boys from a life in prostitution and had an impact upon a law passed in Parliament forbidding the giving of young children to the temples. Life can be tangled, and nobody can disentangle such tangles. She knew the Lord 'does not ask us to walk in any path where He has not walked before'.¹²⁷⁷ She also had long talks with persons who were interested in the Christian belief, but who feared to break with their family. On 30 October 1900, she talked with 'the mother of one who wants to follow Jesus. Heartbreaking'.¹²⁷⁸

Not everybody was happy with her rescue efforts. Opposition came from fellow missionaries and Indians. Even supporters in her homeland wondered if she was a real missionary or just a babysitter.¹²⁷⁹ She was accused of kidnapping young children and for this, she was ordered to appear in court several times. In the eyes of others, her missionary activities were controversial.

Amy expected opposition. Referring to Acts 16:22–25 she said that the storm and the darkness Paul endured is 'an eternal reminder of what we are all meant to be and do. We are *not* meant to be fair-weather Christians; we are never promised fair weather'.¹²⁸⁰

■ The place of Heavenly Healing

As the number of children grew, Amy more and more saw the need for having medical care for them. The nearby hospitals were not easy to reach and to transport a sick baby could mean their death. On 25 September 1905, Ponnamal – 'the heroic Indian sister'¹²⁸¹ – went with the sick children of Dohnavur to the hospital in Neyyoor to be treated there¹²⁸²:

It was not always plain sailing, even at Neyyoor. 'You are fighting satan at a point upon which he is very sensitive; he will not leave you long in peace', wrote an experienced friend of Amy's.¹²⁸³ Ponnamal permanently stayed with these little sick ones. She is God's golden gift to the work.¹²⁸⁴

During seasons with epidemic sicknesses many children died. 'Child after child died, the doctors were away, and the help at hand was hardly sufficient to deal adequately with the trouble.' Nurses at Neyyoor lost heart:

If another baby dies, we shall know the blessing of God is not on this work. [...] Then some evil men who lived next door awoke to the opportunity; their wickedness was a nightmare.

They strengthened themselves in the Lord:

The storm will not always last. The waves dash into our little boat, but when the Lord says, 'Peace, be still' they will lay down. [...] Let all your prayer for us be this, that we may rest in the will of God while the storm lasts [...] 'In battle you need soldiers who fear nothing', so said Père Didon; and so say I.¹²⁸⁵

1277. *Candles in the Dark*, 86.

1278. In Amy's Bible [1895], in the margin of Matthew 10:35.

1279. Johnson, *The Top 100 Women of the Christian Faith*, 171.

1280. In *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 69.

1281. *Ploughed Under*, 141.

1282. See *Lotus Buds*, XVI, 133–141; *The Beginning of a Story*, 13.

1283. *Lotus Buds*, 136.

1284. *The Beginning of a Story*, 14.

1285. *Ponnamal*, 47–48.

In the height of the heavy work, Star was sent to Neyyoor to assist.¹²⁸⁶ Amy kept in touch with Neyyoor by daily bulletins and frequent visits.

Finally, it was too difficult to send sick children to the hospital in Neyyoor and another nursery was built on the Dohnavur compound in 1908. In contrast with the often squalid housing, the sweetness and the cleanness, its pervading atmosphere of Christian love in a loveless land, its power to bless and its abundance, may well seem to them scarcely to belong to this poor world.¹²⁸⁷ The medical missionary effectually illustrated Christ's mission by reviving it. Here Christian ministry is presented in deeds of ministering love. It was at that time the only exhibition of our Christian religion which some of them could comprehend. In the mission hospital for those far away from God, a true vision of the Great healer could be seen:

The burden of the unrelieved suffering of the people was more than she could endure, and she took it to the Lord in earnest, persistent, prevailing prayer; prayer for a nurse, for a doctor, for a hospital, for means of helping needy souls to find both physical and spiritual healing.¹²⁸⁸

As years went by Amy enlisted the prayer help of friends all over the world. As she had experienced during her itinerating work, house-to-house evangelisation in the strong Hindu area of Tinnevely and Dohnavur, as in the whole of south India, the relief of human suffering and help given during great crises of human life are keys that unlock many doors. As far back as 1920 Amy had felt strongly the need of 'a Place of Healing'.¹²⁸⁹ 30 January 1920 was a remarkable day, as was noted down in the logbook, because on that day Amy, with seven others looking at a sunset, was thinking of so many who were difficult to reach, even out of reach: 'It was as though there swam into our view a Place of Healing'. Amy saw a place where a company 'in gaiety of their spirit, served with love'. The life of the Franciscans had had a great influence on her:

They were lovers of the Lord and servants of the sick; they loved one another fervently, and money had no power over them. [...] But it was there, and so why should it not be here? And the pattern for the hospital was her shown from the New Testament. We had seen nothing anywhere in the pages of our New Testament to give us hope that such a thing could be. [...] But it was there, and so why should it not be here?¹²⁹⁰

From that date onwards it was put into words and all eight signed their names to a prayer for its fulfilment.

The medical work of the DF started in obedience to the Lord's command to heal the sick as well as to preach the Gospel. For years Amy had longed to reach the villages around Dohnavur with the Good News of Jesus Christ, but were not her hands and feet tied to the place to care for the children, whose numbers increased yearly? So, how to reach the many scattered villages where there was no Gospel? What if there were a hospital?

And we wondered why there was no medical mission in this part of British India specially bent on reaching those who are practically unaffected by the Gospel. Was it because Christians at home heard chiefly of the successes of the south, of the crowds swept into the visible Church, of the villages clamouring for teachers? What is that they had not ever really understood that the castes to whom the great temples belong are still

1286. *Ploughed Under*, 135.

1287. The author remembers one occasion in Moçambique in 2004 when a girl of about eight years old came to a medical clinic asking the nurse 'Is heaven like this?'

1288. Robbins, *Greater is He*, XV.

1289. *Gold Cord*, 279.

1290. *Gold Cord*, 279. Cf. also *Meal in a Barrel*, 131–133.

Hindu to the core? Those who are hardest to win for Christ are not being won. Nor have they the least desire to be won. They are either antagonistic or indifferent.¹²⁹¹

The dedication of the Place of Heavenly Healing took place on 15 November 1936. 'The service was all thanksgiving and adoration.' A 30-year-old dream of Amy's became reality. Since 1906 she had prayed, thought and talked about having her own medical facilities. From the 1920s onwards Amy and the Starry Cluster were led in a new direction. Several times, they came into situations in which a demon possessed was set free and came to peace after they had called upon the name of the Lord. Many people came to Dohnavur, hearing that there was help for them. Some who were tormented by evil spirits came and many sick came, all 'pitifully suffering children':

They came at the time the children assembled for prayers, and we were all blessed and drawn into a new tenderness, a new awareness of the Presence in our midst.

Many came to Dohnavur and among the people many colourful stories spread of 'a place of healing! Miracles!' All this confused Amy and she continues:

We searched our Bibles then, to find our Lord's thought about this matter; and we read the scores of letters that came from the ends of the earth, each urging upon us some new view of divine healing. There was a day when we asked Him, if He willed it so, to give us the gift, the charisma, that had been in apostolic times.

In the bungalow, Amy mostly lay in bed during the long years of her illness. I saw words painted in blue on a piece of rough teak over the doorway of her room: 'Good and acceptable and perfect'. These three words 'hallow pain' she said. Those difficult years were lightened for her by the new understanding of the words of Romans 12:2. Against the pain these three words 'take from it all bitterness, all that stings and rankles; they leave it, still pain indeed, but somehow sweetened, chastened'. In Tamil 'acceptable' is rendered by a word meaning 'lovable'¹²⁹²:

To accept in this sense is to come with all the desire of the mind unto the place which the Lord shall choose, and to minister in the name of the Lord our God *there* – not other where. *Where the things of God are concerned, acceptance always means the happy choice of mind and heart of that which He appoints, because (for the present) it is His good and acceptable and perfect will.*¹²⁹³

Amy thought that if they had that gift, it would make the Lord known and loved. 'Would it not glorify His Name? What a joy it would be to see pain instantly relieved. [...] There was not anything comparable to the healing of the first century.' In her diary on 04 May the entry is: 'Asked for cleansed hands. Asked for the gift – I fear to write it even now, but I did ask, was constrained to ask. Told no one.'

A further note in *Daily Light* on 12 June goes as follows: 'Asked for the gift of healing for the sake of others', and she added the words 'Answer, "No"'. Then, almost suddenly, the healings ceased. Did the Lord prevent her from becoming too popular and people from coming to Dohnavur for the healing of their bodies and not for the healing of their sins? In the Dohnavur library is a booklet called *What The Scriptures Teach Concerning The Laying On Of Hands*.¹²⁹⁴ Often during her long illness, Amy was 'assailed' (as she puts it) by letters and tracts suggesting that if only she would pray the prayer of faith, healing would be granted. On this issue she once wrote:

1291. *Gold Cord*, 279. In a note Amy refers here to the medical work in China described by her friend Mrs Geraldine Howard Taylor, in her *Guinness of Honan*, chapter XV.

1292. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 187.

1293. *Gold By Moonlight*, 35.

1294. J. Webb. (ed.), *What the Scriptures Teach Concerning the Laying on of Hands* (Bangalore: Scripture Literature Press, 1944).

But our little children had taught us many things. We knew they did not always know what was good for them, and we should have been very grieved if they had persisted in imploring for something, after we had let them understand that we could not give it [...] Not, 'Thy will be changed' but 'Thy will be done', as the prayer we are taught to pray.¹²⁹⁵

I have been asked to say what has been our experience in relation to healing and medicals. We have seen our Lord use His servant's skill and we have seen Him work, as it were direct. Surely He is sovereign in this as in all things? Of one thing we are pure sure – His touch has still its ancient power and we who have seen that Touch heal and renew can never be as those who have not seen.¹²⁹⁶

But honestly about the spiritual healings, Amy wrote: 'The *Charisma* was not given'.¹²⁹⁷ Mabel Wade, a fully trained nurse from Yorkshire, was the first fellow worker and who assisted on the medical side of the Fellowship. She was, like Amy, a CEZMS missionary, but set apart for Dohnavur. The first doctor in Dohnavur was Gladys Webster, an answer to Amy's years of prayer.

On the mission field the lancet has proved mightier than the sword in opening closed doors. Amy was convinced that healthcare missions were an effective way to spread the Gospel and the key to proclaim Christ in the strict Hindu society of south India. Compassion in Christ's name speaks loud. She could refer to the many medical missionaries – men and women – who blazed the trail, and whose stories of sacrifice and service convinced and inspired many. In the room where Amy lived, there are still today some paintings, given to Amy by Dr Howard Somervell of Vellore, who was an explorer who climbed the Himalayas and a painter not without merit.¹²⁹⁸ Eventually, long before the hospital was built, Amy began to buy land for the House of Healing, as the hospital was called after it had been finished. Already from the very beginning, the first objective of the hospital was to evangelise to the people who came there:

Satan, prince of this world, cares not one jot how many hospitals we build, if only we are satisfied to be philanthropic. [...] And may God save India from such schools and hospitals.¹²⁹⁹

Amy prayed that when people saw the love of God in operation, they would not only see, but also hear and believe of the one, who is the real healer and think of him as Saviour and Lord.

'The story of how we had good hope of being able to do more for the people passed out far beyond our borders.'¹³⁰⁰ One day Amy was with two other women in the bazaar of a Hindu town, when suddenly a big bazaar man said, 'You are to have a hospital in Dohnavur – so we hear. [...] You will make it a Paradise.' Amy was surprised and for a moment did not know what to say, until the man added, 'Yes, Paradise.'¹³⁰¹

1295. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 185.

1296. *Tables in the Wilderness*, 37–38.

1297. In *Gold Cord*, 237.

1298. We today should learn from the first medical missionaries, their love and compassion for the sick, the poor, and those who don't have helpers, may not be forgotten. Cf. also R.B. Dietrick, *The Man the Church Forgot* (USA: Xulon Press, 2007).

1299. *Windows*, 56. A member of a Muslim family who was treated in Dohnavur, and therefore cursed by others from their community, afterwards said: 'But as for us, we do not believe as much as the measure of the rape seed of such talk. We have seen the love of God in operation, and we believe and know that His love is mightier than the power of the demon or the curse of man' (*Windows*, 60).

1300. *Gold Cord*, 289.

1301. *Gold Cord*, 289.

The hospital to be built should be of great magnificence. Amy refers to the word ‘magnifical’ in *Daily Light* of 04 June 1929, which ‘lifted the matter of cost to the heavenlies – where the air is clear’. Magnifical here means:

[P]erfect for its purpose of glorifying the God of love, so that men and women will be drawn to Him. He is also the God of beauty, and it follows that ugliness jars. He has no pleasure in it – nor in dire.

At the end of 1931 Philip England, an engineer, joined the Fellowship and was given the responsibility for all the designing work and the organising of the builders and the building materials.

The purpose of this branch of the DF can be summarised as follows: healing the sick and relieving the sufferings of so many, especially among the women, the poor and the needy. Great attention was given to help disseminate knowledge of hygiene (public health) for the community. Medical work gave missionaries a unique chance to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The DF maintained a very clear position in their work to save children from moral and physical abuse in an intricate relationship between evangelism, medical work and education. The three always went hand in hand. The way land was bought for the proposed hospital reminds us of Gideon asking for a sign:

All who have followed our story from the beginning know how, in other days, when I was almost alone and very fearful of running before the Lord, I used to ask for Gideon’s fleece, a sign which I could not mistake, and how, often He did kindly answer by a sign.

In these matters Amy walked like a child at her Father’s hand. Land could be bought adjoining the land that already belonged to the Fellowship.¹³⁰² The building of the hospital actually started in 1929.¹³⁰³ Attention was given to the Indian architecture of the hospital buildings. Many buildings had features similar to the other buildings of the DF, some with typical designs made by Amy. A plaque hung high up in the centre of the entrance written in big Tamil characters brought familiarity and acceptance from the Indians.

At the 1930 Keswick Convention, Dr Orissa Taylor dealt with the importance of medical work in the mission field. How many of those present were really converted to the claims of the medical mission? At the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, medical missions were hardly mentioned. Yearly Keswick gave 10 minutes of consideration of the claim of medical missions. Dr Taylor said that the three years Christ was on earth, he spent many of his days healing the sick. ‘Yet for nineteen hundred years they had been preaching till their throats were dry, but they had not engaged in the healing ministry as they ought to have done’.¹³⁰⁴ Statistics showing the state of the health care in the India of the 1930s were an urgent appeal for more medical staff.¹³⁰⁵

A hospital gives a deathblow to the many miserable superstitions which sometimes cleave to those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their great physician. In the Dohnavur hospital, as was usual at that time in mission hospitals, the doctors were also evangelists. They, too, went out into the villages, helping and assisting in evangelistic enterprise. In a country where belief in signs and omens is cultivated

1302. *Meal in a Barrel*, 112–114. ‘To hope for such a thing was to hope for the impossible, so we were told by almost everyone. But we have learned to love the word “impossible”’ (p. 128).

1303. *Windows*, 3.

1304. ‘The Claim of Healing’, in *The Keswick Convention 1930*, 224.

1305. ‘In Bengal a thousand or more babies died every week from lockjaw. Three million died of cholera every year in India; in ten years many millions died of malaria. Seven million died in one year of influenza in India. And there was the slow death of leprosy. Many of all these sicknesses could have been treated easily if more medical staff would have been there’ (‘The Claim of Healing’, in *The Keswick Convention 1930*, 224).

as a science, it was not to be wondered at when great disasters in the work at Dohnavur, for instance a fatal epidemic, caused the faith to be shaken of all who were not in the deepest way committed to this work and a lot of reproaches were made by outsiders. Mission hospitals as fields for teaching and evangelising have been seen everywhere on the mission field. 'Far and wide scatter the precious seeds, to spring up later in requests for instruction from villages where the missionary had never gone.' Dr Poret of Pang Chuang reported that in one year, patients from 1031 villages came to that one hospital, some of them undertaking a journey of 5 to 10 days. 'One half of our native churches had their origin', he says, 'in patients in hospital attendance.'¹³⁰⁶

Murray Webb-Peploe was a very much loved physician in the Dohnavur hospital. He and his brother Godfrey were for Amy 'pillars' in the Fellowship. Between 1928 and 1929 Murray Webb-Peploe had left China due to political unrest, and assisted in the medical work in Dohnavur, where his brother Godfrey had worked since 1926 in the education of the children. On their way to China, Murray and his mother Evelyn had passed Dohnavur, invited by Amy,¹³⁰⁷ and had an opportunity to see his friend Howard Somervell at Neyyoor in Travancore. In addition to being a medical doctor, Murray also cared for the spiritual welfare of the people. Murray could not go back to China and instead came back to Dohnavur. Amy, Godfrey and Murray was a match made in heaven. All three worked in spiritual unity for the welfare of the Fellowship. Amy rejoiced over them:

Oh, these two, what gifts to the world they are, worth all your life of loving sacrifice, worth anything – never have I seen two like them, it is rest and strength and comfort just to have them in the house.¹³⁰⁸

On the night of 08 October 1926, Amy was sleeping on the sand of Cape Comorin's coast when she had a vision in which she with a sense of joy and light saw Godfrey and Murray in Dohnavur. 'But dreams have no conscience'; was God telling her to pray that these two men would come to Dohnavur? Two years after Stephen Neill had left Dohnavur, Murray arrived.

Murray now worked in the little theatre of the hospital with Dr May Powell. It was an Indian friend of the Fellowship – who himself was not a Christian – who gave the new hospital a typically Eastern name: *Parama Suha Salai*, Place of Otherworld (or Heavenly) Healing. Amy wrote: 'We accepted the name, as truly telling what we prayed the hospital should be'¹³⁰⁹:

The Place of Healing belongs to the family – even the little children take a keen interest in all that pertains to it – and so it happens that the story of the hospital is interwoven with our main story, like a gold thread running through the web on the loom.¹³¹⁰

'Buckingham Palace', so called by Murray, was the name of the first hospital ward. Amy called the wards 'Rooms of Kindness', for 'ward is too cold a name for such a room'. And when children died they had 'left us for the Heavenly Country', or to the 'Upstairs Nursery'.¹³¹¹

Soon it was known in the community that in the hospital no bribe was accepted. The Indian instinct for privacy was accepted and people were to feel at home as much as possible. The hospital also served tuberculosis victims and those suffering from leprosy. A well-equipped dental unit is still there today.

1306. In Barret Montgomery, *Western Women in Eastern Lands*, 134.

1307. In a letter, dated 16 January 1925 (in Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 74–75).

1308. Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 83.

1309. *The Starry Cluster*, 5.

1310. *Windows*, 3.

1311. *Though The Mountains Shake*, 19 and 21.

From the Fellowship, the Accals come regularly to read the Bible for the patients and pray with them. During Christmas, the hospital was vacated, and former patients and other guests came, some from great distances, to hear the Gospel and hear again the vision. Many Hindus come to these meetings these days. The hospital catered for the Dohnavur family and for the six villages surrounding Dohnavur.

When the bells in the tower of the House of Prayer rang out the tune of 'At Even Ere the Sun Was Set' everybody knew that some serious operation was about to begin in the hospital.¹³¹² Whatever anyone was doing, or wherever they were, everybody knelt in silence, or sometimes gathered, to pray that the great physician's hand may be over the operator's hand. The prayer of the doctor was:

When in the still white room I stand
Thy viewless hand will guide my hand.
Dear Lord, what joy, what peace to be
About Thy healing work with Thee.

Murray Webb-Peploe meant a lot to the hospital. He was concerned with good nutrition (learnt in Australia), for instance that all the workers and patients would get the necessary protein. Murray wanted to live in an Indian way, but at the same time have a balanced diet. Extra milk, cheese and eggs were added to the diet, along with Marmite, as well as more fruit and vegetables. Hugh Evan Hopkins who was there valued Murray's realistic and practical approach: 'Murray brought humanity to Dohnavur. [...] He rooted us in reality.'¹³¹³ Often he was assisted by his mother, who lived at Nothernhay, in Kotagiri on the Nilgiri Hills. The hospital was up-to-date and the X-ray installation would do credit to any Western hospital of a similar size. Amy described the atmosphere inside the hospital as 'quietness', so rarely found in Indian hospitals. Philippe Berthoud, who took charge of all the wiring, plumbing and fitting of the X-ray plant, observed that when he arrived from Switzerland: 'what struck me immediately was the careful planning together with the touch of beauty'.¹³¹⁴ Murray was able to inspire and help many in and around Dohnavur, and people trusted him, which arose from his own close walk with God. 'He passes on what he receives of the heavenly manna,' said Amy. There was continuous traffic and intercourse with heavens.¹³¹⁵ After some years, Murray needed a rest and it was decided he would go to Australia for convalescence. He did not go alone; just before his departure in 1933, on 23 April he married Theoda Albertine Baroness Van Boetzelaer¹³¹⁶:

Murray's and Oda's Wedding day. A holy Day. Service at 6 p.m. 'O Splendour of God's will' sung before the sermon; 'Love through me, Love of God' before the end. 'Praise God' in the hall afterwards. They went in the lorry with M. and C. to Caruniapuram where Edith had all ready. She and her party came back here in the lorry.¹³¹⁷

The couple had met in Dohnavur. Oda, as the bride was called, was the first Dutch member of the Fellowship. Murray and Oda came back from Australia with their twin sons in 1935. In the central enclosure of the Place of Healing a new children's hospital was opened in 1938.¹³¹⁸

1312. See *Meal in a Barrel*, Chapter IV, 20–24.

1313. See Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 139.

1314. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 142.

1315. In *Dust of Gold*, May 1939.

1316. Theodora Albertine van Boetzelaer [born at De Bilt, Utrecht, The Netherlands on June 01, 1903, died on June 11, 1982 in Burgesshill, Sussex, UK]. Married at the age of 29 to Murray Hamilton Webb-Peploe on 24 April 1933 in Dohnavur. See Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 128–136.

1317. Entry in the logbook of the Dohnavur Fellowship, 1931–1941: Sunday, 23 April 1933 [in the Dohnavur library].

1318. *Though The Mountains Shake*, 18.

Medicine is a great asset in evangelisation and the building up of the indigenous church. Medical care demonstrates the love of God to the pagan heart; it breaks down prejudice, and opens the way for the preaching of the Gospel. Before Dohnavur had its own hospital, the nearest missionary hospital was the LMS hospital at Neyyoor, south Travancore, at a distance of about 35 miles. There was a Western staff and an Indian medical evangelist. 'There you have the science of the West at work, with the touch of the East upon it.'¹³¹⁹

Nancy Robbins¹³²⁰ in *Understanding to the Simple*¹³²¹ gives us a vivid account of hospital life in Dohnavur between 1948 and 1957. The life story of village women and their hospital experiences unfolds before our eyes, a gracious and fragrant narrative of human need and spiritual and medical response in rural south India. Itinerant medical work was undertaken from the hospital. In unevangelised districts, out-stations were established. The majority of India's population at that time lived in villages and patients who needed medical treatment and were unable to travel long distances for medical help were assisted in this way. The examples of missionaries' sacrificial spirit to do all they could do to help people in need impressed the Indians and gained their confidence and trust.

However good the medical and surgical work may have been, everything was done with the intention to win the patients for Christ. This meant a follow-up in terms of personal dealings with the patients who came. They were not 'cases' only¹³²² and patients cannot be nursed by machinery only. Special care and attention was given to each case. Always the commission was to 'make disciples'.

In opening a hospital, the Fellowship made a unique mission to provide strategic medical care to the people who otherwise had little access to medical facilities. In introducing medical care, the DF faced a new challenge, not so much from opposition by the Indians, but more from the pressure of the 'professionalization of missionary work'. Was not the Fellowship divorcing from evangelical aims? Amy herself rejected this trend, seeing in the hospital a unique way to reach the people with the Gospel. The medical work under the DF was directly linked with evangelism and it was instituted in obedience to our Lord's command to heal the sick as well as to preach the Gospel. It is evident that the medical work played a key role in the extension of the Gospel in south India. National workers, right from the start, served faithfully, hand in hand with foreign staff members. The hospital has never grown big, that was not the aim, but it provided medicines and staff for itinerant medical work, so that many in scattered, far-off places could be reached. The medical mission also played a prophetic role against unethical practices, such as marriage of very young girls. This kind of mission work represented the conscience of the Christian organisations from which they had come.

It had always been Amy's concern, next to the well-ordered organisation, to give Jesus Christ, and the people for whom he died, the right place in her thoughts and regime. An atmosphere of self-effacing love is as essential in the hospital as skilled surgeons and good ventilation. Patients cannot be nursed by machinery. Special care and attention must be given to the individual.¹³²³ There is nothing like heart-to-

1319. *Overweights of Joy*, 62.

1320. Nancy Robbins (Karunai Sittie), 1913–2013, served as medical doctor in Dohnavur 1946–1977. It was she who advised putting the children into mixed age groups in the children's cottages, instead of same-age sets. She was a keen and effective evangelist too.

1321. N. Robbins, *Understanding to the Simple* (London: Dohnavur Fellowship, 1958).

1322. Cf. the intention of Dr G. Whitfield Guinness in the CIM hospital in Honan: to educate medical students, next to the medical and surgical lectures in Bible study, to keep in touch with the Lord and to urge them to do also the work of an evangelist. He himself gave the example! 'At home as well as in the hospital, I want to put Christ first' (Howard Taylor, *Guinness of Honan*, 198–207).

1323. See the aim of the Christian hospital in Kai-feng, Honan, China, during the time Whitfield Guinness did his medical work there. In Howard Taylor, *Guinness of Honan*, 244–255.

heart contact with individuals. Whenever there was a baptismal service in the church several of those who received baptism and were welcomed in the church were ex-patients. In later years the treatment of patients with eye problems got special attention. A little booklet gives us a special light upon this work.¹³²⁴

A sudden surprising silence fell as Dr Rambo stood looking at his prospective patients, and began to introduce himself to them. He told of his journey down from Vellore, wonderfully protected by our God from all accident and delay. He told of his great desire to bring sight to eyes which by reason of disease could no longer see the light of the sun. And he told how the far more deadly disease called sin blinds the eyes of the soul so that people grope in darkness and despair, unable to see God. Lastly, he told of the Lord Jesus whose love led Him to die in order that sin might be taken away and blind eyes to see their God and Saviour. One of the team then prayed briefly and earnestly that during the coming day might receive both physical and spiritual sight. And our eye-camp had begun. In the women's ward was one who had come to us wretchedly ill three years ago. Her husband was angry with her because of her illness, and refused to support her. So she quietly sold her jewels to pay her expenses during her lengthy stay in Hospital. The Lord healed her. He also saved her. And at the end of the year, in spite of her husband's bitter threats and opposition she was baptized. Something in her courageous witness evidently touched her husband, for he changed his mind about her and took her back into their home. The following year he too was baptized, having been won for the Lord chiefly by his wife's witness. This woman, who is ill again, and who is not very wealthy, hearing of the eye-camp, asked if she might give a gift to help the blind people. Her Christianity is a matter of life and deed, not of pious phraseology, and her gift was very large in comparison with her income.¹³²⁵

■ Rules and way of life

The DF compound – ‘a mere and delightful henhouse’¹³²⁶ grew considerably from 1904. The family feeling was a happy one, and to realise this Amy was assisted by many Sitties and Accals. The children were neatly clothed; Indian dress was usual though without decorations and jewellery. In Amy's way, it was very colourful although she had her own restrictions. One day Nesaruthina had put a ribbon in her hair, but Amy changed it. Her argument: ‘without a ribbon, this is as the Lord gave it to you, your hair, and not with the ribbon’.¹³²⁷ On Saturday afternoons expeditions to the foothills were undertaken. Quarrels among the children – they were children like all other children – should not happen and if it occurred, repentance and forgiveness was swift.

There were no salaried workers, Indian or foreign. There were also no workers in Dohnavur who were only preachers. The evangelists shared in the practical work of life – doctoring, nursing, teaching, building, engineering, gardening, farming and so on. As soon as the girls and the boys were grown up, some of the most reliable became fellow workers. There were never enough workers and it was difficult to allow one who was in a responsible position to take a long rest:

[F]or we have no duplicates anywhere; and in a close-knit family the incalculable quality of love must be taken into account in making arrangements for the help of anyone. [...] There is nothing so demanding as the spiritual training of the young. It asks for everything we have to give, and for everything always.¹³²⁸

1324. *Recovering of Sight to the Blind* (Dohnavur Fellowship booklet no. 31).

1325. *Recovering of Sight to the Blind*, 3–4 and 12–13.

1326. *The Continuation of a Story*, 32.

1327. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1328. *Windows*, 16 and 17.

The work in Dohnavur was difficult due to the constraint laid upon the team to keep the work pure. Amy knew that taking care of young children was not considered honourable work, and the women willing to do this kind of work were often not of a desirable character. It was very difficult, with the high moral standard, to get suitable women to assist in the care for the children. Lowering the standard, and taking anyone as a paid worker, was that an option? It was, until Ponnamal advised: 'Let us work till we fall, but do not let us have women in as nurses who will spoil the whole work.'¹³²⁹ What they required was: 'endurance, courage, a capacity for happiness, love'.¹³³⁰ Slackness in the work was abhorred, and when people around Dohnavur watched one of the workers, they had to see 'incorruptible in her integrity' and 'imperishable quality of love'.¹³³¹ Amy did not want to have negative conversations and she avoided talking in a negative way about other persons. In others people's work one should accentuate the positive and avoid the negative. Confrontation with the misery or degradation of others, in the midst of the strain of those early days, was sometimes too much. To find the joy in these situations, the faith and the devotion for the undertaking in Dohnavur, strong faith was needed for all the workers. However, Spirit-filled hearts under whatever name, are always tender. They see through many tears of a divine compassion. With so many people of different ages, of which the majority were (unmarried) women, many workers from other continents and young children growing towards adulthood, very easily misunderstandings and gossip penetrated into the community and disturbed the harmony of love.

In 1939, Amy felt she had to write a letter to her children concerning disharmony within the community. In the margin, she wrote: 'Keep this letter. It is not likely that I shall write again about this of this matter'. The DF had done according to her wish, because the letter is still in the office of the Fellowship in Dohnavur.¹³³² We will quote a large part of this letter because here we see that Amy went to the core of all disharmony, and pleaded for her children in a spiritual and powerful way, as Moses did for the children of Israel. It hurt her deeply when she sensed that her children, as she felt it, sinned against Calvary love.

The heading of the letter goes as, 'To my children who are comrades in the war'. She writes about the distress she had as:

I think of a misunderstanding that had never had been between two of you who love the Lord Jesus. We do not know what the reason of this misunderstanding was.

She goes on: 'This kind of distress comes too often.' She writes to them that if they go on in this way they will destroy their own soul and grieve the Holy Spirit. One Accal has to serve the other Accal and one Annachie the other. What put all things right is, when 'you talk together in the Presence of the Lord'. 'There would be truth on both sides, but the Lord would be in between and guide their talks.' Amy then refers to former difficulties, how they go 'into real prayer'. She taught everybody a lesson:

We are too big a family for that to be possible now, but it is as important now as ever it was that all should be clear, who are out of love with any other one. [...] O my children if only you would wake up your minds never to doubt the love of another sister or brother in Christ, but always to think the best. [...] But why do some of you even encourage that warp to sting? I beseech you to have done with this. Refine it. Hate it. It may seem a lust, but it is of hell'. We are all human. We may forget things we should remember. [...] Speaking to instead of

1329. *Ponnamal*, 52.

1330. *Ponnamal*, 58.

1331. *Ponnamal*, 63 and 97.

1332. Letter written by Amy, 07 December 1939, in the office of the DF.

the one who did it. [...] Will you for the sake of love of Christ have done with them all? Will you make up your mind never again to take up against your neighbour? Will you trust instead of troubling one another? Will you, who are so greatly loved, love? I remember now in the very last birthday meeting [...] I stopped and feeling too broken to go on because of something that had happened to grieve love, I said, 'If this were the last time I could speak to you, I should say just these words, "Beloved, let us love." My children, my comrades in the war of the Lord. I say these words to you again, "Beloved, let us love".'

Amy writes about Moses, praying the Lord to forgive the sins of the people:

If not, blot me, I pray Thee out of the book which Thou has written. [...] I think of Calvary. I see that love, that pain; I hear the words You said so well, the words of uttermost agony: 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?' And when I think of how we, redeemed at such a case can stoop to think of such personal strife and magnify it, and go on doing so, till in very truth we are crucifying the Son of God afresh. And I am ashamed before Him. God forgive us. God forgive us, God forgive you – 'and if not' – yes, I can and I do pray this awful prayer, for what is anything to me if you, my children, and the children God has given you and to be content to shame the Lord who has redeemed you? [...] God forbid that we should add to the unlove of India and of this sad sinful world. But with Thee is forgiveness. [...] Remember these last words. They are too often forgotten. Fear to sin against love. Fear to dishonour your Lord. Fear with a holy fear the worst smell beginning of this hellish sin. Beloved let us love. O let us love. We perish if we do not love. Let us love. Your sontha Ammai.

The standard of living and what she expected from all Fellowship members was high. Too high? When asked this question, she replied:

Yes, we believe, as one has said, that history cries out against the notion that a vigorous corporate life can be achieved and a lasting impact can be made by any community which makes few or no demands on its membership.¹³³³

She stood for the hallowing of common things but also for:

- Pre-eminence of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things.
- Obedience to His highest known wish – 'a wish is a command to one who loves'.
- The truth that the Unseen, the Eternal is of far more importance than the Seen, the Temporal.
- The necessity to weigh everything in the scales of the Sanctuary, as even the gold that was brought for an offering was weighed in those scales. This means, not ever. 'Not what doth man or woman say about this or that?', but 'What saith the Lord?'.
- Restful dependence upon all the promises of God. It follows that we have full assurance in the truth of His Book.
- The conviction that those who bear the vessels of the Lord must be clean, that a sin unconfessed, cuts the nerve of prayer and the power to serve.
- Dependence upon God for grace, strength, guidance that we may do the things which He plans beforehand and we should do.
- Love, loyal love the one to the other.
- The principle known as vital unity. By this we mean that underlying unity of spirit which is not affected by race, name of sign.
- The truth taught by our Lord when He said, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit'.
- And everything under the one motto: 'Love never faileth'.¹³³⁴

1333. *The Starry Cluster*, 18.

1334. *The Starry Cluster*, 18–19.

■ Love for God's creation

Amy reshaped the DF compound into a beautiful place full of trees and flowers. The bushy place became a 'Garden Village'.¹³³⁵ She must have thought of her grandmother's love for flowers and the beautiful garden in Portaferry where she often stayed during holiday times. In Dohnavur she still remembered the colours and the smell of the flowers:

Don't you think our heavenly Father is very kind to give us 'that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude' so that we can see ever again? Sometimes the scent of a flower will waken memory and we see and feel and hear again, just as if we were feeling and hearing and seeing now. You remember how Wordsworth end his daffodil song:

And then my heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the daffodils.¹³³⁶

The whole atmosphere of love and joy was a place where the soul came to rest. It was the prayer of its people when the Lord was weary with the sin and the sorrow of the world. He might walk in their garden as a day drew to its close, and find rest and joy, not only in the flowers, but in the family which he had gathered to himself from the dark places of the earth.¹³³⁷ We get an impression of the abundance of flowers when she wrote:

Flowers looking in at the window and down from the roof, for a climbing alamanda, with its large soft yellow flowers, grew in between the top of the wall and the roof, and hung its bells overhead. For our compound enclosed in its walls is like a great garden; all manner of lovely things grow happily in it, its trees are always green. People coming into it from the dried up land beyond have wondered at its greenness. So we had shown the nurseries set in their fifteen acres of garden ground, whose walls coloured the soft red of the earth here and are covered in places with the polished leaves and yellow bells of alamanda and whose house gate is a mass of blue convolvulus.¹³³⁸

A wide range of books about birds and dogs can be found among the many books in Amy's room. In Dohnavur Amy enjoyed the fellowship of some little dogs and many birds. She had several books about the food and the treatment of birds and dogs.¹³³⁹ In the margin we read several comments. In Kipling's *The Power of the Dog*, where he deals with the mistreatment of dogs, she commented: 'Was it fair to his dog?' In her copy of *Animals As Friends* she wrote:

It's delightful and should be a great help to everybody. Get the right way in, wherever there are pets (if not in, already). The book is packed with help of all sorts. How I wish everyone, everywhere were brought up on this tradition.¹³⁴⁰

1335. In Dohnavur letter no. 2, 1924 (PRONI D/4031/24/1A), 11.

1336. *Amma's Book*, 11.

1337. Cf. G. Webb-Peploe, *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, 61.

1338. *Ponnamal*, 88 and 100; *Nor Scrip*, 1.

1339. Cf. K.F. Barker, *Just Dogs* (London: Country Life Ltd, 1937). Of this book she wrote on the first page: 'A delight'. D.J. Watkins-Pitchford, *Manka, The Sky Gypsy* (London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1939): 'Full of things worth knowing – but cruel men spoil it all. Should be read with gay. It makes bird-life real'. P. Sharpe, *Your Dog in India* (Bombay: Thacker & Co. Ltd, 1944). P. Kirmse, *Shakespeare with the Pets* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1935); J. Nicolson, *Winks, His book* (London: Jarrolds, 1934): 'Delightful and teaching too'. R. Kipling, *Thy Servant A Dog* (London: McMillan & Co, 1930). J. Rohan, *Rags. The Story of a Dog Who Went to War* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1930). Amy wrote: 'A book for dog lovers'.

1340. In M. Shaw & J. Fisher, *Animals As Friends, and How to Keep Them* (London: Dent & Sons Ltd, 1939).

In *Tail-Waggers Great Book*¹³⁴¹ she made several remarks, such as ‘Why cut a dog’s tail?’ when God created the dog like that! She read that many dogs are suspicious of a hand that is advanced towards them, so it is wise to put the hand out back uppermost, and then she writes in the margin: ‘I was taught this as a child. It gives faith.’ She loved God’s creation and could write ‘Blessed be the maker of dogs’.¹³⁴² For her the author of *The Lonely Dog*, was ‘A dear man’, and that lonely dog was one that made ‘one’s heart ache over all the lost dogs in the world’.¹³⁴³ Once she thought of the story of Benaiah in 2 Samuel 23:20, who during the time of snow entered a pit in which a lion had fallen. Benaiah slew the lion. Here Amy comments: ‘I have always felt sorry for that lion. Lions detest snow, and that lion did not have a sporting chance. But his troubles are over now.’¹³⁴⁴

She could not understand how people could mistreat their animals. Once she wrote, after having read of someone who mistreated his dog, ‘How can a man be so cruel?’¹³⁴⁵ Once a child had killed a butterfly. Amy pinched the child on the arm and said to her: ‘Now you feel what that butterfly felt’, and she could not bear it when an old man crushed a butterfly against the church wall during a service. She saw and felt the sufferings of God’s creation and behind that crushing of a butterfly she saw how little girls were ‘crushed’ in the temples.¹³⁴⁶ In P. Kelway’s *The Squirrel Book*,¹³⁴⁷ she repeatedly makes remarks like ‘Cruel to bird’, about the removal of claws. In the margin is a big ‘NO’ and other remarks as ‘horrid’. The author writes: ‘Salt is not good for a dog’, and Amy comments: ‘We give a very little. Is that bad?’

Amy loved birds. Grey’s *Charm of Birds*¹³⁴⁸ was a pleasure to read for her. On the veranda of the bungalow were several birdcages with all kinds of canaries. The book *Canary keeping in India*,¹³⁴⁹ thoroughly read by her, was one of her favourites. ‘Birds never gossip, and never backbite’, according to Amy. That she knew several different species of canaries we see in the following: in this canary book is a picture with 12 different canary types, and Amy has exactly the correct name for each canary. In her copy of *The Roller Canary*, she just wrote ‘cruel’ in the margin, when the author suggested in obstinate cases to reduce the food of plain rapeseed and ‘on this a bird will not have an inclination to shout’.¹³⁵⁰ In Dohnavur is a letter¹³⁵¹ from Spencer & Company from Madras, dated 17 May 1941, with advice to her about which canary food the company could supply. Amy indicated on this paper what she wanted to order. It was a food that would give the birds a deeper colour! Amy enjoyed T.R. Treloar’s book about the perfection and

1341. Mrs Herbert-Strang, *Tail-Waggers Book* (London: Oxford-University Press, 1933).

1342. This she wrote in the front page of a book about dogs, D.M. Large, *The Kind Companion* (London: The Lutterworth Press, 1891). Amy liked this book, considering her remark written on the first page: ‘Dear book’. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1343. A.C.B. Bellerby, *The Lonely Dog. A True Story* (London: John Miles, 1937). The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1344. In *Whispers of His Power*, 28 January, 28.

1345. On p. 209 of Rowland James, *Dogs You’d Like to Meet*. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1346. Cf. *Ponnamal*, 9. Cf. too the way Barbara Trehane describes her care for the one week old mongoose Micky: ‘Micky’s happy life is based on one thing only: his absolute confidence that I will take care of him and never harm him’ (in B.M.G. Trehane, *Micky and his Dohnavur Friends* (London: Dohnavur Fellowship, n.d.), 14.

1347. P. Kelway, *The Squirrel Book* (London: Collins, 1945).

1348. V. Grey, *The Charm of Birds* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, n.d.). This book is in the Dohnavur library.

1349. I. Tweed, *Canary Keeping in India* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1907). This book is in the Dohnavur library.

1350. J. Tomlinson, *The Roller Canary* (Strand: The Cage Bird Fancy, n.d.), 24. This book is in the Dohnavur library.

1351. In the Dohnavur library.

classification of colour varieties in his *Budgerigars*.¹³⁵² Amy got this book from Olive, on 22 June 1944, and wrote 'To be enjoyed'.

Nesaruthina remembered Amy sitting in her armchair on the veranda, where she watched the birds. She told the children to look at these birds and she taught them to love these creatures of God. In September each year, a children's service was held in the House of Prayer especially to give thanks for all the pets of the children. As many as they could, the children brought the animals into the church building on that special Sunday morning, a little calf, a donkey, squirrels, a white rat, doves, etc.¹³⁵³ From her room Amy could see the garden and often walked there just to enjoy the flowers and trees. She read *A Book of Roses*¹³⁵⁴ and wrote on the title page 'A lovely work. Pure Delight'. When it had rained she drew the children's attention to the sunlight through the raindrops to admire the beautiful colours.

Often God's daily delights were mixed with anxieties and troubles, inside and outside. Was not she with the Fellowship on a battlefield? And was not in the unseen leader with them in the battle?

Why should we fear for His work, whether it be in a place dear as the apple of our eye to us, or in a soul to succour whom we would pour out all we have? Are the children of these lands, yes and of our cities at home and of all waste places, un-regarded by Him?¹³⁵⁵

She read her Bible very carefully, for in the margin of Matthew 15:26: 'Not dogs – puppies. Dogs never were fed so, but pups were'.¹³⁵⁶ Her work was done in happiness. 'I am never unhappy except when I hear of wrongdoing or think of the grief of the world'. In God's presence there is fullness of joy, and 'we should be the most radiant of people with such a Lord'.¹³⁵⁷ 'We have the presence and the promises of God'.¹³⁵⁸

■ Conflict with Stephen Neill

Stephen Charles Neill (1900–1984) was an 'eminent figure in the world church scene in the 20th century. He was, perhaps, the most prolific missiologist during the time'.¹³⁵⁹ Less known is that he started his mission career in Dohnavur in 1924. For him it was a dark period, and that was the reason that even in his autobiography he never mentioned Amy and the DF.¹³⁶⁰ What happened in Dohnavur that time?

Around 1924 several new workers arrived in Dohnavur and they were doing well, but Amy had some anxieties concerning one of them, Stephen Neill. He had come to Dohnavur with his parents, who were medical doctors, and he was to oversee the boys work. For both Amy and Neill, with their strong Irish nature, their fixed visions, it was very difficult to go through one door, which eventually culminated in the fact that Neill was turned out of the house. Mostly the Dohnavur story is one of comings and

1352. T.R. Treloar, *Budgerigars* (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens Ltd., 1936).

1353. In B.C. Osman, *Buds and Teddies* (London: SPCK, 1936), 58.

1354. J. Ramsbottom, *A Book of Roses* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1939).

1355. *From The Forest*, 14.

1356. In Amy's Bible (1895). Matthew 15:26, 'And He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread, and throw it to the dogs"' (RSV).

1357. *Candles in the Dark*, 105.

1358. *Gold by Moonlight*, 15.

1359. See Daugherty, *Bishop Stephen Neill*, 250.

1360. E.M. Jackson, *God's Apprentice, The Autobiography of Stephen Neill* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991).

goings, steady growth, and regular crises, but this crisis concerning the arrival and leaving of Stephen Neill and his parents,¹³⁶¹ who came to Dohnavur in November 1925, was a very severe one. This crisis has been the object of many speculations. The Neill family working together with Amy was, in the words of Elisabeth Elliot, ‘a bad mix’.¹³⁶² In first instance, the arrival of Dr and Mrs Neill was for Amy a real blessing:

What is it to have someone who understands things straight off, and is absolutely in sympathy? There was nothing to explain even our ‘peculiar Dohnavur ways’ were all his ways. There was no need for us to be one, we were one to start with.¹³⁶³

The children called Dr Neill ‘Arul Iyer’, which means ‘the graciousness one’. For his son Stephen, who arrived some months later, Amy had high expectations. Could he be the second Ragland? And when Amy was writing *Ragland*, she intended to have Stephen’s initials on the dedication page ‘for we were then in touch with him’. And then she goes on:

I was anxious not to do anything which could seem to imply that falling into particular ground of Dohnavur was the will of God for him. I was continue praying (and he knew it) that if he could be diverted he would be formost earnestly we only want those who are called with a call about which there is no mistake, for to join us means an acceptance of the corn of wheat life in certain very definite ways. But of one thing I am abundantly sure: God never wastes his corns of wheat.¹³⁶⁴

But the Lord had other plans with Stephen and his parents, for after a short period they all left Dohnavur, leaving behind them a distressed and a confused Amy. In his autobiography Stephen Neill chose not to mention that he had ever been anywhere near Dohnavur. It is sure there was a deep conflict of wills, and that Neill in effect had been given his marching orders by Amy. Two characters, two strong Irish tempers; the clash between two such strong imperious personalities must have been awesome. Amy felt it as a defeat, hypersensitive as she always was to tension among Christians, especially those for whom she felt some responsibility. Although she was not infallible, as a judge of character she did her utmost to secure only fully committed Christians to work at Dohnavur. When she failed in judgement, her reaction was always to blame herself first. As always, her convictions about disputed matters were as strong as ever, but she never did say a hard word against anybody, and no word that could suggest self-praise escaped her lips.

To this day, there is still some controversy about Stephen Neill’s work in India.¹³⁶⁵ The premature termination of his ministry there was traumatic. Neill had plunged into evangelism in south India after leaving Trinity College, Cambridge. He had acquainted himself with the Tamil language. At the time of his arrival in India, according to his own words, ‘the great tradition of Tamil scholarship among missionaries had practically died out’.¹³⁶⁶ He was of the opinion that wherever you are you learn the

1361. In the missionary meeting of the Keswick Convention of 1928 Mrs Neill from India reported that both her husband and she had received their missionary call at Keswick before they were known to each other (Sloan, *These Sixty Years*, 96).

1362. In *A Chance to Die*, 234.

1363. In Dohnavur letter, no. 4, December 1924, p. 5 (PRONI D/4061/30/1).

1364. In Dohnavur letter, no. 4, December 1924, p. 5 (PRONI D/4061/30/1).

1365. Elliot deals with the Neill episode in some detail, in contrast to Houghton, who merely hints at it, mentioning no names. In 1939, Stephen Neill became Anglican bishop of Tinnevely, with pastoral responsibility for the geographic area that included Dohnavur, at which time Amy severed her remaining Anglican connections. This might have been just as well, all things considered. On some of the complexities of Neill’s character, see E.M. Jackson, ‘The continuing legacy of Stephen Neill’, *IBMR* 19(2) (1995): 77–80.

1366. *God’s Apprentice*, 87.

language of the people. 'I made up my mind that I would learn Tamil or die.' However, he felt he had to leave Dohnavur and wrote his letter of resignation. His reason he describes as follows:

Fellow Christians had brought into my life such darkness and suffering that it took me many years to recover from the injuries, and the scars are still there. [...] But I thought that for the time being I might be better out of things – I would take advantage of my fellowship, which had three years to run, learn Sanskrit for a couple of years, and then come back to start again, better equipped for the work among high-caste Hindus.¹³⁶⁷

In the 1970s, Stephen Neill (1900–1984), wrote in a newspaper about his vision of missions, in which he strongly disagrees with the forming of the traditional missionary 'fellowships' within the Church:

Any attempt to create another and more intimate fellowship within the Church is certain to be harmful and is certain to be bitterly resented by the Christians of the other race.¹³⁶⁸

Strong words, echoing that Neill after his retirement still had bitter, negative feelings about what had happened when he as a young missionary staff worker had been working in Dohnavur. Much of what happened at that time, and the background of the conflict is explained in Daughrity's study.¹³⁶⁹ Stephen openly opposed Amy's leadership. For instance:

One day Amy said to Stephen to give his love to the people in the villages, surrounding Dohnavur. He said: 'That is silly' and he felt very offended and that he for himself could not choose what to do and where to work.

On this Amy remarked: 'You are expressing yourself too much'.¹³⁷⁰ Another worker in Dohnavur thought that Neill was 'temperamentally unsuited to the situation'. He was known to have given in to several violent explosions of temper during which he beat some of the Dohnavur boys. Stephen, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, acted in Dohnavur as a lay missionary. In October 1923 Tim Houghton, preparing for mission service, met Marjorie Neill, whose parents had offered to serve with BCMS in India. Tim found Marjorie a 'lovely girl', but after she had joined her parents, she died of typhoid. That happened when she worked in Mirzapur. It was Tim who wrote of her brother that his 'views on the inspiration of the Bible were uncertain', and he knew of Marjorie's anxiousness about 'her brother's theological position as tending towards liberalism'.¹³⁷¹ Was Amy afraid he would influence the children with his thoughts? His intellectual training in Cambridge was not well suited for the 'Keswick' fundamental environment, because he questioned some biblical issues. Did Amy know more about his attraction to young boys and did she want to protect the Dohnavur boys who had been rescued from a life of shame?¹³⁷² Amy covered it and was very sad that he had to go. For her there was

1367. *God's Apprentice*, 93.

1368. In *The Church of England Newspaper* on 13 November 1970. Quotation in L. Lyall, *A World to Win* (London: IVF/OMF, 1972), 34.

1369. See Daughrity, *Bishop Stephen Neill*, chapters 3 and 4, 'A Conflicted Mission and Diocese' and 'Conflict with Amy Carmichael', 67–121. The book speaks of the 'nuns' in Dohnavur (p. 98) and also quotes Jeyakumar, who writes 'Amma discouraged "her girls" to get married' (p. 103). NB: The members of the DF did not live in a convent and the girls been were never prohibited by Amy to marry!

1370. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur. 'From the moment Neill arrived in Dohnavur, tensions arose and problems came about' (quotation from R. Pierard in Daughrity, *Bishop Stephen Neill*, 96 [note 15]).

1371. In T. Yates, *Pioneer Missionary, Evangelical Statesman. A Life of A.T. [Tim] Houghton* (Central Milton: Author House, 2011), 51 and 32.

1372. In the author's opinion, Amy already sensed Neill's sexual struggles. Daughrity writes that this was part of the problem in his downfall in 1945 from the bishopric in Tinnevely (p. 247). Daughrity also quotes Bishop Holloway who wrote in 2003 that 'it was well known that he was a brilliant man with a tragic flaw, sadomasochism, which contributed to his departure from India' (p. 242).

no other way. Before Neill left the Dohnavur compound, his parents, who had worked there as medics for some months, left for Suvisheshapuram. For Amy this was a terrible episode. This is recorded by Elliot when she quotes Amy from her diary, 'May 30, 1925, most painful night of my life' and that night she prayed¹³⁷³:

O Saviour, must the sword O Lord of thorns and nails
Smite sharp, nor spare? And piercing spear
Then come, O loving Lord, The coward in me quails
Give strength to bear. Come near, come near.

She often prayed for a renewal of hope. Could the friction be healed? 'Keep me from looking back on what appeared to be guidance.' Amy, no doubt, was sensitive to the potential difficulty of a man working under the authority of a woman, particularly at that time, and did everything to avoid that prejudice. Were the men 'overruled' and adversely affected by the majority of female workers and recruits? The relationships with the Webb-Peploe brothers, John Risk and other male workers in Dohnavur convince us that in Neill's case this could not have been the problem. Amy had been ready to hand over the leadership to male workers, so we have to look for other reasons why the relationship between Amy and Neill ended.

Daughrity's study lays open Neill's complex character and his two great conflicts, one as an educator in Dohnavur with Amy (1924–1925) and the other as bishop of Tinnevely (1939–1944), which ultimately led to his downfall from the Tinnevely bishopric (1944–1945). One can only say, especially in the case of his conflict with Amy, that the word 'obedience' was not to be found in his dictionary. It was very difficult for him to listen to his superiors. The stirring scuffle of not recognising and obeying the Dohnavur leadership and the most dramatic event in his life, losing the Tinnevely Bishopric, gave him a pain from which he never recovered. In his posthumously published autobiography, Neill never mentions Amy's name and the DF; he only blames others as to the cause of his dismissal there:

It was there that I wrote my letter of resignation. [...] During that first year, fellow Christians had brought into my life such darkness and suffering that it took me many years to recover from their injuries, and the scars are still there.¹³⁷⁴

At the end of his book, Neill writes: 'In eighty years, I have experienced many rough passages'.¹³⁷⁵ He was unable to be 'critical of himself' and 'most comfortable when he was in total control', in short a 'homeless mind'.¹³⁷⁶ Houghton himself writes in a somewhat evasive way about this whole issue between Amy and Stephen Neill: he does not even mention his name! The only reason for it can be that he did not want to put his colleague in a bad light.

1373. In *A Chance to Die*, 235. A contemporary of Amy's suggested that the Neills came with the idea of 'doing a takeover' (Daughrity, *Bishop Stephen Neill*, 109). However, this has never been proven to be true. The Neill family did not agree with the strict separation between the boys and the girls. They did not understand that this was according to the Indian culture at that time. Amy herself did not agree with Stephen's use of a cane to punish the boys. In what Daughrity writes about Neill's punishment method in Tinnevely as bishop, Amy indeed could have known more about Stephen's violent explosions of temper (p. 195).

1374. *God's Apprentice*, 93. Among historians who have studied Neill's life seriously, 'there is a consensus that Neill deliberately airbrushed this information [about his stay in Dohnavur] out of his CV' (p. 104).

1375. *God's Apprentice*, 333. Daughrity's *Bishop Stephen Neill* gives some suggestions of what might have caused his attitude. Was it his problematic youth in a boarding school? Or the eagerness to be always the first in class, of his 'mixing his sexuality with his bizarre disciplinary methods' (p. 64)?

1376. Here Daughrity quotes Peter Berger. In Neill, *God's Apprentice*, 248.

Amy always had a deep understanding about the way in which the Fellowship should develop. She was not in for any compromise. Should we not suffer for Christ's sake? Should we not rather be afraid of avoiding it through cowardly compromise? Daugherty says that:

[O]n a deeper level, it is fair to say that despite Amy Carmichael's impressive piety and tender heart, she could be exacting, dictatorial, even insolent when it came to defending her principles. Perhaps Neill and Carmichael were two peas in a pod – strikingly similar in their dealings with people.¹³⁷⁷

In January 1926, Stephen's service at Dohnavur ended. Their separation hurt both. 'Both loved each other'¹³⁷⁸ and later on when Neill was bishop in Tinnevely, according to Nesaruthina, he expressed his love for Amy: 'I adored her, the way she loved the children'. 'She was the instrument to find my life work' and 'inwardly I was very proud to work in Tinnevely where Amy worked once'.¹³⁷⁹ After Neill had gone the work went on in Dohnavur. In what way? Amy put down these questions on paper:

But do not some go away? Some have been unable to stay for medical reasons; some for other reasons equally compelling. And some went out from us because they were not of us, for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us. What is the effect upon you of such a disappointment as a parting of the last kind must be? It moves us the more to look to Him who never disappoints. We earnestly look to Him. Then we close up the ranks and go on.¹³⁸⁰

The whole affair had hurt her deeply, she who always tried to emphasise Christ's love for sinners, his dying on the Cross, and should we not therefore work and talk in the mind of this love? In *China, My China* she underlined one sentence, and wrote this sentence on the first page, which explicitly expresses her own thoughts about issues of disagreement: 'Agree to differ, but resolve to love'.¹³⁸¹

■ '... and the fellowship of His suffering'

The words from Hebrews 12:7, 'Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons' (NIV), had a special meaning in Amy's life. She would experience that hardship was an indispensable and invaluable ingredient in the experience of a child of God. She got a deeper understanding of God's love and a purity of heart and life. God as it seemed denied her the service that she so urgently desired:

It is at such times that we have the opportunity of being refined by the fire, of being ground by the millstones. In such circumstances we either crack with the heat, or become refined and smooth; we either break under the grinding-stone or become fine-flour for bread for the hungry.¹³⁸²

Early morning, on 24 October 1931, Amy prayed, 'Do with me as Thou wilt. Do ANYTHING, Lord that will fit me to serve Thee and help my beloveds'.¹³⁸³ The entry in the Dohnavur logbook that day starts with the ordinary events and then in another handwriting: 'Amma had an accident at Kalakadu 5.30 p.m.

1377. In 'A Dissonant Mission', 18.

1378. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1379. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1380. In *The Starry Cluster*, 9.

1381. Cf. H.B. Rattenbury, *China, My China* (London: Frederick Muller Ltd, 1944), 246.

1382. In F. Mitchell, *At Break of Day, Daily Meditations for the Year* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications Ltd, 1981), 27 (21 January).

1383. In Skoglund, *Amma*, 15. Cf. too her remark: 'I'm in Nero's prison, but I'm not Nero's prisoner' (E. Stanley Jones, *In Christ*, (Nashville: Abingdon, 1961), 207.

Ronald took her straight to Neyyoor. On the way car wonderfully protected going over particularly hidden and very dangerous road.' On a visit that day to Kalakadu (Joyous City), a serious accident occurred, which was to change the whole further course of her life. The Fellowship had bought a house in Kalakadu, in which some workers, who were going to do evangelistic work in that town and environment, could stay. Kalakadu was also the town where Amy nearly 30 years before had seen the lotus buds in the temple pool, where she then had had the vision of little children, belonging not to the temples but to God.

Amy had come to the town to inspect the house, which was nearly ready for the missionaries to stay in permanently. First, there was no one who had the key, and after a key was found it was already getting dark when Amy wanted to enter the house. An unseen hole near the entrance of the house caused the change in Amy's situation. She fell into it, broke her ankle and her back was distorted. As soon as possible, she was driven to Neyyoor, where Dr Somervell set the limb. She stayed here until 03 November. In the entry of the logbook she wrote: 'Home. Goodness and Mercy'. In due time several other operations were performed, but she did not recover; from that day she never was one day without pain. She was confined to her room and could not take part in the physical activities of the Fellowship. In the first years she went out – although not often – by car, but mostly she was to be found in her room or on the veranda. Sometimes they took her for an outing, or she was carried up to the forest. The routine day-to-day business was done by the Webb-Peploe brothers, May Powell or Arulai. From 1931 onwards the emphasis of Amy's biography more and more moved from the outward events of the Fellowship and concentrated more upon her personal relationship with Christ. The past 30 years, from the start until 1931 had been years full of shaping the DF with Amy in the middle of the web. An early member of the Starry Cluster remembered Amy before she had the accident, as one who was 'not walking, nor even running but always *flying*, with many a glance at a wristlet watch "lest we waste moments"'.¹³⁸⁴ From her bed, she often looked at the oil painting presented to her by Dr Somervell of Nanga Parbat. The glorious view of the mountains kept Amy's vision alive. The climb was not yet over, nor the fight. In those days she underlined the words of the poet Stephen Phillips, accentuated the very place in the margin and wrote: 'Read many, many times since Oct. 24. 1931'.

But when Thy joy is past; comes in the test,
To front the life that lingers after zest: [...]
Sustain me in that hour with Thy left hand,
And aid me, when I cease to soar, to stand;
Make me Thy athlete even in my bed,
Thy girded runner though the course be sped;
Still to refrain that I may bestow,
From sternness to a larger sweetness grow.¹³⁸⁵

The Lord used her in a wonderful way. She spent a long time in prayer for each of her children; many books were prepared and out of her often painful situation arose many a helpful reflection on the problem of the Lord's dealings with his children and the meaning of the Cross. She, who had always seen the work in Dohnavur as a battle, knew that the accident was not a defeat. For her there was no discharge from the war. From her bed, she kept the charge and continued the battle to save children in danger. Amy received a letter from an aspirant member of the Fellowship, who with his fiancée wanted to work in Dohnavur. That fiancée had written, 'I know that for us it is to be swords drawn, up to the gates of heaven'. These words pleased Amy, for she wrote:

I was thinking of the so much greater and more protracted trials that might be part of life for these two – for married life, if both husband and wife are pledged soldiers, is a sacrificial thing from the first day.

1384. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 293.

1385. In T.H. Ward (ed.), *The English Poets* (vol. V; London: MacMillan & Co., 1918), 550.

For those two and other ‘soldiers’ elsewhere she wrote, looking also at her own battle wounds:

No soldier on service is ever ‘laid aside’; he is only given another commission, sometimes just to suffer (we are not told yet the use of that), sometimes, when pain and weakness lessen a little, to fight among the unseen forces of the field. Never, never is he shelved as of no further use to his Beloved Captain. [...] Only, as I have been learning through these months, the soldier must let his Captain say where, and for what, He needs him most, and he must not cloud his mind with questions. A wise master never wastes his servant’s time, nor a commander his soldier’s – there is a great comfort in remembering that. So let us settle it once for all and find heart’s ease in doing so. There is no discharge in our warfare – no, not for a single day. We are never hors de combat. We may be called to serve on the visible field, going continually into the invisible both to renew our strength and to fight the kind of battle that can be fought only there. Or we may be called off the visible altogether for a while, and drawn deep into the invisible. That dreary word ‘laid aside’ is never for us; we are soldiers of the King of kings. Soldiers are not shelved.¹³⁸⁶

Being convalescent was not easy for Amy, who was naturally an energetic and active person. Later she thought that she never found patience easy, being by nature a most impatient mortal. Even one week in bed seemed for her impossible in the old days.¹³⁸⁷ Despite her own suffering, she remained others-centred. Because of her own trials, Amy was able to have a remarkable empathy for the sufferings others had to endure, offering comfort and refreshment even when those trials were comparatively mild compared with hers.

Amy was to stay in bed for weeks, but weeks became years. When she was busy day by day, she often wondered ‘at the power and the endurance I saw in the ill and the maimed. The mere thought of indoor life was anathema to me. How did they endure it?’¹³⁸⁸ Were those people never much discouraged, she asked herself. For her, always the busy one, could she endure the way the Lord went with her? She longed to be well and walk like all the others. Some days she was down and she saw herself in an ‘abyss of distress and fear’.¹³⁸⁹ It was Satan who was chaining her: ‘It is only that the devil does not want you here at all’.¹³⁹⁰ ‘But all our problems are open to God and all will fit into His plan. [...] Let us claim the blessing of the un-offended.’¹³⁹¹ ‘The Father holds His children very close to His heart when they are going through such rough places as this.’¹³⁹² Ten years before she had the accident Amy had written:

To be ill in India can never be easy. It is a land to live for, and (most joyfully) to die in, but it is not a land to be ill in, unless one can command seclusion and quiet, and few missionaries can do that.¹³⁹³

She then inserted the words of the martyrs Ridley, Latimer and Bradford:

What is glory in the world but shame? What art thou afraid to carry Christ’s cross? Wilt thou come into His Kingdom, and not drink of His cup? [...] If we refuse to be corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying; if we will neither sacrifice prospects, nor risk character and property and health; nor, when called, relinquish home and break family ties, for Christ’s sake and His Gospel; then even supposing that we not thereby prove that we have not the root of the matter in us, that we have nothing at all to do with Christ,

1386. *Rose From Brier*, 36–37.

1387. Cf. *Rose From Brier*, chapter 1.

1388. *Gold by Moonlight*, 31.

1389. *Candles of the Dark*, 62.

1390. *Candles in the Dark*, 65.

1391. *Candles in the Dark*, 63.

1392. *Candles in the Dark*, 64.

1393. *Ragland*, 62.

we shall abide alone'. [...] God forbid that we are too careful of our lives, or of what means so immeasurable more, the lives of our beloved.¹³⁹⁴

Confined to her room, she wrote a lot and often during her mealtimes she was still writing. During that time 13 new books came from the press. We admire her persistence to continue, for when she had the accident she was a 63-year-old woman, often in great pain and having sleepless nights. One of the books she wrote during that time was more or less autobiographic. She sent letters to the sick, and these were later gathered and published under the name *Rose From Brier*. She hoped that from her 'brier' roses would grow for the sick and for other sufferers:

I know it all; but from thy brier shall blow
A rose for others. If it were not so
I would have told thee, Come, then, say To Me
My Lord, my Love, I am content with Thee.¹³⁹⁵

Houghton writes that many years before she had the accident she once had prayed that she would never be a burden to someone else, and that she would die on the battlefield. The Lord, however, had a different plan for what she had prayed for in 1915:

Lord, teach me to conquer pain to the uttermost henceforth, and grant this my earnest request. When my day's work is done, take me straight Home. Do not let me be ill and a burden or anxiety to anyone. Oh let me finish my course with joy and not with grief. Thou knowest there would be no joy if I knew I were tiring those I love best, or taking them from the children. Let me die of a battle wound, O my Lord, not a lingering illness. Father hear me, answer me. Forgive this prayer if it be wrong, and grant it if Thou canst turn it to Thy glory.

One day, reading Psalm 84, she wondered whether God was emphasising this – 'Draw us so into accord with Thyself that no good thing shall be withheld' – instead of 'Health is a good thing, Lord, give it'. She prayed like Paul three times, but also for her was the answer the same: 'My grace is sufficient for thee'.¹³⁹⁶ Is the Lord not saying 'see to it that you are in perfect accord with Me and then trust Me to withhold no good thing'? Was health that good thing?:

Every morning I waken with the hope, 'perhaps today'. But I first wish to want His will, that His will be mine or to be spoken to privately: 'Let Me see thy countenance, let Me hear thy voice.'¹³⁹⁷

She never questioned God about this. At times, she even was thankful for it. 'A slip on the upward climb is sometimes the one way by which we can be led into Hebrews 5:2.'¹³⁹⁸ In her spiritual warfare of always resisting the prince of darkness, in all the unanswered questions, she only knew one answer: *In acceptance lieth peace*.¹³⁹⁹ The acceptance of the will of God will never lead to the miserable feeling that it is useless to ask and to suffer strife any more:

God does not ask for the dull, weak, sleepy acquiescence of indolence. He asks for something vivid and strong. He asks us to co-operate with Him, actively willing what He wills, and our only aim His glory. To accept in this

1394. *Ragland*, 63.

1395. *Rose From Brier*, 52; *Mountain Breezes*, 294.

1396. In 2 Corinthians 12:9.

1397. Song of Songs 2, 14; see *Candles in the Dark*, 61.

1398. *Candles in the Dark*, 19. Amy refers to Hebrews 5:2: 'Who can bear gently with the ignorant and erring, for that He Himself also is compassed with infirmity' [RV].

1399. *Gold by Moonlight*, 33. 'But when stripes and imprisonment had to be endured, there is acceptance. He does not think of himself as Caesar's prisoner: "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ." The steel chains of Caesar are his Lord's chains of gold.'

sense is to come with all the desire of the mind unto the place which the Lord shall choose, and to minister in the name of the Lord our God there – not other where.

As far as the things of God are concerned, acceptance always means the happy choice of mind and heart of that which He appoints, because (for the present) it is His good and acceptable and perfect will.¹⁴⁰⁰

Amy knew that in very rare cases God could use the practice of laying hands upon the sick for healing. She underlined this sentence:

Except in the special case of Paul when a certain disciple was sent to lay hands upon him (see Acts 9:10–19), it would appear as through the apostles alone the Holy Spirit was imparted. Ananias was used by God for a special case, and it is the one solitary example given in the New Testament of one who was not an apostle being used in this way.

Amy herself wrote in the same booklet, 'Charisma is a gift given by the Holy Spirit for service'.¹⁴⁰¹ We read on top of this document Amy's words: 'We ought to know why we cannot have this teaching here. This helps towards that'.

In living on these peaceful lines, there was nothing cloudy or nebulous for Amy. She knew that the outcome of all this would be salvation and it accorded with her own eager expectation and hope, that in no respect she would be disappointed. On 11 April 1938, she underlined the words in Way's commentary on Philippians 1:20:

For (if I could think for myself alone) for me life is absorption in Messiah: death – ah, that is gain! Yet – yet – if to live on in this body be yet reserved to me, this will mean more fruit still of my toil. Life? – death? – which to choose I cannot discern. Oh, I am in a strait betwixt the two for the yearning that I feel to sail away from earth, and to heaven me with Messiah.¹⁴⁰²

She had to wait peacefully and be ready:

[L]ike the waiting of the little ship near the shore that was ready at the slightest sign to set sail with the Master; ready, too, to wait there till He made that sign. [...] Unreserved acceptance opens the way for the turning of the captivity.¹⁴⁰³

She thought in line with Madame Guyon, 'who suffered in every sensitive fibre of her being' and said:

Through the dark and silent night
On Thy radiant smiles I dwelt;
And to see the dawning light
Was the keenest pain I felt.

It was not easy for Amy to accept her helplessness and peace was not always in her heart, especially when she saw others doing the work she used to do. The year 1937 was extremely difficult for her; she compared it with Paul's voyage of Acts 27 and called that year 'Adria'. It began as other years, but soon we were plunged into grief.¹⁴⁰⁴ A new building in the Place of Healing was realised, but affairs among other adult workers caused her a lot of stress. However, never one complaint was heard from her, and we see her inner situation and trust in God in the following poem sent to her by Murray Webb-Peploe:

1400. *Gold by Moonlight*, 35.

1401. In Webb (ed.), *What The Scriptures Teach Concerning The Laying On Of Hands*, 6 [Amy's comment on p. 5].

1402. See A.S. Way, 'Letter to the Philippians', in *The Letters of St. Paul* (London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd, 1909), 156. This reference was given to me by Dr Jacky Woolcock of the DF in the UK.

1403. *Gold by Moonlight*, 36.

1404. *Though the Mountains Shake*, 10.

Here it has been a morning alone with the Lord. There is only one desire, and that is to go down deeper and deeper until there is none of self left and the Power of His Spirit will have full sway.

If I should trust thee to obey,
 Though mist and mud beset the way;
 And if obedience leads to loss
 And agony, and then – the Cross;
 What is that, My child, to thee?
 Thy loyalty is to follow Me,
 Who triumphed there, on Calvary;
 And blessed is he,
 Whosoever shall not be offended in Me.¹⁴⁰⁵

Her help was from the Lord and overwhelmed with the love of the others who frequently visited her, she experienced something of the peace of Christ.

The greatest difficulty is to readjust, to see our daily worn down Warfare of the Service, and to be oneself sheltered from all the hardest things [...] Bring me out of this fog of the spirit [...] Quicken Thou me. And till this prayer is fully answered, let no shadow of mine shadow anyone who come to this room. [...] It is not only human love, it is something different that quickens joy. I do truly see Him Whom we love best, in each one as he or she comes into the room, and I do 'hear in each tone His well-beloved voice'.

And on 02 November 1938, the notes in her diary are:

If so be that we suffer with Him. Lord Jesus, Thou hast made my prison so beautiful and my bond so light that I greatly fear I do not 'suffer with' Thee [...] Do not let me miss the deepest thing Thou hast to give – the fellowship of His sufferings.¹⁴⁰⁶

She wrote more of her fellowship with Christ in a private letter. This fellowship of his sufferings she had in the 1940s, when almost every morning she remembered Christ's death, by eating a morsel of bread and drinking a few drops of water. She believed that Jesus still 'turned' water into wine. In doing that, 'something happened'. 'I cannot say more, only I am conscious of life received.' She accepted her situation and the setback in her health; she kept on 'climbing' and saw all God's doings as steps forward on the pathway home. She saw that it was God who had put up the stumbling blocks and not that things were happening to her by accident. God's truth brought her face to face with the standard revealed in Christ and in his Cross. Is not the Lord right in his diagnosis? This situation also had its place in a full-orbed life of holiness and Amy knew through suffering that God was creating a perfect balance between her own spiritual struggles and his love in Christ Jesus:

Thou hast not that, My child, but thou hast Me;
 And am not I alone enough for thee?
 I know it all, know how thy heart was set
 Upon this joy which is not given yet.

 And well I know how through the wistful ways
 Thou walkest all the dear familiar ways
 As unregarded as a breath of air;
 But there in love and longing, always there.

 I know it all; but from thy brier shall blow
 A rose for others. If it were not so

1405. *Though the Mountains Shake*, 14 and 16–17.

1406. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 310–311.

I would have told thee. Come, then, say to Me:

My Lord. My Love, I am content with Thee.¹⁴⁰⁷

‘These words may be too high for earth. But it is not for us to set a limit to what God is preparing to do when He is training a soul to endure, not accepting deliverance.’¹⁴⁰⁸

As an example of a soul in training, she referred to a letter she once got from Bishop Moule after his wife had died. Moule wrote to her of comfort ‘dropped like an anodyne from the hand of the Physician into my great wound. [...] And I bless her Lord for calling her to go upstairs, and meet Him there’. Here Amy says:

So near is the Eternal Comforter that the strangely un-Christian view of death of our half-pagan age does not come into the picture at all. The wife is not ‘lost’. She is just ‘upstairs’. [...] O Lord, Thou art wonderful. Thou canst make a radiance anywhere. There is nothing too hard for Thee.¹⁴⁰⁹

Often she prayed she would never lose the spirit of happiness. This spirit of happiness is a sheer ‘miracle’:

It is the gift of a happy God, as Paul names our heavenly Father in writing to Timothy. It is the gift of the God of love. He pours it out of His own fountains, through unseen channels, as He poured it upon Paul and Silas before their feet were taken out of the stocks and their stripes washed; for no created powers of hell, or out of hell, can mar the music of our Lord, nor spoil our song of joy’.¹⁴¹⁰

She never complained or questioned God’s dealings with her:

God’s blossoms may be given, but if not (and if so) there remains the prayer, Make me Thy athlete even in my bed [...] and God’s answer remains ‘But I am the strength of thy heart and thy portion forever. Thou shalt not be forgotten of Me’.¹⁴¹¹

Confined to bed for the whole day, she was encouraged by her own children and was able to encourage others in the storm of life. Often they came to Amma’s room and sang for her:

In the evening they sang carols outside Amma’s room. Ronald had arranged most beautiful illumination in the big tree and lit up the fountain just outside Amma’s room. Amma was on the veranda. [...] Amma had a better night and seemed much better in the morning for a short time. Children tremendously cheered. [...] Amma went for a drive after tea and enjoyed it.¹⁴¹²

When the Lotus Buds with their Accals were in the Forest House for a holiday, nearly every evening at a particular time, Amy went in a car along the road from which, in daylight, one can see two of the forest houses as tiny specks on the distant hillside. From the Forest House the road can be seen and in the dark: the lights that pass along it show clearly. Barbara Osman tells us:

Night by night, our Forest family gather all their lanterns together to make a light that will shine down and take their love, and say ‘Goodnight’ to Amma. The annachie, who is driving the car stops and turns the spot light round to the mountains, and makes it wink and blink messages. When it is put out for a moment all up there in the Forest, and those in the car on the dark road, pray for one another, drawn closer together in the Lord Jesus.¹⁴¹³

1407. *Rose From Brier*, 52.

1408. *Gold by Moonlight*, 38.

1409. *Gold by Moonlight*, 38–39.

1410. *Gold by Moonlight*, 50.

1411. *Gold by Moonlight*, 52–53.

1412. In the Dohnavur logbook, 07–08 January and 24 December 1931 (in the Dohnavur library).

1413. In *Buds and Teddies*, 51–52.

What would she tell others in a situation like hers? It would be a simple story. It would not tell of un-tempted days but of succour that never failed:

Love, travelling in the greatness of His strength,
 Found me alone,
 Foolsore and tired by the journey's length,
 Though I had known,
 All the long way, many a kindly air,
 And flowers had blossomed for me everywhere.
 And yet Love found me fearful, and He stayed;
 Love stayed by me.
 'Let not thy heart be troubled or dismayed,
 My child', said He.
 Slipped from me then all troubles, all alarms;
 For Love had gathered me into His arm.¹⁴¹⁴

In her many hours of pain she tried to write to others suffering pain and trials. She quoted Amiel¹⁴¹⁵ when he wrote in times of distress 'it is possible to gather gold, where it may be had, with moonlight'. Here Amy said, 'By moonlight, then, let us gather gold'.¹⁴¹⁶

After the accident everyone in the Fellowship was with her in their prayers and often children visited Amma to comfort her and to listen to the stories she told them. At times, especially at midnight when sleep did not come, she read portions of Scripture. Often Neela took notes of her meditations and early in the morning diligent hands copied these notes and spread these messages to the whole family. Many were encouraged by these 'seed thoughts'¹⁴¹⁷ and treasured them. As much as possible these notes were gathered and published for daily reading.¹⁴¹⁸

In the Dohnavur logbook we see many entries that refer to her physical situation: 'Amma sat in a chair'; 'Amma had a bad night'; 'Amma had much pain'; 'Amma slept four hours'; 'Amma put in shoes'; 'Amma very weary'; 'Amma very bad'; 'Amma very wearied and had a bad night'; 'Amma much pain in arms and shoulders'. Further: 'Dr. Somervell came to see Amma, very short visit'; 'Amma's foot very painful'; 'Not having very good news from Amma. She is having so much pain'; 'Amma in great pain'; 'Amma's pain very bad again'; 'Amma tried her new chair'; 'Amma had very acute hour of pain which wrecked her'; 'Amma very ill'; 'Amma's day of nine years ago'.¹⁴¹⁹ An entry in the logbook refers to prayers for her:

Thinking very much about what we could do to have more prayer for Amma. Council of eight met. Very much wanting to have prayer all day going without a break. Began chain of prayer for Amma 6 a.m. – 9 p.m.¹⁴²⁰

1414. *Mimosa*, 31.

1415. Henri Frédéric Amiel (1821–1881), Swiss philosopher.

1416. *Gold by Moonlight*, 46. 'In willing what God commands, in consenting to what He takes from us or refuses – in this we find our peace.'

1417. An Oswald Chambers expression.

1418. Cf. *Edges of His Ways; Thou Givest ... They Gather; Candles in the Dark*.

1419. Logbook of the DF, 1931–1941: 08 March 1932; 31 July 1932; 09 September 1932; 04 October 1932; 25 October 1932; 02 May 1933; 19 May 1933; 03 June 1933; 09 June 1933; 04 February 1934; 30 March 1934; 15 September 1934; 06 June 1936; 17 October 1937; 24 October 1937; 28 June 1938; 17 September 1939; 24 October 1940.

1420. Logbook of the DF, 1931–1941, 03–04 February 1932.

From her sickbed she led the Fellowship, wrote several books and encouraged many by her letters and the daily notes which were spread among all members of the Fellowship. She once wrote down the words of George Fox, after he had been in a situation of huge trials: 'There were never any prisons of suffering that I was in, but still it was for the bringing multitudes more out of prison'. This also can be said of Amy who, with her encouraging letters, notes and books, led many sufferers and sick ones on a way of inward cherishing of joy which led to what the Quakers would call 'a cool and tender frame of spirit'. She herself was what she wrote of the women of India: 'trained through hard generations into disciplined unselfishness that is surely matchless among the nations of the earth'.¹⁴²¹

At the end of 1934, and nearly the whole of 1935, the monsoon rains failed to come. Hardly anything could grow at that time and many people suffered from the drought; even in the neighbourhood of Dohnavur elderly people died. In those days, more than 150 people were busy in a building programme for Dohnavur, so the workers could provide an income for their families. Meanwhile Amy organised regular Bible studies for them, so they were not only helped physically through the drought period but they were also fed spiritually. Despite Amy being in bed and the tensions in the world in the years before World War II, the work continued. In 1937, in the year that 'we were plunged into grief, the energies of our prayer-forces were devoted to something far removed from finance'. She did not exactly explain what had happened, but she saw it as the devil trying to get a foothold within the Fellowship. It was discovered that two trusted fellow workers were acting with 'deceit and disobedience'. They were dismissed, but others within the Fellowship objected to this decision. In short, it was all a 'crashing sorrow' which she feared 'undid the work of years'.¹⁴²² All went through a stormy period, and here Amy refers to Paul's journey through a stormy Adrian Sea.¹⁴²³ The building projects continued, despite the decrease of income; here are some of the many projects from a long list:

1937. Children's hospital, engine room, kitchen for the patients, converts' home, kitchen for boys, silo for the farm to hold a hundred tons of ensilage; swimming bath for the little children.

1938. Place of Well-being; an encircling wall for the Place of Healing [...] extension of Office; well and irrigation channels for the convert's home.

1939. Nurses' home for Place of Healing, kitchen for schoolgirls; sheds for carts.

1940. The babies nursery needed a shady porch. [...] The Forest House needed a kitchen. [...] A book-binding room was added to the boys' workshop. In India, wherever termites abound, even with constant care, repairs are inevitable. Our Father who gives all the birds in all the world all they need for the building of their nests, has given us all we needed to build or to repair ours. So we are grateful.¹⁴²⁴

All who have known her describe her as a woman they loved and whom they still remember in the way she enjoyed the little things in life and who wanted her children to grow up in a safe but joyous atmosphere. She lived out of this secret, which she herself never made a secret that it might seem too pathetic: the rain of joy comes from the clouds of suffering.

The last quarter of her life she confined to her room, and yet in spirit she was so free, free to use and enjoy the Lord's provisions and miracles for the Fellowship, and from her bed she saw visions of the

1421. *Mimosa*, 121.

1422. Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 334. In 1928 Amy admitted to the sisters Evangeline and Francesca French and Mildred Cable, who on their way to the centre of Asia visited Dohnavur, 'the knowledge of the tremendous conflict which surges around every inmate of this house'. This because all the children 'have been snatched one by one from the jaws of hell'. Not only spiritual but also practical difficulties could be expected [French, Cable & French, *A Desert Journal*, 24].

1423. See chapter 4 'Adria', in *Though The Mountains Shake*, 13–17.

1424. For all the details of God's provision, see *Though The Mountains Shake*, 107–109.

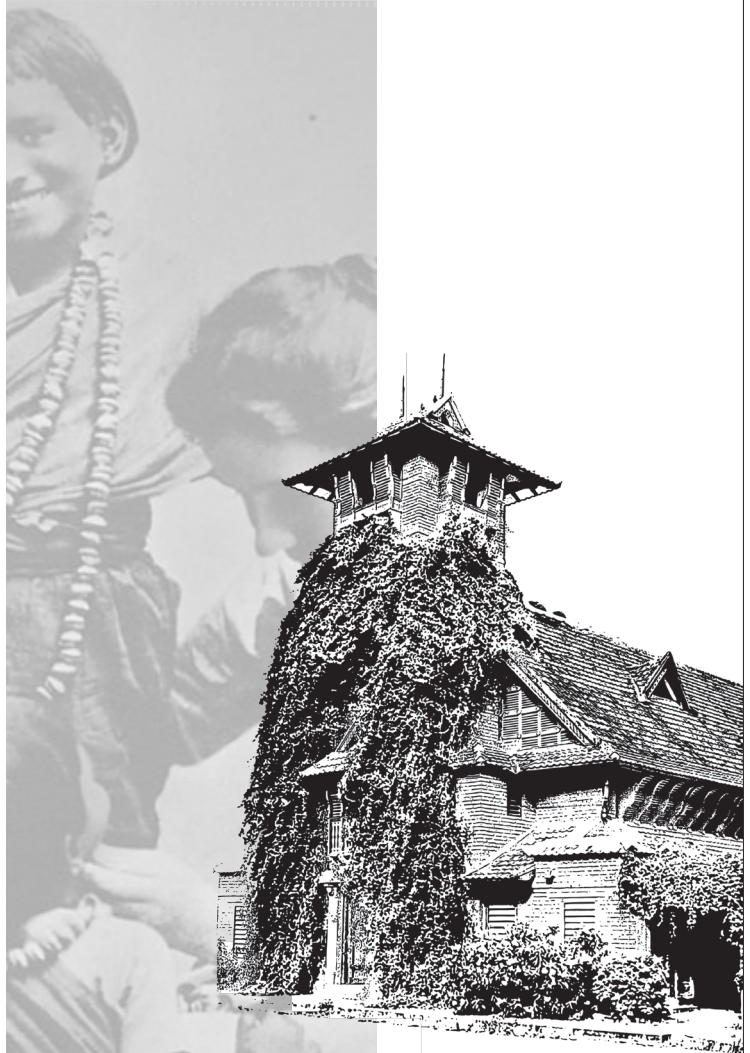
victory. Pain was her partner and her teacher and she was never exempt from the ordinary sorrows of life. Dammed up she broke out in many new directions, with such a drive that she drove past human need. Abiding in Christ and in his Word for her direction and delight, she was not a cistern, but a spring – a spring gathering all the resources from the eternal hills and flowing for the needy, the thirsty and the little ones. In writing to someone who was ill, Amy expressed her own thoughts about pain and illness. For herself she stood out against self-pity and doubt of God's guidance during the last 20 years of her bedridden life. On the contrary, the song had to go on. Labouring on in debilitation, she continued her work and authored more than 10 books after the accident in Kalakadu. She had but one hope and that of the triumphant nature of the risen Christ to support her to live her songs:

Life can be difficult. Sometimes the enemy come like a flood. But then is the time to prove our faith and live our songs. A day or two ago when everything was feeling more than usually impossible I opened on Psalm 40 with a new song. 'He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise'. How like Him it is to 'put' it there. We couldn't find it for ourselves, so He puts it. And when He puts it we can sing it.¹⁴²⁵

1425. *Candles in the Dark*, 'Illness', 61.

‘The men with God’s “go” in them have these three characteristics, – a saving experience; the evidence of supernatural power at work, and the spiritual efficacy of success in prayer’.

O. Chambers, ‘God’s Workmanship’
in *The Complete Works*, 430.



Amy's missionary approach

Sacrificial service

The taking up of the cross always means, the emptying of the life of everything that is merely selfish in motive, high things may become that. If there shall come a moment when a man has to choose between the call of Christ to sacrificial service, and the appeal of high and beautiful earthly affection, there is only one thing to be done according to these terms of Jesus. That is to follow Him. He calls for much; He calls for everything. He calls for the march that may have no return and can have no compromise. He demands His loyalty because His enterprise is a crusade. Its method is that of the cross, and there is no other way. Because He goes that way, His disciple also must go that way.¹⁴²⁶

On 03 June 1851, a breathless date, for no rain from the western hills had come yet to cool the air, and the pitiless heat of six parched months makes all weary and very tired. On that date Thomas G. Ragland wrote: 'Of all plans of ensuring success, the most certain is Christ's own, becoming a corn of wheat, falling into the ground, and dying'. On 11 June 1901, on just such a day, a man like-minded, Thomas Walker of Tinnevely, repeated these words of Ragland's very slowly.

On a glary white road, under the burning sun, two women and a man silently went on. The stifling heat discouraged speech, until they halted about the ugly little ruin and the depressing tombstone. The three on that blistering day along the hot road were Thomas Walker and his wife together with Amy Carmichael. What brought them that day to the tombstone of Ragland on a bare plain in north Tinnevely, near the small, ruined house where he had died? We hear it from Rev. Walker who at the grave of the pioneer missionary Thomas G. Ragland broke the silence with words associated with Ragland:

Of all plans of ensuring success, the most certain is Christ's own – becoming a corn of wheat, falling into the ground and dying: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit'.¹⁴²⁷

1426. *Whispers of His Power*, 24 August 180–181.

1427. John 12:24. Cf. Paul when he was challenged to prove his apostolic credentials. He did not give church planting statistics, academic qualifications or numbers of people in his church. He pointed to his 'burials' – his suffering and his weakness – Galatians 5:11, 6:17; 1 Corinthians 4:8–13; 2 Corinthians 11:22–33. See also Acts 9:16, where the Lord tells Ananias to go to Paul, 'For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake'. See also *Ragland*, 104–107.

Amy then walked around the house, looking in through the gaping holes, trying to see, trying to hear:

If walls could speak what a strange confusion of words there would be! Or would each house have its dominant word? This surely would. We could almost hear it now, Word of words, Name of names, Jesus.¹⁴²⁸

Many years later, when Amy wanted to recapture that moment, she wrote:

Forgotten then were the heat, the fag of life – forgotten was everything. For a minute we stood in silence, and I know that the prayer rose from the depths of our hearts: Lord, give it to us to live that life and to die that death, and to bring forth fruit unto life eternal.¹⁴²⁹

Her vocation was her identification with Christ's sufferings and Cross. For his name and his Cross she had come to India. Here at this grave she again gave up her right to herself to Jesus Christ,¹⁴³⁰ and fixed her mind on the things of God. Through the Cross of Christ, the door is open for a world in need. It is the Cross that tests the missionary and the work, because God's mission is Cross-shaped. Amy abhorred the triumphalism that so often infected the church and the mission, which destroyed humility, minimised grace, and offered far too much homage to money and human activities. Real power and greatness is about sacrificial service because 'even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many'. There is no prestige or worldly power to be found in being 'buried'. The missionary's motivation is tested through the Cross.¹⁴³¹ In a letter written from Kotagiri in 1896 in which she writes about reaching the Indian people with the Gospel she says about Christ that 'He emptied Himself and made Himself of NO reputation. In India that would mean much'. And then she continues: 'Sometimes I think we shall never never lift these people up until we get lower down'.¹⁴³²

The very *raison d'être* of the DF was the love of God in Christ and devotion to the slain, yet conquering Lamb:

So we sympathise with everything that tends towards life and light in India, and rejoice with our brothers who bind sheaves, believing that though all is not genuine corn, some is, yet we feel compelled to give ourselves mainly to work of a character which, by its very nature can never be popular, and possibly never successful from a statistical point of view, never, till the King comes, Whose coming is our hope.¹⁴³³

There in Dohnavur Amy worked out her God-given, Cross-shaped mission by being 'buried' in the Fellowship's compound and surrounding communities to where God had sent her, preaching and demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to fight the ancient old *devadasi* system and saving little children and bringing them to Jesus, through humble service and sacrificial love. That day there at Ragland's grave Amy felt so unworthy of doing this work, with the flame of love burning so dimly. She quoted a fellow missionary, whose thoughts were hers too: 'I do not think I would dare to call myself a missionary yet' and 'to me there is no more tragic sight than the average missionary'.

1428. *Ragland*, 106. 'Jesus' was the last word that was heard of Thomas Ragland who died 22 October 1858 [*Ragland*, 102].

1429. *Gold Cord*, 8.

1430. Cf. Galatians 2:20.

1431. Cf. Count Zinzendorf's prayer that Christ would draw him into the 'fellowship of His sufferings', and into a life of service.

1432. In a letter written in Kotagiri, June 1896, p. 13 [PRONI D/4061/1/1-D/; D/4060/6/8].

1433. *Things As They Are*, 288.

■ 'Good, acceptable, perfect'

For her work, Amy looked upon God and in obedience to his Spirit she went her way. She refused to be swamped by the cares of this world; she cared for the one thing that was necessary. Therefore she cut out all non-essentials and continually revised her relationship with God to be concentrated on him. Him, only him, she trusted completely. 'Real faith believes not only that God *can*, but that He *will*.'¹⁴³⁴

She was eager to know, not the people and the things as they appear, but what is behind, underneath. Pain of men and animals could crush her. The question that cut like a knife striking the ground was not 'Why do the innocent suffer?' but 'Why do the innocent sin?' For her the pain she saw in the sexual abuse of the children, the vileness of the symbols and talk of the people, even of the young ones, seemed to be normal for the people:

There are evil things, which are so common in this land that they shock no one. The reaction is not shame, but a smile. [...] Many a child is born into a heritage which must be harder to triumph over than we can imagine. Certainly, it is so with some whom we have known. Given ancestors who belonged to one of the secret phallic cults (cults old as the East), must not there be a terrible hell-ward pull day by day, night by night? [...] When an Indian woman invited her to her house that flanked a temple wall and took her upstairs, she wrote: a feeling of something wrong with the place came over us. There were pictures on the walls, an air in the rooms that oppressed us.¹⁴³⁵

Which power could ever break these vices and opposition to the Gospel? 'Nothing is strong enough to counter it but the powers of Calvary.'¹⁴³⁶ With the other Sisters of the Common Life, Amy often was on her knees now they knew what was really going on. She prayed:

O God of peace, strong is the enemy
But Thou art nigh,
And he must fall beneath our feet, because of Calvary.

Mighty the weapons of our warfare are
Through Thee alone,
Oh, lead us to the battle, captain us, Most mighty One.¹⁴³⁷

Actually, the person for whom they had prayed to be set free, 'to become a force for good among us', had become one of them. When one of those who was released from Satan's power became very sick and when all human hope had fled, 'He to whom belong the issues from death came into the house, and took her by the hand, and called saying, Maid, arise'.

Such an experience does not leave any who share it just where they were before. They may not be able to put their gains into words, but something has been gained, the precious things put forth by the moon, the chief things of the ancient mountains are theirs, and they can never lose them. But sometimes words can be found that sum up the gains, and for us there are three which will be forever bright because of that darkness. These words are Good, acceptable, perfect – the words learned off by heart by Ponnamal's bedside.¹⁴³⁸

1434. *Nor Scrip*, 46.

1435. *Gold Card*, 173–174. 'Then were the powers of evil aroused in all their fury, and when Arulai and I visited her later we realised that her house is indeed as the way of hell going down to the chambers of death and, as we shrank from contact with such a place of wickedness, feeling ourselves defiled, we entered a very little into what it cost the Holy One when He trod the winepress alone and with His own arm brought salvation' [*Gold Card*, 175].

1436. *Gold Card*, 166.

1437. *Gold Card*, 166.

1438. *Gold Card*, 167.

Amy knew that all the power was wholly in the hands of their Commander-in-Chief. 'And it was in times like these that our nights became light about us.' There is no depth so deep, no situation so dark:

[B]ut what fathomless depths it must have held for our Lord Jesus when He set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem, Gethsemane, Calvary, and certain it is that whatever way of pain may open before any one of us, we find as we walk in it the marks of our dear Lord's footsteps leading on. He walked alone on that road so that we need never walk alone. No star, no flower, no song was Thine, but darkness three hours long.

Since then, Amy's Cross-shaped mission enterprise was lighted by the very tenderness of God:

And a light shined in the cell, Light of Love shined in the cell, Dearest Lord, how can it be
And there was not any wall, Turned to gold the iron bars, That Thou art so kind to me?
And there was no dark at all; Opened windows to the stars; Love is shining in my cell,
Only Thou, Immanuel. Peace stood there as sentinel. Jesus, my Immanuel.¹⁴³⁹

■ Towel life: Amy's view on mission

Before Amy had settled in Dohnavur, she had some 20 years' experience of evangelist work. She evangelised in Belfast, Manchester, Japan and Ceylon and itinerated in India, until the Dohnavur children bound her feet; that seemed an end to everything that she had believed she was called to do. Since then her missionary work was a 'towel life', serving and bringing up the children. She dearly missed the direct way of evangelism, but the work in Dohnavur was also real missionary work for her. Obedience to the heavenly vision kept her for the rest of her life in Dohnavur and that held her to be faithful in this work, even 'when many a time I would have turned from it, but for His hand upon me'.¹⁴⁴⁰ She now was fully involved in what the apostle Paul called *travail* 'until Christ be fully formed'¹⁴⁴¹ in the children who were given to her:

Is it not just that there is work to do and that we have to see it is done properly. It is much more than that. We believe India is meant to evangelize India, so our first care is to help and to strengthen our dear children who are our fellow-workers. [...] But if we go on with our God we come to the place where we ask Him to take and bless and break and give. After that it does not matter what our part in any service be, if only souls are won and His name glorified.¹⁴⁴²

Do not think my brother, that God sends us to the field sweetly to tell the story of Jesus, and that is all. He sends us there to do what Jesus came into the world to do – to bear the cross.¹⁴⁴³

Amy saw that people who wanted to see foreign countries and the work of the missionaries, only saw the mission compound and did not look outside. She would say: you should see more and deeper:

God give us hearts that will care more, and eyes that are clearer to see past the edge of the halo rim, over the walls of our compounds, a way up through His wide world, till we feel as we never felt before the overwhelming enormousness of the work that is not being done, in places where souls are sitting in darkness which does not pass.¹⁴⁴⁴

1439. *Gold Cord*, 170.

1440. *Fragments that Remain*, 94.

1441. Galatians 4:19.

1442. *Fragments that Remain*, 95. Here she quotes Bishop Handley Moule who wrote that all the work done is with this single consuming purpose, 'the equipment for work of service'.

1443. *Overweights of Joy*, 59.

1444. *Overweights of Joy*, 228.

In her mission work, either as an itinerating evangelist or to confess Christ's name in a resident situation, the aim is the same. Mission is about giving what we have already received: the Gospel. God sends his children and takes care that they are not discouraged, for 'discouragement cuts the nerve and effort'. The service is 'whole-time service'. 'But when was a Christian's work *not* whole-time service? And those who have little courage, know 'that the battle is the Lord's'.¹⁴⁴⁵

Frank, vital telling in ordinary language that the Lord Jesus Christ lives and loves, and can save and keep, and can be known like a real friend, and is a Master who gives real orders and strength to carry out – think of the power that is in that!¹⁴⁴⁶

England's queen sent the best-qualified servants for the many affairs in foreign lands; therefore, 'it is a disgrace of our Zion that she sends not some of the ablest and wisest and holiest of her servants'.¹⁴⁴⁷ God had put into the hands of men and women, pardoned and saved by mercy, a proclamation of mercy and pardon to all who would accept of it. In her thinking about mission, she stood firm, her heart secured in the anchor of biblical truth. Day by day she was to be found everywhere on the Dohnavur compound to assist and inspire the other workers. She was 'a bundle of energy'; once she prayed: 'Make us inspirers of others to the very end'.¹⁴⁴⁸

Fully engaged in practical issues she was always aware that she was engaged in spiritual labour and spiritual warfare. Although she appreciated the faithful toil of many whose line was different, she had seen how Muslims and Hindus were hindered to come to Christ by the lives of nominal Christians.¹⁴⁴⁹ She was not in favour of mass meetings and preaching before large public audiences:

To tell the people in the mass, even of patients in the mass, does not do much, I think; to show one singly may do something. But the Lord of the field knows where every seedling is. He never loses sight of even one.¹⁴⁵⁰

In her itinerant work and in Dohnavur all the work was done by offering the people the simple life-changing Gospel and wrapping all other gifts in it.

The chosen site in the Tinnevely plain – was it right or wrong? She never bothered about that question. To her mind, it had long since been answered. The policy settled 19 centuries before in that one sentence 'The love of Christ constraineth us'. Never at rest until people were safe in Jesus's arms and when they had come to eternal rest. People 'unknown to the great world, but well-known in the place where they sing when lost people are found'.¹⁴⁵¹ For Amy, evangelisation was the core business of mission work. She knew that many organisations had honeycombed themselves into mission work by undertaking the civilisation of the people first. For her it was not man's need first, but the obedience to the will of God, her Father.¹⁴⁵² 'The heathen shall know that I am the Lord [...] when I shall be sanctified *in you* before their eyes'.¹⁴⁵³ Amy always insisted on a right relationship with God first and then the

1445. *Fragments that Remain*, 92 and 93.

1446. *Fragments that Remain*, 93.

1447. Broomhall, *Robert Morrison*, 27.

1448. Williamson, *Amy Carmichael*, 99; *Whispers of His Power*, 27th of March, 72.

1449. See *Gold Cord*, 304.

1450. In *Though The Mountains Shake*, 42.

1451. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 35.

1452. Here we can think of an expression of Dr Moffat, missionary in Africa and father-in-law of Dr Livingstone, who once said 'Civilisation drives away the tiger, but breeds the fox'. A statement of a man after years of work in the mission field.

1453. Ezekiel 36:23.

carrying out of the work along God's line, and just being faithful.¹⁴⁵⁴ To comfort God's servants, who might become tired, or did not see results, she very nicely said:

So little is He weary of us that He wants to have us altogether and forever for Himself. He wants us. Oh, the joy of being His wanted one! [...] Let us love full scope. Nothing happens by itself, and every sorrow, every trial, is part of the plan of love, part of the refining. Love meant it. Love sent it. Love will bless.

'Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?' (Mt 20:15).¹⁴⁵⁵

At the end of *Lotus Buds*, Amy pleads for foreign mission. Obedience does not always lead to foreign countries. However, Amy's concern was that:

[A]t home there is so much earnest Church life, with so many evangelistic campaigns, and conventions, but that there is so poor an output as far as these lands abroad are concerned. How is it that so many are meant to stay at home? [...] Will the girl by the fireside, if such a one reads this book [*Lotus Buds*], lay the book aside and spend an hour alone with her Lord? [...] Will she ask Him to fit her to obey?¹⁴⁵⁶

For evangelistic work, she was already ahead of many in her method, for this work had to be done by local men and women. In 1938 she wrote to Godfrey:

If you are asked about our willingness or otherwise to accept evangelists, isn't this the thing to stress? We accept no others, but we ask for those who believe as we do that India can be best reached by Indians, and who are ready to cooperate with us in leading them out into service.

In missionary life, the relationship between God and man is a very practical one. It finds its destination in the way it deals with in common daily life. In this view, there is no distinction between living for Christ and dying for him. Is this not to see in the Apostle Paul's mission, to live for God is to die, and that 'daily'? To lose all and everything to gain Christ. In laying down our lives, we will find these things. To know him, and the power of his resurrection. To know him! The knowledge of the redemption in Christ Jesus:

These things that are given to us to see are not for us alone. They are for the cheer of all who push off from the shore and sail their boat in deep waters, and so must know the beating of many storms. There is for them no easy passing by on the other side of any one's suffering or sinfulness whom they might help. When the people do not understand, and try to divert them with a word that skims the surface of life and never sounds its depths, they only know that it has no voice to them. They are called into another fellowship. It is for such we write. The Lord has ways of entering fast-closed places. And He has a long practice, too, in binding up the broken, and in keeping hope alive in famine, and in drawing men back to Himself, though they may have wandered far. But He is in South India, and He does walk her fields, and He meets His Linnets [*one of the converts*] there.¹⁴⁵⁷

Walking over the roads she was looking to him who walked before her. 'We returned from that village knowing that we had been walking over roads where our Lord had walked before we had even

1454. Here I mention Amy's view on 'Predestination and Works', in Chapter XVIII of G.H. Pember, *The Great Prophecies of the Centuries*, ed. G.H. Lang (London: Oliphants Ltd, 1941). The author writes about being a member of Christ's Body, 'unless one is predestined by God before the foundation of the world, and that this seal is invisible to men and known by God alone', Amy wrote in the margin 'Put in this crude way, it is a stumbling block'. She had a more evangelical Reformed view, where human responsibility is not denied, without trying to intervene in God's decisions. Amy learned her mission strategy in Millisle and Belfast. In the margin of the same chapter, she wrote of the balanced teaching of Bishop Handley Moule. On top of this chapter, we read her words: 'Compare Moule's treatment of this subject'.

1455. *Fragments that Remain*, 109.

1456. *Lotus Buds*, 340–341.

1457. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 58 and 70.

heard of the place.¹⁴⁵⁸ She needed belief every time and prayed: ‘Lord we sympathise with Thee! Let us never be unresponsive to Thee. Let us never be a disappointment to Thee.’¹⁴⁵⁹ During the itinerant work Amy distributed parts of the Gospels. ‘We did not see anyone taking it then – but we “believe to see”.’¹⁴⁶⁰ For those who were converted, Amy was very honest, because they could expect the sword. In Amy’s time, there was freedom to evangelise, and no one loosened their grip on life for Christ’s sake and the Gospel’s, ‘God only knows the bitter secret martyrdoms of India’.¹⁴⁶¹

■ The missionary

Amy was a pioneer. She trod roads others had never gone down before, and she acted and lived in a way fellow missionaries would not – or did not want to – live. She often challenged the Christians in the West who, with all their knowledge and access to Christian literature, were so slow in giving themselves for the work of God. She guessed the reason for she knew of the cost of missionary work: it could ‘wound’ those that God counted worthy of his calling. In Elisabeth Elliot’s foreword of *God’s Missionary* she talks of an ‘utterly impossible standard’.¹⁴⁶² As the ideal missionary Amy saw one who could say like the angel in Luke 1:19: ‘I am [...] that stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak unto thee, and bring these good tidings’. The ideal missionary says, ‘I stand ... I was sent ... To speak unto thee ... To bring these good tidings’.¹⁴⁶³ However, she was very practical and there were situations that the body needed the first attention. ‘Do not talk to a soul when its body is hungry. Wait till it has “dined”’.¹⁴⁶⁴

A missionary is one who gives time enough to the Lord to hear, and who responds to Christ’s love. It is love that brings forth obedience and that must be in a context of being called personally by God. Of all qualifications for missionary work – and every other charity – Amy would say love is the most excellent.

The need is not the call. We do find this eschatological motive, the coming of Christ, in Amy’s missionary motives, although it is not central in her thinking. She never put her ideas in a rigid system. Brought up as a strict Presbyterian, she had a flexibility in working out her ideas; her missionary thoughts she ultimately drew from her communion with her heavenly Father. Being busy only ‘for the Things of the Father, that Business for which all we Christians are in the world’.¹⁴⁶⁵ She would advise not to hurry to work in the mission field. Wait for God and the go, even if it looks the opposite of what one had in mind:

The faculty of fitting oneself quite happily into one’s circumstances, be they ever so uncomfortable and changeable [...] I would advise missionary candidates to practice balancing themselves on pinpoints – it will all come in useful.¹⁴⁶⁶

1458. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 86.

1459. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 87.

1460. *From the Fight*, 19.

1461. *Gold Cord*, 304.

1462. On p. 11.

1463. See Amy’s remarks in the margin of Luke 1:19 in Stevens & De Witt Burton, *A Harmony Of The Gospels*, 22.

1464. In Amy’s Bible, in the margin of John 21:5, ‘So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon son of Jonas, do you love Me more than these’.

1465. *Whispers of His Power*, 12 June 1950.

1466. Amy in a letter to her sister, who was preparing to be a missionary in South Africa.

She was very precise in writing down the money that came in and was spent for the Fellowship. She was not governed by the cry for results and statistics. She went for the aim, because her children were safe when they were in heaven, she once said. For her the invisible results were far greater and far more important than the visible. She rested in the knowledge that God was in control and that gave her in the overflow of work patience. Not ruled by statistics, Amy did see the fruit of her work and that in a remarkable way:

There is a wonderful sense of release when we understand that we never plan for ourselves, never try to twist circumstances so that our wishes shall come to pass. We have only one thing to do, such a happy, peaceful thing that we can never be glad enough and grateful enough for it. We have only to commit ourselves and our ways to Him who guides us by the skilfulness of His Hands.¹⁴⁶⁷

How did Amy view her own place and role as a missionary? She had seen around her how many of her colleagues were as a spider in the mission web. The work was concentrated on them. They worked out the scheme and they took the lead. Amy however was made of other stuff. Having little in common with the other missionaries, she felt directed by God himself. When she arrived in India she met 'this ice and formalism' and she wondered 'how to kindle these dry sticks'. 'The love that should fuse us all together was simply not there'.¹⁴⁶⁸ She knew about the pitfalls in a country like India:

We who walk there know them well. Things are sure to happen which will drain the heart of human hope, but the hall-mark of the true missionary (the good Lord make it ours) is refusal to be weakened or hardened or soured or made hopeless by disappointment.¹⁴⁶⁹

Amy gives us a nice insight into her views. Once in Dohnavur she got an offer from an English girl who was ready to work with her. Arrangements were made for her training but the candidate had in mind was expected to skirmish around with Amy and raid temple houses, so she envisioned a life full of tension, adventures, in this way taking the initiative and the lead in the children's rescue work. Amy gives here a lesson to all mission organisations and missionaries:

Only, and here the English girl was quite out of her reckoning, it is never we white people who do these things, that would be to defeat our own purpose; we are far too conspicuous in daylight at any rate to be any good at raids. *No, to us belongs the humbler part of inspiring others to do.*¹⁴⁷⁰

In the actual daily work with all the heights and the depths, sickness and attacks, there is in her work the unseen nearness and assistance of the unseen. In her meditations and prayers there is assuring knowledge: he is near.

See, I am filling the interval with shining answers to those prayers. Look and see them, star-like, strewn across the places you thought were void. There are no empty places here. Look up, and praise.¹⁴⁷¹

In situations of distress and setbacks, whatever the Lord's way was with his work and workers, 'we are on the winning side; and yet it must not be too bright, for few fight through to victory'.¹⁴⁷²

1467. *Whispers of His Power*, 22 June 136.

1468. *Gold Cord*, 9.

1469. *Gold Cord*, 75.

1470. *From the Forest*, 86.

1471. *Overweights of Joy*, 51.

1472. *From the Fight*, 16.

Who influenced her?

Education at home

'The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world.' Amy's parents brought her up in the fear of the Lord. In Chapter 2, we saw that the influence of her parental home (Figure 3) was with her for her whole life: the evangelical piety in Millisle and Belfast. Her mother's support, even after the death of her father, was comprehensive; when she was in India her mother used to send the DF prayer letter, what is now called *Dust of Gold*, to friends all over England for prayer support for her daughter. For several months, Catherine Carmichael came out to Dohnavur in 1906 and later on Amy wrote to her children, 'she loved you as her own grandchildren'. Others, too, influenced her although they themselves did not even know sometimes. 'We can never be grateful enough for the loving friends who help us in many lands.'¹⁴⁷³ Amy had many friends in India as well as in England. Some had influential positions in church and mission circles. She mentions Dr Eugene Stock (1836–1928) – 'a long-trying friend'¹⁴⁷⁴ – for more than 20 years the CMS secretary, who went through the whole manuscript of *Walker of Tinnevely*.

Robert Wilson, Handley C.G. Moule, Andrew Murray and Arthur H. Pierson

If we are to be real missionaries, if we are to give our money as we ought to give, and give ourselves and our children, and pray as we ought to pray, and live as we ought to live, we must have nothing less than the power of the Holy Spirit flowing freely in us to overflowing. Oh, Keswick thou canst not do the right mission work unless the Holy Spirit fill every heart. O, Christ, we want to live and to die like Thee, for God's Kingdom! Give Thine own Spirit within us! O, Master, we want to live and die that our God may be honoured! Let Thine own Spirit come down on this meeting, and fill every heart.¹⁴⁷⁵

Among the influences that moulded the DF, the first one Amy mentions is Robert Wilson (1824–1906), chairman of the Keswick Convention from 1890 to 1900. He organised in 1875, with Canon T.D. Harford-Battersby, the first convention in Keswick. Since the day Amy sailed to the East – 03 March 1893 – week by week, until his power to write failed, letters from Robert Wilson crossed the oceans. Amy felt very close to him and liked to call him the 'Dear Old Man' (DOM). In his letters to his 'adopted' daughter, he wrote about the latest work of the Keswick Convention in England and overseas; and with wise words he counselled and encouraged her 'to keep first things first'.¹⁴⁷⁶ These letters, which followed her to China, Japan, Ceylon and India, she treasured. In Dohnavur, Wilson's Bible lay on her desk and in it was a fragment of a letter with these words: 'Follow no voice, not mine or any other which is not His'.¹⁴⁷⁷ When she had to make so many decisions, always and every time his advice to Amy was to wait upon the Lord and expect everything from him.

In 1895, when Amy stood on the platform of the Keswick Convention with some others who were also due to go into the mission field, it was the start of the third decade of the convention. About 3000 people attended the convention that year. The presence of Andrew Murray made the convention

1473. *Amma's Book*, 50.

1474. *Walker of Tinnevely*, X.

1475. Andrew Murray in his closing address at the 1895 Keswick Convention [in Sloan, *These Sixty Years*, 44].

1476. Cf. *Gold Cord*, 5.

1477. *Gold Cord*, 5.

special.¹⁴⁷⁸ He gave several addresses, which had a huge impact on all who heard him. Of his last address 'That God May be All in All' on the Friday evening, someone remarked: 'It was an unforgettable night, the Heavens were opened, and we saw visions of God'.¹⁴⁷⁹ Amy saw in him a spiritual guide and sought every opportunity to hear him and talk with him. He taught her a lesson she never forgot:

First, 'He brought me here. It is by His will I am in this strait place; in that I will rest'. Next, 'He will keep me here in His love, and give me grace in this trial to behave as his child'. Then say, 'he will make the trial a blessing, teaching me lessons he intends me to learn, and working in me the grace He means to bestow'. And last, say, 'In His good time He can bring me out again. How and when, he knows'. Therefore, say 'I am here (1) by God's appointment, (2) in His keeping, (3) under His training, (4) for His time'.¹⁴⁸⁰

Mr Robert Wilson died on 19 June 1905.¹⁴⁸¹ Amy called that day 'Fatherie's Glory Day'. Often letters from the DOM were sent to Dohnavur urging Amy to come back and see him. These letters tore her heart. Others, relatives and friends, also tried to persuade her to come to Britain. Mr Wilson, and others, had tried to break through her defences and persuade her to come home. 'I hope thou wilt not let my present condition disturb any arrangements', and in the next: 'Do thy diligence to come to me before winter', he wrote one fall.¹⁴⁸² These words went through her heart afterwards. She did not come before winter, that winter or any winter. Evangelically correct as Amy had been since 1892, in this instance one feels that although she was not exactly hiding behind one obligation to absolve her from another, she was caught in a most painful dilemma, with suffering the result whatever her choice. It was again in Keswick in 1895 she devoted herself to the work of God, now in India, strong in another's strength. As a true determined Irish Presbyterian, she determined 'to do or die'. 'The strong man and the waterfall channel their own path', as the proverb puts it. Amy was aware that her whole life, her decisions, where to go and what to do, every part of her life was under the scrutiny of God. God's grace was sufficient in every detail, so taking up new challenges could only be done after long prayer and any practice undertaken had to be in keeping with a holy God. In listening to the Scriptures she became a true disciple.

■ 'A very beloved friend'

So Amy called the preacher, theologian and churchman, Handley Carr Glyn Moule (1841–1920). Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he later served as Dean of the school, for 19 years he served as the principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, and thereafter from 1901 to 1920 as bishop of Durham. He is described as being 'master alike of the Greek and the English tongues'.¹⁴⁸³ While in Cambridge, he

1478. 'The main feature of this Convention has been the presence of our beloved brother, the Rev. Andrew Murray from South Africa, whose addresses have come home with peculiar power.' (Rev. Evan Hopkins in the 'Life of Faith', in Douglas, *Andrew Murray and His Message*, 163).

1479. In 'The Visit of Dr Andrew Murray' [in Sloan, *These Sixty Years*, 42]. See also Douglas, *Andrew Murray and His Message*, 163: 'I cannot describe to you the deep heart-searching teaching of Mr Murray's evening addresses nor the power and authority with which they were delivered. Every word seemed to come straight from God with living power, and went right to the hearts of the people.'

1480. *Windows*, 10.

1481. Robert Wilson is buried in the small Quaker burial ground in the fields above his home at Broughton Grange. A simple stone bears the words 'All one in Christ Jesus' [Gal 3:28]. This information in I.H. Murray, *Amy Carmichael, 'Beauty for Ashes'* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2015), 91.

1482. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 108.

1483. Sloan, *These Sixty Years*, 32. Of Moule's commentary on Romans, in the 'Expositor's Bible' series, Dr W.H. Griffith Thomas said: 'In this will be found a statement of the doctrine of Sanctification as seen in Romans VI–VIII, which contains

was a very well-known and beloved speaker – since 1886 – at the Keswick Convention.¹⁴⁸⁴ He passed his 79 years of influence more as a giver than as a receiver. The adherence of Moule to the Keswick platform was a great accession of strength, for it brought into the movement one who had long been highly respected as a trusted Evangelical scholar and theologian:

His messages always brought the hearts of his hearers near to the living and the present Saviour, and they touched practical life on all sides, and to those who had the privilege of his personal friendship, what he was added power and influence to all he said or wrote.¹⁴⁸⁵

From his pencil came a wealth of Bible studies, especially in the Pauline letters, and he never neglected his pastoral duties comforting and writing to people in need. Moule sent in 1915 his exposition to the Philippians to Amy in Dohnavur.

His official correspondence was always large, amounting to an average of 30 to 40 letters a day in the Durham years.¹⁴⁸⁶ Many, all over the world sought his spiritual help and the letters he wrote to little children, aged persons, bedridden invalids and so many more became the treasured possessions of the recipients and were read and reread, refreshing their souls. Some of his letters went even as far as to Dohnavur.¹⁴⁸⁷ After Ponnamal's death the compound was empty for Amy and one day it was mail day and with a pile of letters before her, she was longing for a special letter which could comfort her. She opened a letter and then: 'I could hardly believe he [Bishop Moule] had written to me in his own handwriting, and as I read I found the comfort of the day before repeated and enriched.'¹⁴⁸⁸ In 1917 he wrote the foreword to Amy's *Ponnamal*:

Read it, and give God thanks for it, and read it again and often. It will be friend and helper to your faith, a kindling fire to your missionary thoughts, prayers, and efforts, a window through which you will see 'the real India'¹⁴⁸⁹ as it is not often seen, and a picture, wonderful and beautiful, of the life of the Lord lived in His missionary servants, and in the Indian sisters whom they have brought into His all-loving power and keeping.¹⁴⁹⁰

She also had Moule's *Letters And Poems* – 'a dear book' Amy wrote on the first page – Moule's *The Second Epistle to Timothy*, which she re-read in 1947, and his *Colossian Studies*, 'reread Oct. 1947'.¹⁴⁹¹ Amy had met bishop Moule at the yearly Keswick Convention. Moule, with his broad view had a great interest in mission and, with his sensitive way of feeling, in the sufferings of others. Amy, writing about the often incomprehensible way of God's dealings with his children, one day quoted Moule who wrote to her

.....
(footnote 1483 continues...)

the essential principals of holiness associated with Keswick, put forth with all the scholarship and spirituality characteristic of the author. As long as that book is studied, the theology of holiness as set forth at Keswick cannot fail to receive due attention' (in S. Barabas, *So Great Salvation. The History and Message of the Keswick Convention* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), 174–175.

1484. For a biographical sketch of Moule's life, especially about his spiritual experience when he came in contact with Keswick, see Barabas, *So Great Salvation*, 169–175.

1485. Sloan, *These Sixty Years*, 32.

1486. See the preface of J. Battersby Harford, ed., *Letters and Poems of Bishop Moule* (London: Marshall Brothers Ltd, 1921), V.

1487. In *Letters and Poems of Bishop Moule*, we find portions of three letters to Amy, 33–35, and two to Arulai, 35–36.

1488. Dohnavur letter no. 1, January 1916, p.12, [PRONI D/4061/30/1].

1489. See A.T. Pierson, *The Acts of the Holy Spirit* (London: Morgan & Scott, n.d.), 115.

1490. In foreword of *Ponnamal*, V.

1491. The book is in the Dohnavur library. H.C.G. Moule, *Colossian Studies. Lessons in Faith and Holiness* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1898).

when he felt lonely after his daughter and his wife had died. When she had read the letter, Amy commented:

So near is the eternal Comforter that the strangely un-Christian view of death of our half-pagan age does not come into the picture at all. The wife is not 'lost'. She is just 'upstairs'.¹⁴⁹²

Amy was in line with the mission thoughts of A.T. Pierson (1837–1911):

Pierson's belief that world evangelization would usher in Christ's return was the key to his passion for mission. He authored the watchword of the SVMU, 'the evangelization of the world in this generation'. He promoted missions through hundreds of books, articles, speeches, and *The Missionary Review of the World* which he edited (1888–1911), the most important nondenominational mission journal of its day. After attending the London Centenary Conference in 1888, he began to spend time in England as missions advocate and interim pastor at Charles H. Spurgeon's Metropolitan Tabernacle. He acted as elder statesman to the emerging 'faith mission' movement, influencing among others the Africa Inland Mission and the Oriental Missionary Society.¹⁴⁹³

Pierson's absolute surrender to God's will, revealed in Christ Jesus, attracted her. On her first missionary journey, she had some of Pierson's books in her suitcase. In Japan she was a regular reader of Pierson's *The Divine Enterprise of Missions*.¹⁴⁹⁴ Amy saw that she was not the one only responsible for the work, because a missionary is according to Pierson a co-labourer with God (1 Cor 3:9), a co-sufferer with Christ (Col 1:24) and a co-witness with the Holy Spirit (Jn 15:26 and 27). Ours is to keep in touch with the Triune God and we have to know, 'that it is such a solemn thing to work with God'. 'The more one realizes that unspeakable holiness the more utterly one abhors and "retracts"'.¹⁴⁹⁵

Hudson Taylor and George Müller

Though different people helped to shape Amy's mission view, some men seem to rise above others. In 1885, Amy met James Hudson Taylor (1832–1905), the founder of the China Inland Mission for the first time. She heard him pleading for the millions who every month passed away beyond the reach of the Gospel. Taylor gave the advice:

If we would be soul-winners and build up the Church, which is His Temple, let us not this: not by discussion nor by argument, but by lifting up Christ shall we draw men unto Him.¹⁴⁹⁵

Amy fully agreed, for in her work she never argued or engaged in fierce debate. Wherever, anywhere, anyhow, always she put Christ in the front. Taylor's very intimacy with Christ was well known. 'It will be service *with* Jesus as well as *for* Jesus'.¹⁴⁹⁶ Amy followed Hudson Taylor in his vision of an interdenominational mission in million-peopled Asia. She also shared Taylor's longing to bring the missionaries and the Church back to prayer and to live in this work by faith alone. To 'look up' rather than to look at circumstances and the fact that mission work has to be evangelistic rather than institutional gave Taylor as well as Amy openness to the people to listen to the consolations of the Gospel. Amy's expression 'The Cross is the attraction' is an echo of Taylor's saying:

1492. In *Gold by Moonlight*, 38.

1493. Dana L. Robert, 1998, 'Pierson, Arthur Tappan', in Gerald H. Anderson (ed.), *Biographical dictionary of Christian missions*, New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 536.

1494. *From Sunrise Land*, 103.

1495. In J. Hudson Taylor, *Union and Communion. China's Millions* (London: CIM, 1950), 24.

1496. J. Hudson Taylor, *Union and Communion*, 18.

There is a needs-be for us to give ourselves for the life of the world. An easy, non-self-denying life will never be one of power. Fruit-bearing is cross-bearing. There are no two Christs, an easygoing one for easygoing Christians, and a suffering, toiling one for exceptional believers. There is only one Christ. Are you willing to abide in Him, and thus bear much fruit?¹⁴⁹⁷

Amy also felt the influence of George Müller (1805–1898) of Bristol. She ordered her work in Dohnavur on the same basis, never asking for financial help as she winged her petitions to the God of all grace. Müller with his institutions wanted to form these according to the apostolic model, in which the scriptural pattern was the sole guide, and the Holy Spirit recognised as the sole administrator. The emphasis both men – Taylor and Müller – laid upon the complete dependency on God to provide means for the work was also Amy’s way in Dohnavur. She waited for ‘God’s sparrows’ to provide for all the needs of the Fellowship.

Thomas Gajetan Ragland

In India, the Tinnevely missionary Thomas Ragland (1815–1858),¹⁴⁹⁸ who sailed for India in 1845 in service of the CMS, was the first Englishman to camp among the people of India. Amy gave an account of his life and pioneer work in *Ragland, Spiritual Pioneer* (1922). Amy had a deep respect for Ragland and was always quoting him. Ragland was the first missionary to settle in Dohnavur. In a letter home, he wrote ‘Dohnavur, a beautiful spot in the south-west corner of Tinnevely, close to the last high rock of the Ghaut Range’.¹⁴⁹⁹ As the CMS secretary in Madras he visited Tinnevely and had been struck by the contrast between the south and the north of that district. In the south mission stations were to be found every few miles, and there were flourishing and stable congregations. The north was completely the opposite, with scattered congregations here and there. There was no single missionary stationed there. Ragland became convinced that the solution to this disparity lay in the development of a band of evangelists, who were pledged to constant itineration and who were to preach the Gospel in the thousands of towns and villages. Ragland was a mathematician, and the precision of his mind is reflected in the plans he drew up. His way of working was ‘to press home the message by personal conversation, and to render its effect permanent by the sale of literature’.¹⁵⁰⁰

He died in 1858 and, as his fellow workers said, the indirect cause of his death was exhaustion from over-exertion. After his death at Satchiyapuram, a small village in Sivakasi Taluk in Virudhunagar district, Tamil Nadu, the itinerancy was not allowed to die out. Amy and also the Walker family saw the need to follow in the footsteps of Ragland.

Ragland taught Amy to look ‘under the surface’. What is really going on in the daily life of the people? In his student years at Cambridge, the words of Henry Venn pierced through his heart and he never forgot the ultimate goal when doing mission work:

1497. Hudson Taylor in G. Howard Taylor, *Faith Venture, A shorter life of Hudson Taylor* (London: CIM, 1960 [1932]), 156. In the midst of his work in China, Hudson Taylor wrote: ‘Cross-loving men are needed’. In *Faith Venture*, 165.

1498. Thomas Gajetan Ragland was born in Gibraltar in 1815. He graduated with a BA from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, in 1842 as fourth Wrangler. He was ordained deacon and priest at Ely the same year, and elected a Fellow of his college. He proceeded to an MA in 1845, and took the degree of BD in 1853. In 1845, he accepted the position of secretary of the Corresponding Committee of the CMS in Madras, and he retained that appointment for nine years. It was not until 1854 that he commenced direct evangelistic work. In that year, assisted by two younger Cambridge men, David Fenn and E.R. Meadows, he founded the North Tinnevely mission. The Venerable Archdeacon Thomas Thomason Perowne, in 1861, wrote a memoir of his life and work. See T.T. Perowne, *A Memoir of the Rev. Thomas Gajetan Ragland: Fellow of the Corpus Christi* (London: Halliday, 1861).

1499. *Ragland*, 24.

1500. In Neill, *God’s Apprentice*, 102.

Let us but get a glimpse of things unseen and eternal, and see the King of Glory establishing His reign through the whole earth, and calling many officers to join His royal camp and court, and we shall feel in what true honour consists.

Ragland's missionary call cut straight across the hope of marrying one day. He 'held it as a secret between him and the Lord'.¹⁵⁰¹ The high standard of duty Ragland had attracted Amy. His discipline and joy, his going his own way with God, were the rules he walked by. This pioneer could not work with narrow bounds; they would turn into 'pin-cushions, and more pin than cushion'.¹⁵⁰² Ragland did not want missionary literature:

[W]hich paints the picture with the devil out of it'.¹⁵⁰³ 'Where all Christ's dear servants only made willing to be as corn of wheat to fall into the ground and die, I should be content and thankful'.¹⁵⁰⁴ 'Of all plans for ensuring success, the most certain is Christ's own – becoming a corn of wheat, falling into the ground and dying'.¹⁵⁰⁵

A very important thing of getting to know the people is 'to have a knowledge of their intimate talk': don't go on speaking English, but if you want to understand, 'listen and love enough'.¹⁵⁰⁶ During Ragland's time in Dohnavur's bungalow, the story 'Cry a Little for Me' was written. This title was a request from a sick 3-year-old child to his father before he died. Amy added, 'Many a young child, and with deeper reasons, might have said it. But for this comforting more is needed than tears'.¹⁵⁰⁷

He was in Dohnavur to escape from the office work they wanted him to do, but he felt that the preaching of the Gospel and leading people to Christ had the priority. 'There was one tingling wild desire to fly it all, to fly to some distant place where there was no office or committee meeting or polite society.' People had sucked him into daily routine, but he wanted to break free somehow. Today they say he was a visionary, but 'something had happened within him, a new passion had awakened; the lava still flowed'.¹⁵⁰⁸ Madras was so narrow for home, passing thousands of people without the opportunity to say something:

He was tired of the big mission-house with its comings and goings, the many servants who had to be looked after, the time that had to be spent as it seemed to no profit at all.¹⁵⁰⁹

He wanted to live in a house with only one servant and resign to work among the people. The Lord had other plans for him:

It will not open! Through the bars, I see the glory and the mystery. Wind upward ever.¹⁵¹⁰ And here again we meet and touch. Which of us in the hour of our greatest decision or of our sharpest disappointment looked upon it as a little thing?¹⁵¹¹

1501. *Ragland*, 3.

1502. *Ragland*, 4.

1503. *Ragland*, 11.

1504. *Ragland*, 15.

1505. *Ragland*, 16.

1506. *Ragland*, 16–17.

1507. *Ragland*, 26.

1508. *Ragland*, 39–39.

1509. *Ragland*, 43.

1510. *Ragland*, 44.

1511. *Ragland*, 44.

‘Let me be a corn of wheat’, he wrote during a difficult time. He longed for a change:

My secularities begin to be a drudgery.¹⁵¹² And after long pondering he put into words thoughts which had grown up in his heart with his dear Lord, and asked not only to be set free entirely from all other work, but to be given for fellow workers men to whom the Cross is the attraction.

He went off south, that bullock-cart having been his home now for nine years. His heart walked after his eyes. He saw people never having heard the Gospel. ‘Why must they go on without hearing? Was there no way by which they could hear?’¹⁵¹³ ‘This itinerating work had never been tried in the whole of India. [...] Impossible, no, not with God. These people must be reached’.¹⁵¹⁴ By this work many people could be reached:

And it fell to the lot of his spiritual successor, Walker of Tinnevely, to help forward the first women’s band. [...] Sacrifice? Burning fires of eager love, then the plunge into the iciest water; thus are God’s sword-blades.¹⁵¹⁵

In a kind of ‘spiritual arithmetic’,¹⁵¹⁶ he gave a personal word to each letter he wrote; and he kept a prayer roll of his fellow missionaries.

‘The routine of business was saturated in the loving and spiritual, and the work never became mechanical.’¹⁵¹⁷ In his prayers, he examined himself and humbled himself before the Lord. When it was difficult, he used to say, ‘look up, and go on, and try not to make it harder for others’. He was always dealing with ‘real things’:

I want a settledness, a settled holy fear of sin and, if it might be, continual upholding of my going in the Lord’s ways, that my feet slip not, never, never.¹⁵¹⁸

Ragland broke new ground, when he resigned from his sending church and took only what the Lord might give to him. He knew it might be little, but he never urged his colleagues to do the same. This was 14 years before the birth of the CIM. ‘But Ragland and Hudson Taylor were blood brothers.’¹⁵¹⁹

What attracted Amy to Ragland was that in servants for Christ he looked for *vaira* (diamonds). He was not content with less. In the heat of the fight many give in soon:

He was up against a power that had never been attacked, much less conquered, a power that knew how to use every element of difficulty and discouragement, climate and other, in this tremendous warfare.¹⁵²⁰

He wanted men with no reservations and with no ‘buts’. He already saw the creamy smoothness: missionaries who wanted an easy life, avoiding the ‘sham battlefields’. Ragland wanted the real thing and he knew: ‘The call finds them, thrills through them. They rise and obey, and a joy that passes the joy of the morning lightens upon them and abides’.¹⁵²¹

1512. *Ragland*, 45.

1513. *Ragland*, 48.

1514. *Ragland*, 45–48.

1515. *Ragland*, 49–50.

1516. A Henry Venn expression. H. Venn (1817–1889) was the honorary secretary of the CMS.

1517. *Ragland*, 31.

1518. *Ragland*, 36–37.

1519. *Ragland*, 53.

1520. *Ragland*, 53

1521. *Ragland*, 55.

His itinerary plans were accepted. He was persuaded not to resign from the CMS, but they set him free and other men would go with him. This work would be done under the care of the CMS. People at home tried to show him that he could not do the work in this way and that he was too weak. It was useless: 'he saw a hand they could not see that beckoned him away. He heard a voice they could not hear that would not let him stay'.¹⁵²²

Ragland knew that true conversion in India is not in the masses. 'The fruit was all hand-picked, and never made much show [...] and Ragland was not out to pile numbers in reports, but to win souls for Jesus Christ'.¹⁵²³

Thomas Ragland, called 'his Lord's dear lover',¹⁵²⁴ living near the town of Siva's Benares on the plains of north Tinnevely, was called home on 22 October 1858. A boy was looking through an open window of the bungalow unnoticed by the one inside. He heard the last word Ragland spoke, one word he recognised, 'Jesus', and 'saw a smile that no passing of the years could blot from memory'.¹⁵²⁵ From Ragland Amy learned not to waste time and to live a life that is all poured forth. To fall into the ground as the corn of wheat and die, and in that way to bring forth much fruit:

But all through life I see a Cross,
Where sons of God yield up their breath:
There is no gain except by loss,
There is no life except by death,
And no full vision but by Faith,
No glory but by bearing shame,
Nor Justice but by taking blame,
And that Eternal Passion saith,
'Be emptied of glory and right and name'.¹⁵²⁶

Rev. Thomas Walker

The Tinnevely missionaries were in Amy's eyes 'real soldier-missionaries'. The Walkers reminded her of the CIM missionaries in China and for her 'Mrs Walker is especially lovely, and heart and soul a missionary'.¹⁵²⁷ A small note of Amy about Thomas Walker goes as follows:

Born February 9, 1859. Sailed to India, October 10, 1885. Having lived, departed [*Tamil idiom for 'died'*] 24 August 1912. To a man of his adventurous and ardent temperament nothing short of utter surrender would suffice. The Master Who demanded all was the Master for him.¹⁵²⁸

He had been a splendid friend. When first the children's work began he was at home, and his letters were doubtful, for he had never been in that which I have called the Underworld, and could not measure its needs.

1522. *Ragland*, 61.

1523. *Ragland*, 87.

1524. *Ragland*, 99.

1525. *Ragland*, 102. That boy never forgot it. One day, he, still a Hindu, a man grown, stood by a dying friend. In his agony, the dying man cried to light a lamp. Who would show him the way? Then his friend told the man of the open window, the look, the smile, the one great Word, 'Jesus' (in *Ragland*, 106–107).

1526. *Ragland*, 111.

1527. In a letter from Kotagiri, 31 May 1896, 3 (PRONI D/4060/1/1-D; D/4060/6/8).

1528. In the opening page of Amy's first book about Thomas Walker, *When God Came*.

But when, upon his return, he set himself to discover the true state of things, and knew them from the smile to be indeed a call, his attitude changed and he stood by us and was a shelter from the smile that somehow was harder to bear than the scourge of the tongue. [...] Now he was suddenly taken from us. We had to do without.¹⁵²⁹

Who was that white man Star saw one day, when she had slipped away from home, and who stood there in front of the people at the well? Not understanding everything the little girl noticed that the words he spoke were very important. 'He spoke about sin and the punishment of sin, and finished with God's great love and the salvation that has been prepared for men.'¹⁵³⁰ Star had seen and had listened to Thomas Walker (Figure 30), the CMS missionary, based in Tinnevely. Walker had been the chairman of the council of the CMS, a position requiring much office work. On the Tinnevely missionary scene, nominal Christianity was for Walker the most worrying thing: Christians lived like Hindus. Other problems arose and finally he felt he 'could not go on turning the wheel in the direction it was turning'. He asked for replacement and his resignation was accepted. By the CMS he first was stationed in 1885 in Palamcottah, Tinnevely, at that time the CMS's headquarters. This district was Hindu in religion: approximately 3000 temples were in that area at that time, of which 42 were regarded as especially holy.

All this had happened by the time Amy arrived at Palamcottah. Walker, free from office responsibilities, started itinerant work in the villages in the Tinnevely district. He saw in Amy a deep and uncompromising spirit of discipleship. Amy first met Thomas Walker when she was at a Keswick Convention where he was one of the speakers. She did not have much confidence in his ability as a good speaker. 'I took my Tamil grammar study should the address prove dull in spite of the scholarship sure to be in it. [...] My Tamil grammar remained unopened.'¹⁵³¹

Amy discussed with him how she could best learn Tamil and she tried to explain to him that she would rather live in a mud hut with the people around her instead of being among English people in a bungalow. Walker said:

'You would not stand it for long'. I replied: I would rather burn out than rust out. 'That should be as God wills'. My first thoughts: I don't like you, was my immediate decision, 'you don't understand'. I withdrew in the deeps of myself and the rest of the walk was formal and uncomfortable. I did not like him at all. But I liked his wife [...] and it was settled that I should go and stay with them in Tinnevely and study Tamil.¹⁵³²

No one so deeply influenced Amy as Rev. Thomas Walker. She lived and worked with Rev. Walker and his wife for 15 years.¹⁵³³ Like Amy, Walker appreciated the sermons of Bishop Handley Moule,¹⁵³⁴ who was a friend of Amy's. Amy wrote three different books about Thomas Walker. He not only was her language teacher, but in him she saw a true God-sent missionary and we see that in her thinking about mission work, mission principles and theory he was her example. When he lived in Dohnavur he assisted Amy also in the bookkeeping of the Fellowship.¹⁵³⁵ She heard him speak

1529. *Nor Scrip*, 29.

1530. *Ploughed Under*, 50.

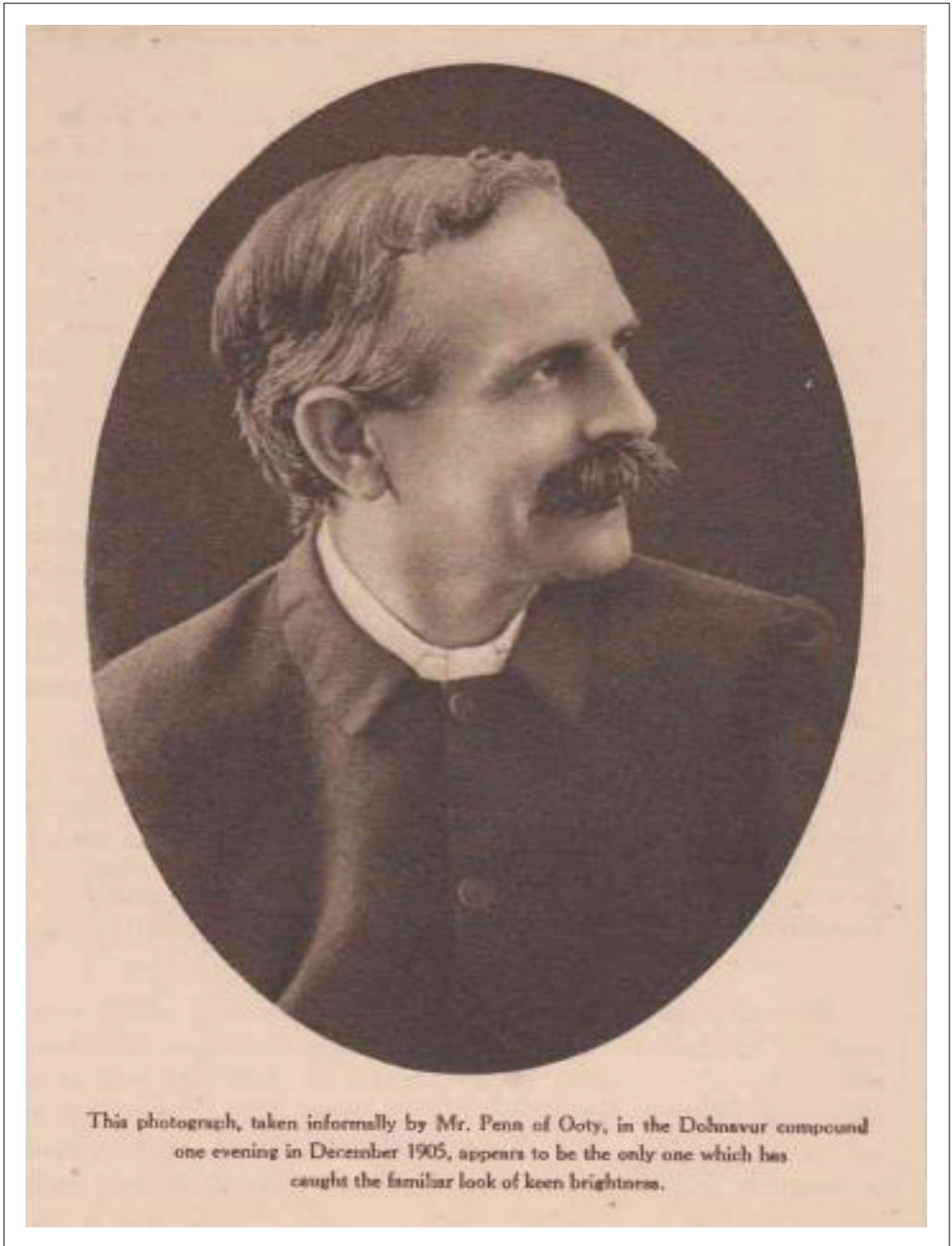
1531. *When God Came*, 2.

1532. *When God Came*, 3–4.

1533. *From the Forest*, 40.

1534. Cf. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 10.

1535. Cf. *Nor Scrip*, 101.



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FIGURE 30: Rev. Thomas Walker (1905).

and preach several times and this, in her own word, 'deepened' her life.¹⁵³⁶ We see many things Amy did or wrote that originated from Thomas Walker. Like Walker Amy was rather afraid of publicity, 'as it opens up the way for pride'.¹⁵³⁷ What she so admired in Thomas Walker, was his:

[S]tern denial of self, and the absolute severance from what was of the world.¹⁵³⁸ A firm stand against everything un-Christian is absolutely essential in order to the progress of the Gospel in India. Let us raise the standard of 'No Compromise'.¹⁵³⁹

A letter home, written in 1899, shows something of his deepest longing:

We have been preaching sin and repentance, and there seems some movement, but how deep it is one cannot yet see. I am tired of the half conversions which are the order of the day in most places, in England as well as in India, and I am longing to see something like the reality of the '59 revival.¹⁵⁴⁰

These words of Thomas Walker's Amy fully agreed with. She respected him, who could rejoice when he met 'earnestness', 'spirituality' and 'unworldliness'. 'It was always as if he were looking through the pressing, crowding, articulate Seen, to the great, quiet Unseen behind'.¹⁵⁴¹ Like herself, she saw in Walker the mountaineer, this 'single hearted-man', who had the vows of God on him and who did just one thing – *This one thing I do!*¹⁵⁴² He longed to be a sincere missionary; once he prayed:

That I may have wisdom to proceed aright, fluency of speech in the Tamil language, a yearning desire to win soul for Christ, and grace to be both in life and service all for Jesus.¹⁵⁴³

He was a real itinerating evangelist, going out for the sake of the Gospel.¹⁵⁴⁴ Walker had deep insight into Hindu life and thought. He could read the old Sanskrit and Tamil sacred works and discuss with learned Brahman. He knew 'the real state of things' in south India and even many non-Christians respected him. He knew of the cruelties and immoralities in Hinduism:

Where is it (the Gospel) so sorely needed as in a continent where satan has constructed his strongest fortresses and displayed the choicest masterpieces of his skill? [...] And so I repeat, if God is calling you, buckle on your sword, come to the fight, and win your spurs among the cultured sons of India.¹⁵⁴⁵

He himself felt fully dependent upon God and liked to pray with Jeremy Taylor, 'Lord, do Thou turn me all into love, and all my love into obedience, and let my obedience be without interruption'.¹⁵⁴⁶

Walker was sure that in no other country but India the forces against the Gospel were so great and so combined. 'For here it has to face and overcome the combined resistances of the Caste system,

1536. *This One Thing*, 75.

1537. *This One Thing*, 35.

1538. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 12.

1539. T. Walker, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (London: CPCK, 1919), 26.

1540. *This One Thing*, 97.

1541. *This One Thing*, 204.

1542. *This One Thing*, 182 and 187. 'The voice of my departed Lord, Go! teach all nations! comes on the night air and awakes mine ear. Why stay I here? The vows of God are on me, and I may no longer stop to play with shadows or pluck earthly flowers, till I my work have done and rendered up account' (*This One Thing*, 16).

1543. *This One Thing*, 39.

1544. 'And the Iyer baptised her as he did all our converts, though he repeatedly declared he was not sent to baptise but to preach the Gospel' (*From the Forest*, 67).

1545. Thomas Walker, quoted by Amy (*Things As They Are*, 249).

1546. *This One Thing*, 50.

entrenched heathenism, and deeply subtle philosophies.¹⁵⁴⁷ For a Hindu to become a Christian it meant to give up everything – *everything!*¹⁵⁴⁸

He knew India as few knew it; he was wise as few are wise; and he had the rarest gift of never failing in a crisis. [...] He had sympathized with us in a way, which halved every grief and doubled every joy.¹⁵⁴⁹

We focus a little more on Thomas Walker. Walker, just like Ragland, was the spiritual son of Charles Simeon of Cambridge University and deeply loved by thousands in Travancore and Tinnevely. His deep determination of utter devotion impressed Amy. 'Of all plans for insuring success, the most certain is Christ's own – becoming a corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying.' His remarkable ministry in Travancore and at Dohnavur,¹⁵⁵⁰ since 1902, was well-known. 'He stood for the highest always and everywhere. [...] He was very quiet and un-self- advertising.'¹⁵⁵¹ He was 'a brilliant linguist with a remarkable knowledge of Tamil',¹⁵⁵² gifted in street preaching, in counselling, and in Bible exposition to missionary groups. In the 1905 revival, which spread over many parts of India, Walker was heavily involved, preaching and praying in many meetings.¹⁵⁵³

Did Walker influence Amy in the formation of the Sisters of the Common Life? In writing to his sister – in 1888 – he already wrote about itinerating work, but he thought the mode of work was wrong:

We preach and preach to hundreds and hundreds of people, but find little or no response. [...] What I long for is a little community of bachelor missionaries to be always at work in the district, sharing each other's sorrows and joys and living a life of greater simplicity than we do at present, trying to stir up native Christians to real self-denial, which is little understood by them. [...] I believe in a good, warm, strong force in aggressive work.¹⁵⁵⁴

This Walker wrote because he did not see any interest in the Gospel in south India, 'in fact, my opinion is that sense of sin is a very rare article indeed in India'.¹⁵⁵⁵

Walker's attitude when something official had to be done, such as the CMS Centenary services, was typical. Walker wrote – and Amy felt the same – 'I wish all the Centenary services were over. I am afraid of all this fuss and noise, "Down in the dust" is our proper place and attitude'.¹⁵⁵⁶ Walker's imperative need for quiet and privacy was also dear to Amy. Walker did not want to sit for photos. When someone asked him to have his photo taken he excused himself: 'I pointed out the incongruity of the request, and begged, as kindly as possibly, to be excused. How fond we all are nowadays of publicity, autobiographies and photographs!' Amy too did not like to have her photograph taken.¹⁵⁵⁷

1547. In *Things As They Are*, 83.

1548. *Things As They Are*, 86.

1549. *Ponnamal*, 90.

1550. The main reason to move to Dohnavur at that time was that this was a suitable place for an ordination class, to teach divinity students and to do evangelistic work with them (*This One Thing*, 115).

1551. *Gold Cord*, 8; *When God Came*, 5.

1552. Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 123.

1553. Cf. Dyer, *Revival in India*, 95.

1554. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 95 and 97.

1555. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 104. 'The god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not. It is partly, I think, that they have lost all sense and conception of what true holiness means' (*Walker of Tinnevely*, 106).

1556. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 222.

1557. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 268. It was very difficult to get a photo of Amy. She even erased her face in a group photo taken during her stay in Japan.

He came into conflict with the office bearers of the CMS in India who wanted to shut him up in a clerical job. He refused:

We have been too much occupied with outward organization and missionary routine; we have not sought for our Indian brethren, as we should, a Spirit of life from God; we have not loved them, wept over them, wrestled in prayer for them as we ought to have done. Lord, we blame ourselves today. We are very guilty, we missionaries, before Thee in this thing. Our strength has often been expended over the externals of our work, and we have failed to attain, in any adequate degree, the main object of our mission: that immortal souls might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Help us all to make a fresh start. O Spirit of life, breathe upon our congregations. Breathe upon these slain, that they may live.¹⁵⁵⁸

In a letter home in 1889,¹⁵⁵⁹ he wrote 'We want less of policy and more of downright, straightforward Gospel work in reliance on the Spirit of grace'. Walker was a strong opponent of introducing Western church systems in new churches on the mission field:

They were not of the essence of the Gospel. And we are warned hereby to beware of oppressing the infant Churches of the mission-field with our own national rules and customs and ecclesiastical systems and accretions. We Westerners often carry to eastern lands denominational shibboleths and Church organisations, which are not of the essence of the Gospel. Very solemn were St. Peter's words, 'Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples?'¹⁵⁶⁰

The Hindus have to 'see' and to 'hear' the Gospel in those who profess to have received it. The evangelisation in India, according to Walker, 'will be immensely accelerated' when missionaries are been keen on these things: to be in the country showing they had received the Christian message straight from God and in life and work live according to the Gospel¹⁵⁶¹:

If we want India to be evangelized, we must be up and doing. There is much danger in our midst of congregations settling down into a state of ease and indifference to the condition of the non-Christian world around them.¹⁵⁶²

Walker was determined that nothing should ever hold him to conventional methods of work. 'I feel I have reached a point when my obedience to the Committee is in danger of clashing with my obedience to God'.¹⁵⁶³ He questioned himself and others by asking: 'Are you sure that you are turning the wheels in the right direction?'¹⁵⁶⁴ Amy says that he was a 'very quiet man and un-self advertising', but 'that he was a man with a message of power'.¹⁵⁶⁵ Walker was a man easy to get on with, but he had strong views and definite beliefs, and an obstinate determination to go the way he believed to be right, together with a high standard of discipleship for himself and for those who shared his life. He was soaked in the Scriptures and life in India had given him deep insight into the thinking, life and vagaries of the Indian people. Being fluent in Tamil he could reach the people's hearts and by experience he had learned not to

1558. W.M. Smith in the introduction of T. Walker, *Missionary Ideals*, X and XI.

1559. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 109.

1560. In T. Walker, *Missionary Ideals*, 88.

1561. Walker, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 112. Cf. too *This One Thing*, 32: 'Let no one come to India who is not prepared to love her people. We British have done much for India, more than she as yet recognizes; but we have not loved enough.'

1562. Walker, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 49. 'But the history of the Tinnevely Mission makes me dread anything like making too much of a mission-field. When we begin to praise ourselves, God allows disaster to come and humble us' (*This One Thing*, 55).

1563. *This One Thing*, 74.

1564. *This One Thing*, 56.

1565. *When God Came*, 5.

put trust in outward things. One thing was in his heart: the spiritual welfare of the thousands of people living in the villages, worshipping the idols. With so much immorality being in their religion Walker emphasised that a true knowledge of Christ and strict morality are one. To love Christ is obedience to his Word too. 'He had mourned over the low ideals of what should have been a living Church [...] He grieved when hungry sheep looked up and were not fed.'¹⁵⁶⁶

There was something apostolic about this missionary. Nothing could keep him from his set purpose. He would give himself to preaching Christ wherever he might be, but he disliked to be restricted by the rules of precedent which so easily became law in the conduct of a mission station. Walker was not a man to talk, discuss, make plans and formulate resolutions, some of which perhaps were put into effect, but the majority of which were laid on the table or placed in a drawer to be dealt with on some future and uncertain occasion. When necessary he attended meetings and conferences. When there was a lot of talk of church organisation and mission work, but nothing practical was done, then Walker listened and his body sat truly in the audience, but his spirit wandered up and down along Indian roads. He saw himself sitting in a bullock cart on his way to the hundreds of still unreached villages of India. He feared that God's open doors were overlooked. 'Away with custom and ceremony! Let us cry to God.'¹⁵⁶⁷ Why wait until the opportunities have passed, and so many have to die, without ever having heard the good news. 'There's an amount of machinery – but life?', he once said, when he saw that the wheels of the Church were turning busily and things looked so imposing, so that most people were satisfied with this.¹⁵⁶⁸

In 1897 the decision was taken. He left the office in Madras and moved to the south, first to Pannaivilai from where he itinerated the whole district. In that year Amy heard him preaching on a Sunday evening and of that sermon she wrote:

A certain nervous mannerism in the speaker which would have been disturbing if the subject had been less finely handled, was forgotten – all the personal and the trivial was forgotten; this present world with its puny powers seemed as nothing, a shrivelled leaf. Only the Eternal was important. That was the sense of the hour; it deepened life for at least one who heard. But the preacher never knew.¹⁵⁶⁹

In his preface to Amy's *Overweights of Joy*, we see a missionary who came up with the cold facts of the religious state of the Indian Church. There was a total indifference to the glad tidings of the Gospel and he referred to Dr Miller, speaking of the Hausaland people in Africa at the Keswick Convention of 1903, with reference to the situation in India: 'Make no mistake. They do not want the Gospel; but they need the Gospel'.¹⁵⁷⁰

He never quit the Anglican Church but the strictness of using the official Anglican Prayer book and rituals presented too many limitations for him, because they were hindering him from following the guidance of the Spirit.¹⁵⁷¹

1566. *When God Came*, 5.

1567. *This One Thing*, 172.

1568. Cf. *This One Thing*, 211.

1569. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 183. 'And now began those wonderful days when vital religion was preached Sunday by Sunday, and the place was alive with a sense of stir and a new brightness' (*Ponnamal*, 7).

1570. T. Walker in the preface of *Overweights of Joy*, VII. 'It is true also, absolutely true, that here, in Southern India, we are "skirting the abyss," an abyss which is deep and foul beyond description, and yet is glorified, to Hindu eyes, by the sanctions of religion. [...] India has not yet been won' (p. VIII).

1571. Cf. the strictness of the CMS in the interview Dr Murray Webb-Peploe had with the board members of the mission committee of the CMS, who had to decide whether he could be accepted as one of their missionaries. 'He asked me how much I knew about the Prayer Book. I said, "I'm afraid very little, but I do read the Bible". He said, "My dear boy, however can you convert the heathen if you don't know the Anglican Prayer Book?"'

While doing his Tamil studies – as Amy was doing at that time – Sherwood Eddy, who for some time lived with the Walker family – ‘this godly family home’ – characterised Walker as ‘a kind of ascetic Christian John the Baptist, who spent hours in prayer when on his missions’.¹⁵⁷² Walker felt the battle and travail for souls, never changing the terms of the message that he propagated: ‘the Cross is still the Cross’.¹⁵⁷³ Walker was Amy’s language teacher and he taught her thoroughly and seriously. When his father died, and the news reached him, he was busy teaching. He first finished his lesson and then told her what had happened. ‘His explanation?’ ‘Not even the sorrows of love could be allowed to interrupt the service of love’.¹⁵⁷⁴ In his sermons he was clear:

He never aimed at soothing souls with those safe, comfortable sentences which disturb nobody and do nothing; he said what was in his heart in words as direct as he could find. [...] In his sermons he was first informing and then inflaming’.¹⁵⁷⁵

On 17 February 1898, Amy passed the language exam: ‘Hallelujah! Hurrah! The exam is passed! I am free for souls at last!’¹⁵⁷⁶ She saw that now for her the real battle could start, now that she was able to converse in Tamil with the Indian Tamil speakers. This was the life Amy had longed for, for her it was ‘blissful work’, and it reminded her of the work she had done in Hirose (Japan). In the itinerating work she came into many villages, saw and heard things so contrary to a life of holiness. ‘She experienced a sense of evil worse than in Japan.’¹⁵⁷⁷ Her big question always was: ‘In what way has this work to be done to touch these men and women for God?’

In Keswick they took note of the move of Rev. Walker from the office to the dusty roads of Travancore. At the Convention Week of 1897, Robert Wilson read a letter from Amy, dated 26 June 1897 from Palamcottah, south India, in which she mentions her itinerary work together with the band of Thomas Walker:

It is a new move this of Mr Walker’s. If there could be a moment’s prayer [*at the convention*] that God would move among the Christians of this great district (Tinnevely) stirring them to wait upon Him for a deeper and more living life, it might – it surely would – make a difference out here! Could Keswick give two minutes to that prayer, or one-minute silence after the request? That would mean most real praying perhaps.¹⁵⁷⁸

When Walker was a young curate at St. John’s, Stratford, he considered ‘Keswick’ teaching ‘something to be regarded with caution’,¹⁵⁷⁹ but in India he saw it differently and eventually Walker was affiliated with Keswick, after the Keswick Council asked the Walkers to be their missionaries. For Amy it was a surprise:

1572. Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 123.

1573. *This One Thing*, 202.

1574. *This One Thing*, 46.

1575. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 19 and 20. ‘Isn’t it better to lead someone to heaven than to have people admire you on earth? Live for Him Who died for you, and first trust Him with your soul’ (Thomas Walker in *Walker of Tinnevely*, 22). ‘For him it was anathema when people only praised his sermons’ (*When God Came*, 6).

1576. In *Scraps*, 17 February 1898.

1577. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 123. In chapters 15 and 16, Elliot gives a vivid account of Amy’s itinerating work.

1578. *TKW* (1897): 82. Walker himself once said: ‘Here is the key to the whole position. India will never be awakened except by prayer’ (*This One Thing*, 82). ‘Better, far better, do less work, if need be, that we may pray more; because work done by the rushing torrent of human energy will not save a single soul: whereas work done in vital and unbroken contact with the living God will tell for all eternity’ (*This One Thing*, 83).

1579. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 17–18.

There had been a time when the Iyer (as the people called him. Iyer means, teacher) had watched the Keswick movement with half-doubtful eyes. Would the Convention end in being merely a religious 'talky-talky', a spiritual picnic, or would it lead men and women out to the needy fields of the world? When it began to do so, he began to believe in it.

At first, Walker hesitated but at last consented to be more connected with Keswick, 'hoping for more prayer of the vital sort because of this link with that great gathering of the Lord's people'.¹⁵⁸⁰ The main reason for Walker to join Keswick was when the Keswick Council started to undertake mission work to obey the Lord's last command.¹⁵⁸¹ Walker and his wife visited the Keswick Convention during their furloughs in 1904 and in 1911, where in the latter he heard Webb Peplow's Bible readings, which were for him 'strong and helpful' and for the rest, 'the missionary prayer meetings were for him the best hours of the week'.¹⁵⁸² During the Keswick Week he mostly liked to go into the woods to pray for without the quiet he could not live.

Another point was that in the first years of his mission work Walker was rather reluctant to accept the Keswick view of holiness, but he gradually changed his mind. In 1900, he even wrote a letter to the Keswick Mission Council to ask the CMS to assign him as one of the Keswick missionaries. The council complied with his request and it was proposed and agreed to pay him 175 pounds annually.¹⁵⁸³ Since then Walker also worked for the Syrian Church in Travancore.¹⁵⁸⁴ The yearly conventions in Travancore with Walker as the main speaker often saw an attendance of some 20 000 people.¹⁵⁸⁵

He emphasised the independence of the Indian Church. He saw all the unhappy divisions of the home church rapidly introduced in India, and so the spread of the Gospel was hindered.¹⁵⁸⁶ For him the Philippian church was the example: an infant church not subsidised from foreign sources, a strong and active congregation, self-supporting and independent:

And here in India, we fall far short of so inspiring an example. We live as a Church in a sort of parasite existence. [...] Indian fellow-Christians! Out of our poverty, if need be, like the Philippians of old, let us give with a liberal hand for the support of our congregations and for the spread of the Gospel.¹⁵⁸⁷

The elaborate rituals in Islam and Hinduism appeal to the senses of the people in India. Our task is to draw 'a sharp line of demarcation between the external systems of non-Christian religions of the country and the essentially spiritual character of the Gospel'.¹⁵⁸⁸ Christians are 'called unto holiness', but

1580. *This One Thing*, 95. No wonder Walker was in first instance a little bit reluctant to accept the Keswick invitation because conferences were not in Walker's line. His general thoughts about conferences was, 'too much talk, too little prayer' (*This One Thing*, 95).

1581. Cf. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 175–176.

1582. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 428.

1583. KCMMB, Keswick Mission Committee report, 05 October 1900.

1584. See *This One Thing*, 106–107: 'What I find in Travancore is a crowd of people, thinking themselves converted, and coming to meetings to enjoy Scripture teaching, but sadly lacking in practical godliness, and with little or no zeal for the conversion of others. There seems to me an absence of real power, and it distresses me. [...] It seems to me that the people are as much in danger from excess of emotion here as the Tamils are in danger from lack of it.'

1585. In *When God Came*, 7.

1586. For Walker's view on this issue, see *Walker of Tinnevely*, 148.

1587. Walker, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, XL. Walker wrote on the Philippians – 'the Joy Epistle' – and Acts. The chief feature of both these books is their India atmosphere as Dr Eugene Stock noticed. See *This One Thing*, 195.

1588. Walker, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, XLI.

in our country creed and practice are so widely and disastrously dissociated from each other.¹⁵⁸⁹ He held the word 'Puritan' in honour.¹⁵⁹⁰

As has been said before, Walker was Amy's language teacher. Mastery of the difficult Tamil language was for him of supreme importance and had to be attained, if the Gospel is to be understood, translated and communicated cross-culturally. Since all culture is expressing of belief, a missionary should be aware that any adaptation or adoption of different cultural elements is prohibitive. Walker drew a sharp line and Amy agreed with him and always presented the Cross of Christ, even to upper Brahman groups when this was a thorn in their side. For communicating God's interpretation of reality to the Indian people, Amy approached them in their native tongue.

For Walker, as for Amy too, Hinduism was not neutral; at its best it was an exercise in suppressing the knowledge of God. So to master the language and to know the culture had top priority for Amy,¹⁵⁹¹ for she longed to tell of the Saviour of the world, to those she met in south India. Missionary work is not truly Christian unless it implies a radical change in the life of the hearers of the message.¹⁵⁹²

The last Sunday in Dohnavur was a day with a glory upon it. For months, on Sunday afternoons when he was at home, Walker had been studying the Psalms with the English-speaking members of the Dohnavur family. There had been many interruptions, but on that last Sunday he came to breakfast with a smile. 'Do you know where we are in the Psalms?' he asked and he quoted the verse preceding the doxology in Psalm LXI, which closes the first book: 'Thou upholdest me ... and settest me before Thy face forever'. 'Isn't that a good place to leave off?' 'Before His face for ever.'¹⁵⁹³ He left Dohnavur in good health, and upon his arrival at Masulipatam, where the meetings were to be held, he visited some friends. At night he wrote in his journal: 'Tired'. The next day he suffered from ptomaine poisoning,¹⁵⁹⁴ and when they asked him for a word for his wife, he was too weak to answer. In a moment, when he thought to be alone, he said loudly: 'I'm so happy'. In the still hour between the night and morning of 24 August, a word came that only his ear heard: 'The Master is come and calleth for thee. [...] Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus.'¹⁵⁹⁵

A few weeks before his death he went through a very bitter time and then he had said, 'I think to see the Lord will be heaven'. A few weeks afterwards he saw him.¹⁵⁹⁶

Fifty years after his death, Nancy Robbins (MD) in Dohnavur, wrote of Thomas Walker, 'The impact of his faithful life and earnest teaching has left its mark on the district'.¹⁵⁹⁷ It is good to read that

1589. Walker, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, XLII.

1590. Cf. *When God Came*, 10.

1591. Amy knew the details of Hindu culture and the religious chants and lyrics. There were regions of language she did not know, but generally, she knew a lot and could communicate in Tamil. Once a lady was singing a weird song all about idolatry, full of sin and sorrow: 'So far I followed her, for I knew the poem well' [in *Things As They Are*, 31].

1592. Here we can think of Samuel Zwemer, the 'apostle to Islam', who admonished us: 'Preach to the Muslim, not as a Muslim, but as a man [...] as a sinner in need of a Saviour', quoted in L.L.V. Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims* (Pasadena, CA: The William Carey Library, 1977), 250.

1593. *This One Thing*, 216.

1594. A food poisoning caused by bacteria or bacterial products. See www.rightdiagnosis.com

1595. *This One Thing*, 218.

1596. See *When God Came*, 15.

1597. *In Greater is He*, 21.

ultimately, after Walker's death in 1912, the Hindus in the Tinnevely district were talking of him 'as a man Heaven-sent'.¹⁵⁹⁸

Walker's death was a huge blow for Amy. No one had so deeply influenced Amy as Thomas Walker. In her own words, he 'deepened' her life.¹⁵⁹⁹ We can see that many things Amy did or wrote originated from him. Amy was left with some trusted friends, of whom Ponnamal was one. She writes:

Ponnamal knew what Mr Walker had been to me, she knew I would be feeling just bereft. She comforted me, telling me now God would be more to me than ever, for He knew I had no arm but His, no help but in Himself. Today she came with a new thought. I believe there is a secret in this matter. God knew he was a could-not-be-done-without one. And yet God said, 'Do without'. There is a secret in it. A secret – it does not matter whether or not it is explained. 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this' (Jn 13:7 NKJ) is a most loving word; but I sometimes feel it will be just as perfect whether or not it is explained, because we know our Father, so we know His secrets cannot possibly contain anything but love.¹⁶⁰⁰

■ The message

In recollecting what had happened in Japan Amy wrote that the first thing she had learned was 'the awful power of the enemy and one's own powerlessness, and how we need to know ourselves as dust, nothing, less than nothing'. One needs to be 'close to the Cross, close to his heart, committed to him, without a "but," and "if," or a limit':

And I learned in a very humiliating way that if one is not being upheld every moment of the day, a fall is certain. Something of this I had learned at home, but Japan taught me how much more there was to learn.¹⁶⁰¹

She re-learned that the call of God asks for a constant communion with God. Charles Kingsley's words crossed her memory:

Be earnest, earnest, earnest; mad if thou wilt;
Do what thou dost as if the stake were Heaven,
And that thy last deed e'er the Judgment Day.

This all, 'to make childhood what it should be for all children, there was many an hour where I was just a child with you. And even now the child is still alive in me. I think it will always be'.¹⁶⁰²

Just before she went to Matsue, something happened, 'that belongs, I think in a vital way to our D.F.'. In a walk along the sea with another missionary she learned that missionaries, – what she could not imagine before – often lived in 'unkindness, loneliness, unlove'. They could even live 'without praying together'. What about John's words: 'Beloved, let us love', and what of our Saviour's, 'This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you'?

1598. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 123.

1599. *This One Thing*, 75.

1600. *Fragments That Remain*, 146.

1601. *Amma's Book*, 37. After an evening of fun talk with other missionaries a word, straight from the Bible, came to her: 'I am against them that cause My people to err by their lightness'. 'It was a burning moment.' Fun was not wrong, she knew, but that evening it was not the time for it, she thought.

1602. *Amma's Book*, 37.

Never shall I forget that walk by the grey sea. And though I never thought then of what our Father had in His heart for me to do, one thing I knew, I must, God helping me, draw others into love. Unlove is just impossible.¹⁶⁰³

Amy knew – she had learned it from Ragland – that in religious India not theology but custom reigned supreme. An evangelical, she kept close to the central doctrines and the great roots of the Christian faith, and never grew tired of the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus. She grew up with firm creeds, ordered expositions of the Christian faith. She could refer to her Puritan blood and the importance it had for her to stand firm in her belief. Without this, you cannot ‘describe the nebulous attitude of mind of many a one today’.¹⁶⁰⁴ But she never put the creed as the test on the outside. For her the inside, the relation with the living God, came first. To see Jesus Christ, and that is always the great surprise in Christian belief: that what he claims to be is a reality for the believer:

What we need is more common honesty. God listens to our words however expressed, strips them bare of accessories, musical or devotional, peels off all the emotion; searches through for the pith at their heart, caring just for the white thread of Truth. If we are, as we declare we are, not our own but wholly Another’s feeling will not affect duty either way.¹⁶⁰⁵

A creed is necessary and assists the explainer of the Scriptures in being able to build up Christians in their intimacy with Jesus Christ. In his first epistle the apostle Peter does not say ‘give an explanation’ of what belief is, but ‘a reason of the hope that is in you’ (1 Pt 3:15). In thinking upon this chapter, Amy writes: ‘Within each one of us is what the Bible calls “the hidden man of the heart” (v. 4). A glance does not show it.’ Then, referring to the myrtle leaf – when crushed, it gives a nice aroma:

We are known what is in us when we are tried, crushed, and what is inside, cannot be explained with words put in a creed, but ‘crush’ the Bible, read it through and through, and the Lord will give the ‘aromatic perfume’, and faith will be manifested in what I do and the way I talk about others and look at them, like Jesus, ‘loving, serving, seeking and saving the lost’.¹⁶⁰⁶

But, ‘we have to leave our sin before we can truly taste the heavenly food’.¹⁶⁰⁷ Was Amy ever discouraged when her message was not received well? She answers:

No, not discouraged. It is written that our Lord came to His own and His own received Him not. The disciple is not above his Master, not the servant above the Lord. But we are sad. Why sad?

Because of what those who refuse are missing.

What are they missing?

Light, life. For in Him is life and the life is the light of men. This is what He offers. It is grieving when His loving offer is rejected. Do you press any to change their religion?

No; we do as the fore-runner of our Saviour did. He said to all who would listen, Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.

But you are glad when people become Christians; is that not so?

Yes, if they be renewed in the spirit of the mind. No, if they merely turn from one religion to another. We do not think that nominal Christianity is a blessing to India.¹⁶⁰⁸

1603. *Amma's Book*, 38.

1604. *Things As They Are*, 245.

1605. *Overweights of Joy*, 55–56.

1606. *Whispers of His Power*, 14–15 February, 38 and 41.

1607. *Overweights of Joy*, 83.

1608. In *The Starry Cluster*, 11.

The urgency of the message was underlined with the ultimate consequence – repent because Christ is coming! Visiting and preaching to the people the band was often confronted with a lot of opposition. 'See the scoffing faces; hear the revealing rained upon us as we close. What has stirred up such a sea of scathing scorn? *The proclamation of the coming King*.¹⁶⁰⁹ Sometimes, having little time, or knowing how precarious opportunities were to talk to someone, as happened sometimes with Star, 'I took her directly to the heart of all things, the Cross'¹⁶¹⁰:

One must approach them here with the utmost sympathy, and yet we cannot lower the standard and offer them Christ without His Cross. Nor can we dress that Cross in flowers, and hide the thorny Crown. [...] We believe discipleship involves open confession, and disentanglement from the devil's web of caste,- and caste so permeates every action in a Hindu home that no woman can break it without being at once recognized as a Christian, and this implies the Cross.¹⁶¹¹

She did not *argue* and ignored religious controversies. When she opened the door of her talking with the people, she closed the door of her study. She would not deny the value of reasoned defence of the faith. For her the Christian faith reposed upon an adequate foundation of its own, and it did not need to borrow support from science or philosophy. She was happy she could preserve the unclouded serenity of mind, and invest at once all her capital of faith in fruitful work. Amy tried, wherever she possibly could, to get into the houses, and talk to the women alone. 'This is by far the best way to get at them; here as elsewhere, it is soul to soul dealing which tells.'¹⁶¹² 'Soul to soul' was her mission strategy; in private conversation, like Jesus did in John 3 and 4, she focused upon the real issues in life.¹⁶¹³ Souls are not won lightly or in masses:

We are not speaking of so-called mass movement towards Christianity among the lower orders – a thing we wholly distrust, but of individual conversions to Christ among those who, by their very position as members of a caste are entrenched within the central citadel of Hinduism.¹⁶¹⁴

During her itinerary work, she was more for *strengthening* rather than for *extending* the work.¹⁶¹⁵ She converted doctrine into evangelistic action. Life and religion for her were one thing. She was not directly interested in those who were chiefly interested in the intellectual side of Christianity.

Her message was simple, direct, and very plain. One can say in entire harmony with the women behind the message. She was unconventional, and what others did not do, she did. 'Naturally, as always in such cases, we kept to the elementary.'¹⁶¹⁶

Missionaries should always ask themselves 'whether they really are preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ as He means we should'.¹⁶¹⁷ Like the one from whom she learned a lot, Thomas Walker, she

1609. *From the Fight*, 21.

1610. *Ploughed Under*, 53.

1611. *From the Fight*, 41.

1612. *From the Fight*, 20.

1613. 'There is often much opposition, and the seed seems thrown away; but we think of Him Who preached by the wayside, and "at the head of the noisy streets... at the entering in of the gates," and we rest on the strong "shall doubtless" of the promise of our God. [...] We told her the true God loved her, but she laughed in a horrid laugh; we tried and tried again to get one ray of sunshine in, but the shutters were shut too close' (*From the Fight*, 21 and 23).

1614. *From the Fight*, 26.

1615. *From Sunrise Land*, 121.

1616. *Overweights of Joy*, 12.

1617. *Overweights of Joy*, 56.

did not shrink from being honest to the Gospel and to the people, by telling them that only Christ is the Saviour and without him people do not have eternal life.¹⁶¹⁸ When possible, she went in her talk with the people, especially to one person, 'directly to the heart of all things, the Cross'.¹⁶¹⁹ 'Our God asks for faithfulness, nor for compromise: *Sow not thy field with mingled seed.*'¹⁶²⁰ No matter how busy she was, she always had a heart at leisure for the humblest. As God and her own conscience were theatre and spectators enough, she knew how to value obscure and unnoticed service.

■ The method

'Carefulness in writing about souls' was one of Amy's principles. Mission magazines want stories of conversions and tend to dress them up a little, which can put the people about whom they are writing in a position they do not like. She learned that lesson in 1893 on board the ship that sailed from the London docks on 03 March.¹⁶²¹

When reading Young's *The Success of Christian Missions* she put in a sharp remark when she read about mission progress in India:

It must, of course, be expected that there will be a large proportion of a semi-educated body whose religion will consist more in the observance of external forms than in a change of heart and life.

She wrote in the side-line: '*But why baptize these masses en masse?*' Amy knew that people from the villages in south India never came to the Lord in a mass, but always one by one.¹⁶²² When others were talking about mass conversions, she doubted. She quoted a visitor who said, 'Christian churches counted by their thousand, their members by the million; whole districts are Christian, entire communities are transferred'. And we look at one another, and ask each other, 'Where?'¹⁶²³ Often the Tinnevely district, with many Anglican communities, is declared as Christian, but Amy knew that the majority of the people were Hindu. Referring to her itinerating work to reach the individual people she said that among the masses so many were nominal Christians and 'a nominal thing is dead – then you are terribly weighted down and handicapped, as you try to go forward to break up new ground'.¹⁶²⁴ Amy did not go after the millions:

We have to come down to the little town, the village, the street, the individual. None of us can be in more than one place at a time. [...] But it is good and joyful too, to get an opportunity to stand effectively in even one small town.¹⁶²⁵ [*The people*] have to be reached one by one.¹⁶²⁶

In her talking to the people, she had the same principle as in her writing: she was honest and told them the full truth and consequences, even when talking to children:

1618. Thomas Walker 'talked about sin and the punishment of sin, and finished with God's great love and the salvation that has been prepared for men' (*Ploughed Under*, 50).

1619. *Ploughed Under*, 53.

1620. *Ploughed Under*, 147.

1621. See the immediate cause of this principle in *Roots*, 4–5.

1622. *Windows*, 48. Here Amy remarks that the CEZMS missionaries reach many women who live behind the big walls. 'Though our work is chiefly for the walled from whose strongholds our children come' (*Windows*, 49).

1623. *Things As They Are*, 287.

1624. *Things As They Are*, 288.

1625. *Gold Card*, 335.

1626. Amy, in a letter written from Kotagiri, 31 May 1896, 3 (PRONI D/4061/1/1-D; D 4060/6/8).

I told them [*two small children*] as much as I could of His love for them, and promised in His Name that He would take care of them and strengthen them to suffer for Him; for the stern law of suffering would, I knew, touch their lives at once, and I dared not hide it from them. To prepare them to face it, to put them on the track of winning through, that was my one business; and often I wonder, when about such work, where in the history of our religion we first dropped the painful Cross, and forgot to go back for it.¹⁶²⁷

Once she wrote to friends in England the story of how children were treated in their homes: parents or relatives threatened the children and punished them when they showed interest in the Gospel. Some children were imprisoned at home, while others were threatened by their fathers that pepper would be put into their eyes if they would not give up their wish to be Christians. Some fathers twisted the wrists of the children, and there were many other punishments, known and unknown, because many 'secret things were done in every village in India':

About this time a letter came from home asking for a book for children. [...] After a few weeks it came back again. 'It was too harrowing', the friend who was deputed to write to me told me. It must be 'modified, even for grown up people'. But I did not see how I could 'modify' the truth; and after all, what did the word mean? Did it mean turn the pepper into flour, and the wrist-twisting into pats, smother the misery of the cross with flowers? But what good would this do? Besides how could one? So I put the unwanted manuscript back in its envelope and wrote across it words I had read a week or two before in 'Aurora Leigh',-

You must not pump spring water unawares
Upon a gracious public full of nerves.¹⁶²⁸

■ The Holy Spirit

'Praise God for the illuminating power of His Spirit, without whom our words were as idle as tales.'¹⁶²⁹ 'Missionaries have to abandon the idea, that instantaneous spiritual receptivity is something often seen. [...] But every sunrise shines with hope'. Before the missionary can talk to someone, they knew 'that through some previous dealing of the Spirit is ready to discern the truth'.¹⁶³⁰ In times of despair and troubles, 'nothing but the fullness of the Holy Spirit will carry anyone through'.¹⁶³¹

And the fruit? Amy took a lot of pain in winning souls to Jesus Christ. Her way of dealing with the people was one of nearness, with a capacity to empathise. Her way of being among the people was not a hard, metallic way of dealing with the people. This never had the stamp of the Holy Spirit on it. However, those rescued during her ministry must have been numerous. See what happened with the captain of the ship to Japan, the many conversions in Japan, and Ceylon, and the numerous children rescued from a sinful, miserable life:

Where, then, is our love? Do we count our lives too dear unto us to risk them under loop holed walls? Is Christ's battalion the only one in which it is counted too much to die?¹⁶³²

Many times Amy heard talk of people about missionary life, that would be 'so nice', just 'a leisure time'. First after arrival in a new country, there 'was a bit of a shock' and then 'gradually we got accustomed to it, and even content'. The danger is, that 'we sometimes strangle our souls'. But Amy did not want to get accustomed

1627. *From the Forest*, 17.

1628. *From the Forest*, 23. This happened when she had written *Things As They Are*. See *From the Forest*, 21.

1629. *Overweights of Joy*, 12.

1630. *Overweights of Joy*, 35.

1631. *Overweights of Joy*, 58.

1632. *Overweights of Joy*, 57.

to the spiritual situation in that new country. Often it was more slogan than fact when it was said, 'spiritual men for spiritual work'. 'What of people to whom the preacher had nothing to give?' You have to expect conversions!¹⁶³³

Referring to her work 'of the little mission-hall in Ireland'¹⁶³⁴ she gave the reason why things in Dohnavur were done in the way they were day by day. The book of Ezra in the Bible, chapters 3 to 6, had shown her the way she had to go.¹⁶³⁵ Those working with her had to have a spiritual call. She felt herself to be a missionary who was leading the Dohnavur Fellowship 'back to the ways of the acts of the apostles'.¹⁶³⁶ One night Amy could not sleep: all through the night the tom-toms thumped. She lay awake and looked and this is what she saw:

I stood on a grassy sward, and at my feet a precipice broke sheer down into infinite space. I looked, but saw no bottom; only cloud shapes, black and furiously coiled, and great shadow-shrouded hollows, and unfathomable depths. Back I drew, dizzy at the depth. Then I saw forms of people moving single file along the grass. They were making for the edge. There was a woman with a baby in her arms and another little child holding on to her dress. She was on the very verge. Then I saw that she was blind. She lifted her foot for the next step ... it trod air. She was over, and the children over with her. Oh, the cry as they went over! Then I saw more streams of people flowing from all quarters. All were blind, stone blind; all made straight for the precipice edge. There were shrieks as they suddenly knew themselves falling, and a tossing up of helpless arms, catching, clutching the empty air. But some went over quietly, and fell without a sound. Then I wondered, with a wonder that was simply agony, why no one stopped them at the edge. I could not. I was glued to the ground, and I could not call; though I strained and tried, only a whisper would come.

She went on, telling that she saw some sentries set at intervals along the precipice, but the intervals were too great. Another group was sitting under a tree and one would stand up to help. The others said, 'You must wait for a definite call to go', or 'There is no need for you to go'. Then they sang a hymn. Suddenly Amy heard through the hymn the voice of a million broken hearts and 'a horror of great darkness was upon me, for I knew what it was – *the Cry of the Blood*. The millions unsaved, living in superstition, in darkness, in the power of the devil, were laid on her heart. Once at night, not able to sleep again:

One seems to feel the shadow of a darker darkness, a deeper slumber brooding over the place. And all around it is so; and thinking wider, it is so; this great round world seems rolling on, away from the Love-light of God. One by one its lands pass before me.

She then prayed for Africa and China, with a million a month dying without God:

India. With her twenty million widows. That alone was enough to touch any woman-heart surely! *Japan*. With its thirty million unreached yet. [...] We know them on our map. *But do we know them in our heart?* wrapped in the death-gloom tonight.

Her heart came to rest when she also knew that night: 'That God is in the field when He is most invisible'.¹⁶³⁷

Why are we in the West so reluctant to see this need, why does nearly no one want to go to the mission field, why are we sitting so cosily as Christians in our churches, and singing our hymns and doing some

1633. *Gold Cord*, 6–7.

1634. *Gold Cord*, 6. She refers to the work done in Belfast for the mill girls in 'The Welcome'.

1635. *Gold Cord*, 7.

1636. *Gold Cord*, 8.

1637. *From Sunrise Land*, 164–165.

welfare work to assist the mission workers, why do we see so many dying 'not knowing what is on the other side'? Very often missionaries on furlough are disappointed in what is called 'interest in missions' in their home countries. And if there is any interest, people want to hear good news from the front. If there is nearly no news or even bad news, 'there is a perceptible cooling off; an honest story of defeat is told, and discouragement results'. Mission for them is a 'sort of decorative afterthought'.¹⁶³⁸

Amy had the same experience Hudson Taylor had had that Sunday morning, 25 July 1865, in Brighton, when he could no more bear the singing and the fellowship of hundreds of churchgoers while far away in China every month a million people were dying without ever having heard of Christ. 'God forgive us! God arouse us! Shame us out of our callousness! Shame us out of our sin!' She experienced what Paul must have seen when he wrote to the converts: 'That ye sorrow not even others which have no hope'. 'How callous we are, how superficial our sympathy.'

Who is stirred by the commendation of God to go? For how many have we come too late? Do we not know the purpose for which we were saved – and as such tremendous cost? Oh for a baptism of reality and obedience to sweep over us! O to be true to the hymns we sing and the vows we make! *God make us true*'.

And she continued:

And if we call ourselves soldiers, and sing, and pray, and talk on these lines, and yet are not in burning earnest, is it not possible that the thing we all agree to dislike is resident among us?¹⁶³⁹

For her, benevolent societies, concerts, clubs, tea gatherings and such activities were extraneous to spiritual life and were the sign of a dead church rather than a living one. She was frustrated when someone would write to her: 'We have had such a nice meeting'. Lots of trivialities, but nothing:

[T]o hear of sin unchecked, need unmet, woes uncomforted, death unlighted. Perhaps the tea and the cake (possibly by way of benediction), closed with little entertainment, the curio-examining, interrogation showering, the interchange of sentiment regarding the heathen in general and their representative now on view, in particular, were exceedingly 'nice'. But it is puzzling.¹⁶⁴⁰

Amy was rather harsh – as it seems – when she says:

One can see its pretty rounds of sociabilities; afternoon teas, tennis parties, concerts and lectures; kindly little interests in beings, doings and dressings. Permeated pleasantly, doubtless with the odour of sanctity, for we go to church, teach in the Sunday-school, visit a district, and take an interest in missions'.¹⁶⁴¹

These remarks, written nearly at the end of her stay in Japan, she wrote to friends and family in England, with the urgent appeal:

Dear one, it is to you, to you the Master speaks, forgive me for pressing it so. Will you not face these things with Him now? What will you wish you had done, when the King comes?¹⁶⁴²

In the story of Linnet's conversion we see a glimpse of Amy's thoughts about human activities:

But then, it was not an organization or an institution (clumsy words for stodgy things) that had won Linnet's allegiance, but the Lord, our Redeemer, the Saviour of the world.¹⁶⁴³

1638. *Overweights of Joy*, 52.

1639. *Overweights of Joy*, 53.

1640. *From Sunrise Land*, 174.

1641. *From Sunrise Land*, 174.

1642. *From Sunrise Land*, 175.

1643. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 83.

Amy felt she was 'a servant... separated to the Gospel'. And immediately she turns to us and asks 'Are we honest towards God?' She felt for the people of India, but:

[F]eelings will not save souls; it cost God Calvary to win us. It will cost us as much as we may know of the fellowship of His sufferings, if those for whom He died that day ever to be won.

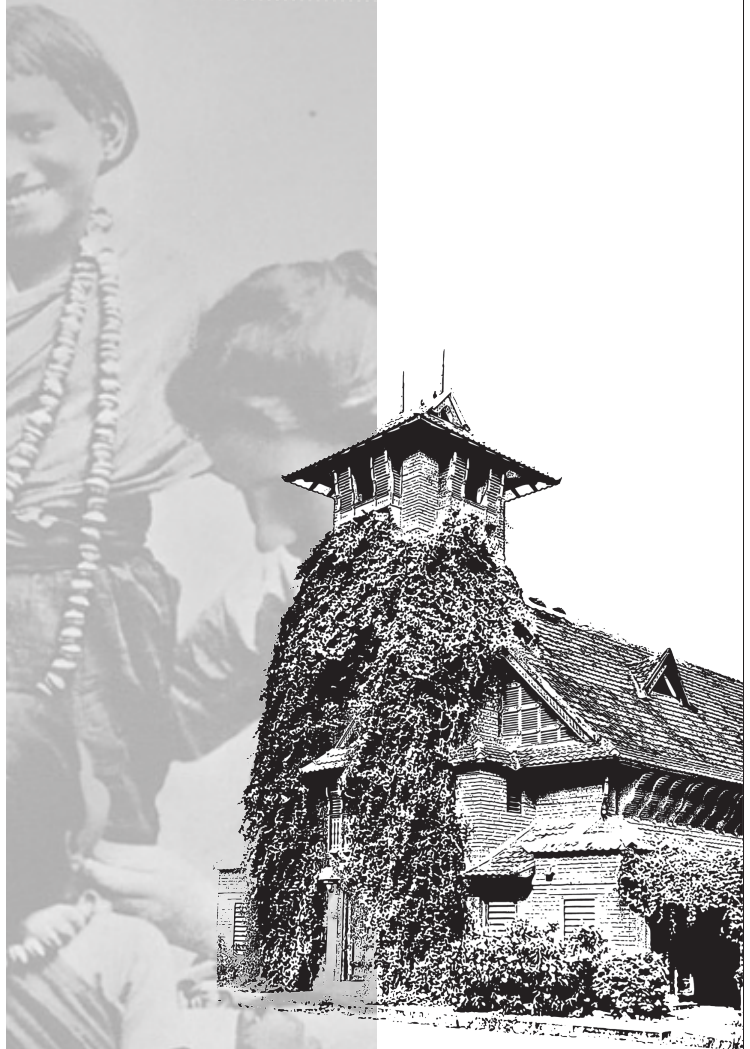
Once in Japan she was invited to a wedding of one of the staff members. She described the clothes of the bride and the groom with their nice clothes, rich and chaste:

At first I was haunted with wonderings – Is it right to spend time so? Is it right to go for feasts and silks, when the world pressing all around us is dying, darkly dying? At last peace came in the remembrance that this marriage gladness pictured the coming of the King, the Bride prepared to meet Him.¹⁶⁴⁴

1644. *From Sunrise Land*, 161.

**'The victory that overcomes the world is not human love,
but Christian faith; it is not won by the natural heart, but
by the recreating cross'.**

Forsyth, in Chambers, *The Complete Works*, 680.



Under the obedience of Christ

■ 'Yes Lord' in practice

In following her Lord, 'obedience' was a word written across her life. In renouncing marriage, in following the call, in taking decisions: in everything she wanted to be obedient to her Master. Amy reminds us that obedience is obedience, even if what God says seems queer to us. 'Obedience – even to the point of doing when it seems foolish and wrong if God says "Do It"'.¹⁶⁴⁵

To be Amma in Dohnavur – was this the work for which the Lord had called her? She had often wrestled with this question. The question came to her afresh after Neela asked her if, looking back, she had found her life's destiny.¹⁶⁴⁶ The question came afresh to her on the evening before she sailed to Japan. She was rather vague here, for she had got a letter pointing at 'what you call "the other life"' – was it a letter for a marriage proposal? She was startled:

It was a new thought. But presently as I waited quietly deep down in me a voice seemed to be saying: 'No, no, no; I have something different for you to do'.

At that time, whenever this question arose, that answer settled the question. But there were times when the desire for marriage was strong. One day in Japan the fear of being alone was very strong:

It is all well while you are young, but when you are old you will be desolate. And then Another Voice spoke. 'None of them that trust in Him shall be desolate'.

1645. In Amy's Bible [1895] next to Isaiah 20:2. In the same Bible in the margin of Matthew 12:50 she wrote: 'Old English motto, "In doing His will is our peace"'.
.....

1646. In an unpublished note written by Amy, 'Taken Out Of The Autobiography', in the Dohnavur library.

The last time 'the other life' pulled was at Ooty:

I knelt down in that room and laid this that was pressed upon me before the Lord. It was not a question of giving up His service. It never had been that. [...] But it would have led Thou out of India. Lord, what wilt Thou have me do? Shall I do this? And all I heard in answer to that was 'No. no, no. I have something different for you to do'.

The Lord silenced all Amy's questions, and therefore she could write after all the deliberations in Japan and Ooty: 'All that matters is that we should be obedient unto all meeting of His wishes'. In a letter written by Amy, dated 31 March 1944, she underlined in red: 'Our very existence depends upon our obedience'.¹⁶⁴⁷ And in the same letter, 'Then shall we be able to serve, indeed to exist at all, only as we follow His thought'. She saw the obedience to the command of Christ as the key motive and the foundation for missionary work.

Dohnavur never had a matron. 'We have no one between the children and ourselves',¹⁶⁴⁸ and 'our guidance comes to us, or is confirmed to us, by means of what is given to us month by month'.¹⁶⁴⁹ Amy continues:

Mission work is not a duty, but to give up yourself and obey when Jesus says we are His disciples that is what we do. A call based on the romantic will be quickly shattered, unless we intend only to do philanthropic work or to teach in a school with no other desire than to educate. No amount of education will convert a man. For to those who really care it is the unseen that matters first, for it is eternal. The Lord does not call us to impress people, but to love them, and to share His treasure with them. They are patient with our mistakes. But they watch us. Some may tell you that it is impossible not to tell lies, yet they expect from us utter sincerity, and demand from us unending patience. And above all they will watch us to see if there is the slightest touch of superiority in our attitude or in our thoughts, for even that will come out. They will applaud our preaching, they will be pleasant enough outwardly; but never, never will they put their confidence in us. However well we may learn the language we shall only know about them what they choose to let us know.

Obedience asks for talking and writing always the truth. She did not like to give mission stories a happy ending when it was not so in reality:

Does God need untruth to help His work? [...] So far as I know not a single untrue or even slightly coloured word has ever found its way in a Dohnavur book. [...] All the sentences have been sifted. [...] Write the things that thou hast seen. [...] All D.F. writers hold the same convictions. All spell Truth with a capital letter. The God of Truth, so it seems to us, does not ask for paint when the word comes to His servant.¹⁶⁵⁰

It demands that we bring under his control all things. It affects the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the little luxuries that we enjoy, the use of what we usually call *our* money and *our* time, but which, in reality, are God's if we are his. He does not call us to an ascetic life, but he wants us to live the disciplined life, for which the Lord loves his disciples. When the Lord calls many try to demand explanations and first want to secure the road in front of them, although this means an attempt at evading obedience.

Our Lord was always busy. He never was merely respectable. Most respectable people were against him. We like to be masters and in control of everything; he came to serve and to give his life. If the glory of God were the chief motive of all our living, there would be for many of us a great change in the use we make of our time, and in the way we live. He died for us, and for the people we work with. And do

1647. The letter is in the Dohnavur library.

1648. *Cold Cord*, 151.

1649. *Meal in a Barrel*, 3.

1650. *Roots*, 5.

we not care? Amy sought real spiritual leaders. She needed brave, men with a fuller development of spiritual vertebrae than was common in ‘these easy-going days’ for her. She was looking especially for wise men, rooted in the Scriptures and coming from the Church in India. Men who were taught by the Holy Spirit and not the product of theological colleges. She had seen too much in Bangalore and other places: that much time and money was wasted. In this, she had a strong conviction and was so afraid of people entering the work of God who were of no use for the Church and of people who would evolve into something of no more use to creation than a new genus of jellyfish.

‘What are we going to do? Not what we are going to say or sing – *but what are we going to do?*’ For Amy obedience was a central word. In following her Lord she obeyed his voice: ‘If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them’.¹⁶⁵¹ Obedience was a daily workout for Amy. For this, she was ready to face trials in court, questions of other missionaries, and negative remarks of fellow Christians, for her conscience forbade any compromise.¹⁶⁵² Mission work:

Only the touch of the Living One can do that. How one feels one’s impotence in the presence of this colossal mummy of heathendom; a mouse might as well try to overturn the Great Pyramid as one of us seek to win a single soul.

Caring for the children, but above all making Christ real to them:

One begins to enter into it a little deeper day by day. He teaches one the absolute uselessness, and worse, of all fleshly energy. No word from Keswick came straighter home to some of us than: ‘God sends us here to the heathen for two purposes, to do them good and to find a grave for a good self. May He make our self-funeral the greatest fact in our existence. So don’t always paint our skies blue! Do not always and only look down. Don’t forget, there is more, and repeat it over and over: Rejoice with Me, for I have found My sheep that was lost.

Ultimately what was the aim of mission work, and her work in India? Amy just needed three words to express it. ‘Our aim is great – it is *India for Christ*.’ It stirred her to notice that in mission circles ‘there is no consciousness of need’.¹⁶⁵³ Before all the people there, even ‘before the gods in possession here, we sing songs unto Him’.

Obedience, in the words of Campbell Morgan, is the one qualification for further vision. And the further vision for Amy came as she learned and obeyed the duty she had to be a ‘mother’ for the Dohnavur children. Another pivotal word was *acceptance*: only God can change the situations and the hearts of people. Never cease to expect and to hope.¹⁶⁵⁴ For Amy the call of Jesus was a call for total transformation in the sense Paul was using it when he used the phrase ‘obedience of faith’ in his letter to the Romans.¹⁶⁵⁵ These words captured the goal of Paul’s missionary commission to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of the name of Christ and the believers total response to the Gospel, not only the initial conversion, but total dedication. The ‘obedience of faith’ combined both initial response and outgoing faithfulness in Christian living. The missionary task is incomplete if efforts fail to go beyond evangelism. Amy did not marginalise evangelism and did not limit the great commission to pioneer evangelism alone. The DF shows that she went beyond *evangelism* toward *discipleship* in order

1651. John 13:17 [KJV].

1652. Cf. here the remark of G. Davies in *Genius and Grace* (p. 280): ‘Likewise Amy Carmichael stayed in Dohnavur, South India, because of feeling compelled to obey the clamant demands to help children who were ritually sexually abused.’

1653. *Overweights of Joy*, 39.

1654. See *Gold Cord*, 151. Especially from Samuel Rutherford she learned to accept the way God was dealing with her and the Fellowship. See *Gold Cord*, 154.

1655. Chapters 1, 5 and 16.

to see the transforming power of the Gospel both in individuals as society, not only reaching the lost but also reforming the reached. Inward peace produces outward transformation. Amy only wanted to obey her Lord, and she knew that 'obedience leads to unexpected places and knows no precedents'.¹⁶⁵⁶

■ A fight

'Out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle'; these words from Hebrews 11:34 were an encouragement for Amy and The Starry Cluster as a whole. When she had been in India just one year and saw the huge workload and the strong opposition, she said: 'The gods of the heathen must crumble and fail. Systems of error prove worthless and fail. Christ and His Cross at the last must prevail. By this we conquer!'¹⁶⁵⁷ Starting itinerating work in Tinnevely district she wrote on her birthday in the margin of this verse: 'Remember the Lord and Fight. Dec. 16. 1896. God's meaning for us, His missionary soldiers in 1896'.¹⁶⁵⁸ Visiting the Village of the Lake, she was confronted with an 'unbroken front' of caste Hindus. 'To visit in that village is to fight the devil straight'.¹⁶⁵⁹ Those who turned to Christ could expect the most dreadful fate. Amy wrote of a woman who was frightened by her husband: as she, at midnight, felt him stirring beside her, she opened her eyes and saw a dagger gleaming. 'Turn Christian – and expect this!' he whispered in her ear.¹⁶⁶⁰

Amy was to uncover one of the ugliest sores of Mother India – the secret traffic of temple girls and boys. Infuriated at what Satan was doing to these lovely children, Amy declared war. When God chose her location, the battle came. In India she fought many battles on her knees, risking her life on more than one occasion and facing arrest and imprisonment in order to snatch some pleading child from the jaws of defilement and destruction. Amy's missionary career can be seen as one long battle, especially the first 30 years. These years were years of warfare, years in which she poured out love, catching the directing word of God. Especially when the DF sought to expand their working area and tried to get a foothold in several places, they often were met with fierce opposition. Due to the Gospel the great enemy defended his territory with all kinds of weapons to prevent people from turning from their idols to worship the living God. Amy and The Starry Cluster often noticed that those who wanted to come to the Lord would be carried off. There was beating, drugging, murder, anything rather than the disgrace of an open confession of Christ. Already the existence of the DF invited criticism from their environment and in 1934 Amy wrote to the children that they too were involved in warfare:

My children, our comrades in the war of the Lord. [...] The more you love me the more steadfast you will go on. You won't give way and fail. That would be utter defeat. I did not train you for anything so ignoble as defeat. 'Be thou faithful unto death', is His word to you today. Stand by your Fellowship and Family, and forget yourself in serving others. That is the way of joy.¹⁶⁶¹

Everything was done by Satan to prevent people from breaking caste and from following Jesus. We can read about the cost of following Christ in *Ploughed Under*. The Dohnavur hospital tried to extend its

1656. *Ponnamal*, 78.

1657. In a letter written from Kotagiri, 12 June 1896, 13 [PRONI D/4061/1/1-D/; D 4060/6/8].

1658. I Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of Hebrews 12:34.

1659. *From the Fight*, 10.

1660. *From the Fight*, 15.

1661. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 350.

work by opening dispensaries in several places, especially in the Muslim town of Eruvadi (Song of the Plough) and the Hindu town of Kalakadu (Joyous City). ‘Crowds swarmed in day after day, and the men were definitely hostile.’¹⁶⁶² Also the purchase of the land for Three Pavilions was not without strong opposition from the Hindu priests. In another year houses were set on fire, people became sick, and again others attacked.¹⁶⁶³ On 06 June 1931, a letter came from the people of 4th Street in which they asked the DF not to settle in their midst:

To the honourable mission of Dohnavur, the people of Fourth St. write as follows. You have got a house in the middle of us people of the Muslim religion and sitting down. But your religion and work are not beautiful to us. God has given you unbounded wealth and people, and also measureless learning. There when you bestow your money down without sitting down in this insignificant town (be in) one of the many places where there is good wind suitable to your dignity and glory. This place is not suitable for that. We believe that you who follow the way of justice will not cross the desires of us and walk in the unjust way. Therefore, our being merciful on us do not come to the Fourth Street. The universal petition of the people of Fourth Street.¹⁶⁶⁴

About 1932 we read in the logbook: ‘Heard that the people in Eruvadi threatened to beat J.V. and Devasharma. [...] Heard that the headman in Eruvadi had cancelled the order forbidding people to come to our house.’¹⁶⁶⁵ Then some days later in the logbook a special message: ‘First fruit from Kalakadu. Ephesians 3:13 “My tribulation for you which is your glory”’. The Fellowship went through times of attacks from the evil one, and at the same time, the Lord granted Amy to see people coming to the Lord Jesus:

Our Lord Jesus did not fly from danger. He went straight into it. After a year of witness John had been arrested, and then our Lord went from Judea into Galilee just where the danger was

These words Amy wrote in the margin of *A Combined Harmony of the Gospels*.¹⁶⁶⁶

All work that had in it the seed of eternity was bound to pass through a baptism of suffering and be misunderstood, decried, and judged by its apparent failure or success. [...] That is the truth, and we shall live to prove it.¹⁶⁶⁷

Mission work is a fight, ‘for we are on the enemy’s ground, and the harder we mean to fight him the harder he will fight us’.¹⁶⁶⁸ A fight against the powers not to be seen. She saw herself as a fellow warrior. Preceding her signature in one of her books, she wrote: ‘Yours in the Fight’.¹⁶⁶⁹

There are no easy victories. The fact is irrefutable, and the sooner we face it the better, that certain fields are ‘discouraging,’ but the right ones will not be deterred.

Amy sometimes saw that people started believing the Gospel, but often the enemy took the burgeoning faith away. ‘Quatre Bras is won, but Waterloo has to be fought tomorrow.’¹⁶⁷⁰ She saw India

1662. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 283.

1663. Cf. *Meal in a Barrel*, 100.

1664. In Dohnavur Fellowship logbook, 06 June 1931 (in the Dohnavur library).

1665. In Dohnavur Fellowship logbook, 21 November 1931 and 10 December 1931 (in the Dohnavur library).

1666. Composed by O.E. Daniel. Quotation in the margin next to Luke 3:19–20.

1667. *Ponnamal*, 49.

1668. *From the Fight*, 25.

1669. In *From the Fight*, 5.

1670. In Amy’s Bible (1895), in the margin of Psalm 9:13.

as a special battlefield and missionaries coming to this country required a strong character, conviction and integrity above all suspicion. She saw that caste tightened the people body and soul:

It is unspeakably strong, un-mercifully cruel, and yet it would seem as though the very blood of the people ran red with it. [...] This then, is Caste viewed as a Doer. It does strange things, hard things, things most cruel. It is, all who fight are agreed, the strongest foe to the Gospel of Christ on the Hindu fields of South India.¹⁶⁷¹

She agreed with Bishop French, who wrote:

This work in India [...] is one of the most crucial tests the Church of Christ has ever been put to. The people you think to measure your forces against are such as the giant races of Canaan are nothing to.¹⁶⁷²

In *Walker of Tinnevely* she quoted Mazzini¹⁶⁷³: 'We must act like men who have the enemy at their gates, and at the same time like men who are working for Eternity'. Even the nurseries where the little children lived, played and studied were a battlefield. When children were brought to Dohnavur instead of to the temples there was often a difficult process to get them through difficult legal complications:

It may seem a quick transition from nursery to battlefield; but rightly to understand this story, it must be remembered that our nursery is set in the midst of the battlefield. It is like a little sheltered place, where no sound of war disturbs the babies at their play, and the flowers bloom like the babies in happy unconsciousness of battles, and make a garden for us and fill it full peace; but underlying the babies' caresses and the sweetness of the flowers there is always the sense of conflict just over, or soon coming on. We 'let the elastic go' in the nursery. We are happy, light-hearted children with our children; sometimes we even wonder at ourselves; and then remember that the happiness of the moment is a pure, bright gift, not meant to be examined, but just enjoyed, and we enjoy it as if there were no battles in the world or any sadness any more. And yet this book comes from the hot fight. It is not a retrospect written in the calm after-years, when the outline of things has grown indistinct and the sharpness of life is blurred. There is nothing mellowed about a battlefield.¹⁶⁷⁴

Mission work is never without fight. 'I have never known a time when it was not so, and do not think I ever shall' and 'so long as we fight satan he will fight us, if he does not, it will be because we are not worth fighting'.¹⁶⁷⁵ Her second book bears the significant title *From the Fight*. Mission work is going out 'in the Fight, where fighting comes first and writing second'.¹⁶⁷⁶ She learned this from the apostle Paul who never seemed to get tired of comparing the Christian life to a fight, a fight against tremendous odds, but always a fight with victory in sight. 'For He must reign; we fight a conquered foe.'¹⁶⁷⁷ 'In this fight for the souls for whom Christ died, may we ever say, "In vain"?'¹⁶⁷⁸ In *Things As They Are* she writes: 'For the book is a battle-book, written from a battle-field where the fighting is not pretty play but stern reality'.

1671. *Things As They Are*, 104. Cf. too T. Walker: 'In India the bitter cry is far more bitter, but it is stifled and smothered by the cruel gag of Caste. Orthodox Hindus would rather see these girls betrayed, tortured, murdered, than suffer them to break through the trammels of Caste' (in *Things As They Are*, 118).

1672. *Things As They Are*, 105.

1673. On p. 398.

1674. *Lotus Buds*, 45.

1675. *Edges of His Ways*, January 22, 11.

1676. *From the Fight*, 3. The introduction of this book, written by Amy, closes with the words, 'Yours in the Fight', and is then signed with her name.

1677. *Gold Cord*, 345.

1678. *Gold Cord*, 228.

Amy had learned from Thomas Walker that 'India is satan's chosen battle-ground'.¹⁶⁷⁹ Mission work in India started by Protestant churches two centuries before the moment Amy saw her calling in Dohnavur. The experienced CMS missionary Walker wrote in 1905, 'India has not yet been won', and having said this he encouraged the whole Christian Church with, 'Let us face the work in deadly earnest; let us "remember the Lord" and "fight"'.¹⁶⁸⁰ Here he stressed something we frequently see in the writings of Amy. 'We are not called to be weaklings but warriors.'¹⁶⁸¹ Missionaries are 'soldiers'¹⁶⁸² and mission work is a fight. In mission work, it is 'to let the song out before the gods in possession here'.¹⁶⁸³ Knowing of the 'giant powers' she started to praise the Lord. Amy reminded her readers of Psalm 138:1 spoken in the Keswick Convention some years ago, which suggested the thought. 'I give Thee thanks, o Lord, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing thy praise' (RSV). Just like Thomas Walker, Amy knew that 'India has not yet been stirred', and she was waiting:

[T]o see such a manifestation of Divine energy as shall convince the Hindu and the Mohammedan world that the Lord is God. [...] This battle is His. The victory was won on the Resurrection morning.¹⁶⁸⁴

Yet mission work must not be based 'on prospects of easy victory'.¹⁶⁸⁵ When doors are open and people willing to receive you, use that opportunity, because doors are open now that will be shut tomorrow. [...] How much longer will any door anywhere be open? We do not know. With the Lord is ultimate victory.¹⁶⁸⁶ Amy makes an appeal to the people at home when she quotes a missionary working in India who said:

Let the people that are at home not care only to hear about successes; we must train them that they take an interest in the struggle.¹⁶⁸⁷ Mission work a battle, and 'battlefields are not beautiful'.¹⁶⁸⁸

Amy's battle to save children from a life of vileness went on during her whole life. We see this in the short talk one of the missionaries working in Dohnavur, given at the Missionary Meeting of the 1934 Keswick Convention:

Our Indian Sisters

Miss B. Taylor (Dohnavur) told her hearers something of the condition of life prevailing in India, especially in regard to the treatment of little girls, where in the name, and under the cloak of religion, they were dedicated to the temple for vile purposes. They were brought up in those evil surroundings, and grew up with no sense of what was right and wrong. Miss Taylor told of one little girl who persisted in refusing that kind of life, and she was beaten and cruelly treated. Finally when she could bear the life no longer, she rushed out and drowned herself in the courtyard well. There were many little children who were being brought up in evil surroundings,

1679. In *This One Thing*, 135.

1680. In the preface of *Overweights of Joy*, VIII.

1681. *Candles in the Dark*, 13.

1682. *Overweights of Joy*, 53.

1683. *Overweights of Joy*, 1.

1684. *Overweights of Joy*, 2.

1685. *Overweights of Joy*, 53.

1686. *Before The Door Shuts*, 3.

1687. In *Things As They Are*, 145.

1688. In *Things As They Are*, 159.

and who were out of reach, except by prayer. There was also the need of the Indian women; many of them were not aware of their need. But behind many a closed door in an Indian house there were poor widows shut away to a life of exile in a dark room because of supposed sins committed in a previous life, and which it was said had caused the death of their husband. One such child, married when she was only five, became a widow while she was still a child. What happened? The relatives were summoned; her pretty clothes were taken from her, and she was clad in a coarse white garment, her hair was shaved off, her jewels were taken away, and her relatives pushed her from them, cursing and reviling her. After being shut up for some years she began to wander from town to town seeking for the true God, and after years of suffering and trouble, she found Him; and today, though herself a Brahmin, she was going among the out-castes in the villages telling them of the love of Christ. Miss Taylor went on vividly to describe a Hindu festival, where sometimes more than a million people would be congregated in one town, and of a conversation that the missionaries had with one old Indian woman, whose wistful face spoke of her longing for God. For long years she had been searching for God, but never once, she said in her journeying's of sixty years had she met a single person who knew Him, or could tell her anything about Him!¹⁶⁸⁹

'Heaven's statistics'¹⁶⁹⁰ show us other things. Missionaries should not be 'either optimistic or pessimistic, but just true. [...] Truth beareth away the victory'. 'And so we have tried to tell you the truth – the uninteresting, unromantic truth.' This she wrote one day to awaken the awareness of the people at home:

Let there be no untruth in our talks when we tell people of our mission work. Don't be afraid that subscriptions should be lost and candidates deterred by a too detailed account of what is called 'the dark side' things. But surely God's silver and gold should not have to be dragged out of Christian pockets by force of tales of victory. It should be enough to know that the King requires the money for the prosecution of His wars. [...] What we need is more common honesty.¹⁶⁹¹ For us who work in India there is no quick martyrdom. And yet no one who goes out in the battlefield and fights our Lord's enemies is for long without a wound, the kind of wound that heals slowly and leaves a scar.¹⁶⁹²

The Fellowship has never been free from attacks from the enemy and since 1923 the 'fight grew more and more violent'. 'Early in the year four men were baptized in the Red Lake near Dohnavur, and baptism, if it be vital, always leads straight to a new attack.'¹⁶⁹³ Early in 1924, one of the schoolrooms was burned down. Since Amy was involved in Raj, the brigand whom she had led to faith in Christ,¹⁶⁹⁴ 'the local Apollyon had been active'.¹⁶⁹⁵ Coming into a village:

[I]t is not the case of 'come, see, and conquer'. [...] The village was fast asleep, what the Bible calls dead. A real fight is exhilarating, but the stillness of the sleep of death has nothing exiting about it. [...] We need to be re-inspired with the faith that accounts God able to raise them up even from the dead. [...] It is Athens

1689. In *TKW* (1934): 247.

1690. *Overweights of Joy*, 54.

1691. *Overweights of Joy*, 55.

1692. *Ploughed Under*, 94.

1693. *Meal in a Barrel*, 2.

1694. The whole story is told by Amy in *Raj, Brigand Chief*. In 1921 and 1922 Amy met Raj (Jambulingam) in the forest. The robber confessed 'I have been forgiven, and must I not forgive?' 20 September 1923 she wrote in her diary: 'With Christ, which is far better'. Unvanquished, the love of God prevails. 'Blessed, ever blessed be triumphant Love. The forces of evil are immense; the awful powers of the material pile up about us like the piled rocks of the mountains. And yet at long last the Spiritual must conquer. It is the Spiritual that is strong' [*Raj, Brigand Chief*, 308].

1695. *Meal in a Barrel*, 14.

in the mud. [...] But for months we worked on, and saw nothing. The people listened or did not listen, just as they felt inclined. They never argued or opposed. They were not alive enough. [...] It looked impossible. But we have not to look at things from a human point of view, so that did not matter, and 'we reckon on God who is at home in impossibilities'. And always look at the people, read the writing on her forehead which no earth soil could quite obliterate, 'For whom Christ died'.¹⁶⁹⁶

When we are speaking our words:

God strips them bare of accessories, musical or devotional, peels off all the emotion; searches through for the pith at their heart, caring just for the white thread of the Truth.

'The rulers of the darkness, unknown and unimagined, gather up into one stupendous Force.' In writing *Things As They Are* she knew that she could only touch the dust. 'But in touching the dust we touch the out workings of an Energy so awful in operation that descriptive chapters are awful too.' Opposition from the devil and what they experienced, convinced them that the opposition from the Hindus was 'organized'¹⁶⁹⁷:

Those were the days when our appearance in the most offended villages brought handfuls of dust thrown from behind walls full in our faces. We did not mind the dust, but we did mind being shut out of the people's hearts.¹⁶⁹⁸

Mission work was a fight because 'each soul we pass must go to heaven or hell'. There was nothing romantic in missionary work 'except on platforms and in books'. 'And yet this book [*Lotus Buds*] comes hot from the fight.' Visitors, who saw the happy children playing in the nurseries and having fun with their Sitties, who cared for them, did not see what was really happening:

It may seem a quick transition from nursery to battlefield; but rightly to understand this story, it must be remembered that our nursery is set in the midst of the battle-field. [...] The happiness of the moment is a pure, bright gift, not meant to be examined, but just enjoyed, and we enjoy it as if there were no battles in the world or any sadness any more.¹⁶⁹⁹

After having heard of a little child they were unable to save, she writes, 'Poor little girl! It makes one sick to think of her spoiled young life'.¹⁷⁰⁰

The storms and the enmity she met, were seen by Amy as opportunities to 'prove God's keeping and His peace'. As if a nest is shaken by fierce winds, out of the inky clouds comes out a hand. 'He who has held that nest [*the DF*] in the hollow of His hand all through the years, holds it there today. The nest is safe.'¹⁷⁰¹ Missionaries encounter their Shah Najaf¹⁷⁰² and only after a fierce battle is the victory there. She did not *see* yet everything subjugated to Christ.¹⁷⁰³ But the *invisibility* of his power in its exercise was no

1696. All quotations in Chapter XXI 'Dry Land', in *Overweights of Joy*, 162-168.

1697. *Meal in a Barrel*, 14.

1698. *Meal in a Barrel*, 14.

1699. *Lotus Buds*, 45.

1700. *Lotus Buds*, 46.

1701. *Fragments That Remain*, 122.

1702. *Lotus Buds*, 53. The Shah Najaf was a tomb enclosed by masonry loop-holed walls 25 feet high. See F.M. Roberts, *Forty-one Years in India* (London: Macmillan, 1905).

1703. Hebrews 2:8.

argument against the *certainty* of his ultimate conquest.¹⁷⁰⁴ All her labours, toils, battles and efforts were but a small part of his overall strategy. She was part of his army, a member of one small regiment in the spiritual war:

We have the promise of triumph.' 'God will bring down the walls of the fortress.' 'We have no right to be discouraged.'¹⁷⁰⁵ 'Never is mission work a wrestle with a reluctant father (God forbid), but with His enemy and ours.'¹⁷⁰⁶ Ours is a God who delivers, not from the hour of trial, but out of it, out of its power; and in the bearing up under it, not in the sliding out from beneath it, there is strength and victory.¹⁷⁰⁷

She recognised that the discouragements of this world were but a prelude to the glory of the world to come. Glory proceeded out of suffering.¹⁷⁰⁸ Mission work was obedience and therein was the joy of doing it. 'The Lord said: "Go", "Tell", and we have come and are telling, and we meet Him as we "go and tell".'

Her comment on remarkable stories sometimes in missionary books was sober, just the plain truth: 'They do not happen here. Practical missionary life is an unexciting thing. It is not sparkling all over with incident'. A father and a mother can tell you how their child can repeat texts and tell Bible stories, 'and if you are quite new to the work you put it in the *Magazine*, and at home it sounds like conversion'.

'But a Christian Doctrine is not just a Creed, but contains a living Power.' Often people asked Amy to tell converts' stories, and certainly, they would thrill. But she knew that she was doing her work 'in the Terrible's lair'¹⁷⁰⁹ and how this terrible one fought to get back his prey; therefore, she was afraid to tell these stories too much and felt 'that silence is safest [...] and for the present most glorifies God'. She learned by experience 'to fear any attempt to photograph spiritual fruit'. The best thing others could do was to pray for the converts. 'It is no less solemn afterwards, until Christ is formed in them. Converts are a responsible joy.' They would be safe when they were in heaven! In Dohnavur the boys and girls very often sang a chorus about this, which goes to the tune of 'Hold the Fort':

Make us valiant warriors, Jesus, Over self and sin;
Lead us, lead us, on to triumph
Over foes within.
Lead us forth in any service
Thou, dear Lord shalt choose;
Make us steadfast, make us faithful,
Meet for Thee to use.¹⁷¹⁰

There was a separate fight for each soul. Ultimately it was not us who fought, 'but the Powers of Light fighting against the Powers of Darkness'. It was as 'knocking our heads against a rock'. Would it affect a rock when we smashed our heads against it? It was an old cry 'Rock, Rock! When wilt thou

1704. Colossians 2:15.

1705. *Lotus Buds*, 56.

1706. *Ploughed Under*, 114.

1707. *Lotus Buds*, 115.

1708. Cf. 2 Corinthians 4:17.

1709. See what happened in the struggle of Star to confess Jesus and how 'the evil one' tried to withdraw her. It was really the struggle between 'Siva or Christ'. In *Overweights of Joy*, Chapter VI: 'Our work is only the undermining of the walls of the ancient fortress of at lies, that when at last the wave breaks on the shore, there may be less to withstand it; till then may God keep us patient, "henceforth expecting"' (p. 45).

1710. In Osman, *Buds and Teddies*, 40.

open?’ Amy cried it afresh. She saw the faces, the gesture and the smiles of the wise Brahmans when she passed them and heard them say, ‘Who will fall into the pit of the Christian Way!:

In all the work we look unto Him, Who has fought the good fight, and we as His servants should never forget, thorns were His heritage. He chose them for His crown. And His goodwill is on His servant, and He will give light and strength to fulfil all His will.¹⁷¹¹

Ultimately it is for love of him that his servants ‘draw the swords’. In Amy’s words:

Captain beloved, battle wounds were Thine,
Let me not wonder if some hurt be mine.
Rather, O Lord, let my deep wonder be
That I may share a battle wound with Thee.¹⁷¹²

However, there will come a day when we can say: ‘The End crowns all’. Dagon will fall! For us, called to go on with the ‘fight’, the victory will be there one day. ‘God may see a garden where we only see a grave.’¹⁷¹³ She knew that grace tried is always better than grace, it is even more than grace, for her it was ‘glory in its infancy’:¹⁷¹⁴

We have learned in Dohnavur to thank God for peaceful, commonplace days and quiet nights, though we do ask to be kept from that sloth of spirit which would shrink back from battle; and for everyone who offers to us I copy these words from Garibaldi to his soldiers: Come, ... I promise you weariness, hardship, and battles. But we will conquer or die. This sacred work demands no lukewarm, selfish, slack souls, but hearts more finely tempered than steel, wills purer and harder than the diamond.¹⁷¹⁵

Amy saw herself on a pilgrimage full of adversaries. The war in the spiritual realm entered the sphere of her human life and the great enemy, the devil and all the other fallen spirits made her pilgrimage a real battlefield. We are amazed that she, who due to health reasons was not allowed to go to the mission field, physically bore all the strain and business for the Dohnavur children night and day. She never complained, and wrote in a very positive way: ‘The strongest, happiest, most victorious people are those who forget all about themselves in trying to help others’.¹⁷¹⁶

The enemy sought to destroy the people, especially the young ones among whom she worked, and to rob the supreme God from his glory. She tried to turn out the foes in her own ranks and carefully chose her weapons in this spiritual war, so by prayer and through the Word of God she had recourse. Amy always told her children that Dohnavur was God’s work and they who were saved from the devil’s den were taught by her that it also was the Lord’s work. The work was the Lord’s; the glory was his, too. The DF was in the mind of God and he had led Amy to that place in the desert to become a sanctuary for so many children. It is all in the control of God. And for us Mitchell’s words are enough: ‘Where reason fails with all her powers, There faith prevails and love adores’.¹⁷¹⁷ Dohnavur’s prayers were and still are held to save the children in danger as it was on the prayer day in May 1937:

1711. *Edges of His Ways*, 21 January, 10. Amy also quotes the German mystic Tersteegen.

1712. *Gold Cord*, 350.

1713. *Overweights of Joy*, 219.

1714. The expression is from Samuel Rutherford, one of Amy’s beloved devotional authors.

1715. In *From the Forest*, 58–59.

1716. In *Whispers of His Power*, 13 January, 18.

1717. In Mitchell, *At Break of Day*, 17 November, 328.

Remember our call. Renew our vows. Rededicate ourselves to the Lord for our children. That self may be dead and that Christ may rule in the practical things of daily life. That in the battles of this month at every point the devil may be defeated because of Calvary. [...] That this month's end may find us deeper in loyalty, unity, and purity of motive than we were before.¹⁷¹⁸

■ 'God of mountains, I will climb'

One of the favourite Fellowship prayers, too exalted for many, but for the single-hearted a prayer with such a deep insight, was *God of the Heights*.¹⁷¹⁹

God of the Heights, austere, inspiring,
Thy word hath come to me.
O let no selfish aims, conspiring,
Distract my soul from Thee.
Loosen me from Things of Time;
Strengthen me for steadfast climb.

The Temporal would bind my spirit;
Father, be Thou my Stay.
Show me what flesh cannot inherit,
Stored for another day.
Be transparent, Things of Time;
Looking through you, I would climb.

Now by Thy grace my spirit chooseth
Treasure that shall abide.
The great Unseen, I know, endureth,
My footsteps shall not slide.
Not for me the Things of Time;
God of mountains, I will climb.

In the whole of Amy's mission concept, this metaphor of climbing as an illustration of the life of a Christian was one of the most important. In her strenuous missionary life with the many day-to-day entanglements, which could distract one from the one thing necessary, Amy, from the very beginning of the work in Dohnavur, had these words of A.C. Fox in her mind:

Like the staircase in ancient houses,
Long, winding, and strangely dim,
It is faith that is needed for climbing,
Faith, rather than length of limb.

But there is light at the different landings,
And rest in the upper room,
And a larger range of vision,
And glorious thoughts to come.

How much of our life resembles
Time lost in going upstairs;
What days and weeks seem wasted,
But we're climbing unawares.

1718. In the logbook of the DF, 1931–1941, 01 May 1937. In the Dohnavur library.

1719. In *Though The Mountains Shake*, 163.

With these words she could encourage Rev. Walker, who was asking himself if he was using his time as the Lord wanted him to; these words helped Amy when she thought her days on the sickbed were idle days. In her diary, we read, 'Read many times after 24 October 1931': 'Make me Thy athlete even in my bed, Thy girded runner though the course be sped'.

She prayed in November 1935 the words of Vaughan's line: 'O let me climb when I lay down'.¹⁷²⁰ Amy found her vision for the DF clearly expressed in *The Matterhorn* and wrote the following sentence from the book on the first page: 'We make our way wrapped in glamour to the supreme good, the summit'.¹⁷²¹

To his astonishment, a present-day visitor to Dohnavur will see many paintings and pictures of mountains, glaciers and snowy landscapes and these in a climate where never one flake of snow is to be seen. Amy loved the mountains and got many a spiritual insight from them, and due to her friendship with Dr Somervell,¹⁷²² the mountaineer and medical doctor in the Neyyoor hospital, several of his paintings still decorate the bungalow where Amy lived.¹⁷²³ From stories of mountaineering and explorations – like those of Ernest Shackleton – she always drew lessons for spiritual life. In Paul Bauer's *Himalayan Quest*¹⁷²⁴ is written by the author: 'Amma, who wants to be one of the mountaineers in Dohnavur but is less than the last of them and on its lowest foothills, April 26. 1939'. When Amy received this book, what was written was: 'Amma, The Mountaineers in Dohnavur', but in her own handwriting she added these words: 'who wants to be one of the mountaineers but is less than the last of them and on its lowest foothills'.

Here we see two things: very often Amy uses the 'climbing' as a metaphor to picture the way the Christian has to go through this life¹⁷²⁵ and as to how she saw herself among the others in Dohnavur. Not as their leader but just one of the servants, even less than the others. It was Murray Webb-Peplow who, for Amy and the others in Dohnavur, wrote this poem:

Make me to be Thy happy mountaineer,
O God, most high.
My climbing soul would welcome the austere:
Lord, crucify
On rock or scree, ice-cliff or field of snow,
The softness that would sink to things below.

1720. See Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 307–308.

1721. In G. Rey, *The Matterhorn* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908), 185.

1722. Howard Somervell (1890–1975) was a member of the two expeditions in the 1920s to Mount Everest (1922 and 1924). In 1924 he travelled through India from the north to the south, where he was overwhelmed by the needs and the sorrows of the people in south India and decided to stay in Neyyoor to assist his old friend, the missionary doctor Pugh. Neyyoor Hospital was one of the greatest mission hospitals of the London Missionary Society's Medical Mission. He found here his life's work, first in Neyyoor and from 1949 in Vellore, Madras State. There he was one of the professors in Vellore Medical School. In 1925, Somervell showed slides of his climb of Everest to the Fellowship family. In D.A. Devapiriam, *Vanacharbu-Woodland*, 54. For more about Howard Somervell, see J. Reason, *Heights After Everest (Howard Somervell of India)*, Eagle Books no. 69 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1957).

1723. Many times Dr Howard Somervell (Stira Annachie) from the Neyyoor Hospital offered his assistance when there was a need in Dohnavur. Often, as he administered his work for the children, he visited Amy.

1724. London: Nicholson, & Watson, 1938. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1725. She had many books on mountaineering, like P.F.M. Fellowes, *First Over Everest* (London: John Lane, 1935) and F. Younghusband, *The Epic of Mount Everest* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., n.d.).

Thou art my Guide, where Thy sure feet have trod
Shall mine be set-
Thy highest word my law of life, O God,
Lest I forget,
And slip and fall, teach me to do Thy will-
Thy mountaineer upon Thy holy Hill.¹⁷²⁶

‘God is the God of the mountains’ Amy wrote in the margin of the foreword of the above mentioned book and she agreed with this sentence there, ‘Climbers have found joy in battling with the mountain giants and the sterner the battle the greater has been their joy’. From Dr Somervell she received his *After Everest*¹⁷²⁷ in 1937 and Amy wrote on the first page: ‘The greatest sentence in this book: The presence of a Companion on the mountains who is not in our earthly party of climbers’. Dr Somervell loved climbing but on a visit to the south, 20 miles from Cape Comorin:

I saw the thing which changed the entire plan of my life, something more impressive than the mighty Himalaya, far more compelling than the call of the mountains. That something was the unrelieved suffering of India.¹⁷²⁸

She did not agree with everything that she found in this book. When someone urged that an English Christian is not called to destroy Hinduism, Amy wrote in the margin: ‘How can you obey the command “make disciples” without destroying false faith’. In the first edition of *After Everest*, Somervell had written: ‘Carmichael’s orphanage in Dohnavur’, and she had written in the margin: ‘We are not an orphanage’. At another place, he had written: ‘Miss Carmichael’s institution in Dohnavur’. Amy refused her name to be mentioned in the book and erased her name and wrote in the margin: ‘No, we are not an institution and we don’t want honour. It is just the Lord’s kind heart’.¹⁷²⁹ She agreed fully when Somervell wrote about the temple religion:

And we, His servants, must show them no compromise. [...] There is only one power on earth that could have caused this transformation – the power of Him who made Himself of no reputation, and took the form of a servant to show us that all men are equal in the sight of God.¹⁷³⁰

When Somervell stated that every country had its social order, Amy wrote in the margin: ‘Social order is not caste. Better not mix up things that differ [...] but there is a great and fundamental difference’.¹⁷³¹ Smythe’s *The Mountain Vision*¹⁷³² was read by her with less approval. When Smythe suggested that heaven could be realised by an increasing sense of beauty, Amy put a big question mark and when he asked: ‘What is wrong with this world?’ she wrote in the margin: ‘Much’.¹⁷³³ When mountaineers got the blessing of the Rongbuk Monastery to deliver them from evil of the mountain

1726. In *Rose From Brier*, 66; *Mountain Breezes*, 225.

1727. T. Howard Somervell, *After Everest*, 128. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1728. On p. 70, in the first edition.

1729. In the new edition, Somervell did not omit her name and the word institution, but the word orphanage – in the first edition on p. 266 – is not there.

1730. On pp. 279 and 280, first edition.

1731. First edition pp. 284 and 285. Somervell was positive about Ghandi’s ideas, but Amy put great question marks in the margin (first edition, p. 315). The Indian clarinet and the drum, which Somervell tried to introduce in the church at Neyyoor, were strongly opposed by Amy. She wrote in the margin of p. 318. ‘Yes [*she agreed with an Indian pastor who did not want this practice*] but it instantly calls up the vilest associations. No truly convert wants it’.

1732. F.S. Smythe, *The Mountain Vision* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1950 [1941]).

1733. Page 3.

gods, she wrote in the margin: ‘What does God think about that?’¹⁷³⁴ See saw too much of the German liberal theology of Dr Bauer in this book.

‘It is the climbing that counts, whether the top will be reached or not.’¹⁷³⁵ Very often in her books, Amy reflected on the idea of climbing a mountain as a metaphor for the life of a Christian:

Everest has become a symbol. Everest stands for all that is highest, purest, and most difficult of attainment. As the climbers struggle and gasp towards the summit they are putting heart into all who are striving upward in whatever field.¹⁷³⁶ To climb a mountain is to tread not only the heights of Earth, it is to adventure to the very boundaries of Heaven.¹⁷³⁷

Are not the sharpest trials the finest furbishing?

The most tempestuous weather is the best seed-time. A Christian is an oak flourishing in winter. God had so magnified and glorified His servant, and exalted Him so highly in His eternal bosom, that no other joy should be able to move us but that alone.¹⁷³⁸

Amy admired in the mountaineers that they responded to the call. The mountain was calling. Climbing Everest was a symbol of reaching for perfection. In a Christian’s life, perseverance and endurance are required for the pilgrim’s journey. When in Dohnavur the strain of the work nearly exhausted the workers, Amy wrote to them:

Almost everyone seems to be going through painful ways at present. But they know their God and as they and we all go forward and through these rough waters, and step by step climb our Matterhorns and Everests, we find ourselves drawing nearer to the day when we shall see His face and He ‘shall look us out of pain’ forever and ever.¹⁷³⁹

She underlined the phrase in Norton’s *The Fight for the Everest*,¹⁷⁴⁰ a book she had got in 1926, that:

[I]t is the spirit of the man that made him the great mountaineer as he was; the fire burnt in him [...] and while the call lasted his would remain the dominant spirit in any enterprise.

The question on page 155 in the book, ‘Is it worthwhile?’ was for her a question she asked herself often. ‘All that is done here in Dohnavur will it stand in the fire of God when He will test our intentions?’ ‘Does it lend a touch of the supernatural to our vision?’¹⁷⁴¹ Amy had a strong determination to serve God. Her first biographer wrote:

She never ceased to climb, though often she feared that she was losing ground. In November, 1935, she happened on a line in Henry Vaughan’s poems which both cheered and challenged her: ‘O let me climb when I lay down’. Then the spiritual climb could continue when physical movement was impossible?¹⁷⁴²

1734. Page 238.

1735. In the first edition on p. 32. On p. 319: ‘There are many other Indian music instruments that could be used’.

1736. *Rose from Brier*, 67.

1737. Quotation in Smythe, *The Mountain Vision*, XI.

1738. These words Amy underlined in B. Dobell (ed.), *Centuries of Meditations by Thomas Traherne (1636–1674)* (London: P.J. & A.E. Dobell, 1927), 92.

1739. *Fragments That Remain*, 106.

1740. E.F. Norton, *The Fight for Everest 1924*, (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1925), 145.

1741. On p. 155.

1742. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 307.

■ ‘Sorrrows for consolation’

Amy liked to quote Dr Moule when she was confronted with strong heathendom: ‘the servant brings his sorrows for consolation’. The servant of God identifies himself with the Master, who mourned over the opposing people, over a Jerusalem that will not come to the Son of God, that they might have life:

He opened His arms and called those who would not come, and opened the eternal arms for an embrace – to be met only with a contradiction. [...] To know Him is to be at peace even under the griefs of the mystery of sin.¹⁷⁴³

Redemption so near to them, but *they do not want to know it*. ‘Because redemption must mean loss of Caste.’ Being a Christian really meant sooner or later leaving home and all relatives forever. The old people were the most difficult to reach with the Gospel because ‘they usually were too attached to their own faith’ and ‘indifferent’. Their argument was that Christianity ‘spoils our Caste’. Caste and religion were so mixed up that she did not know how to unmix them. She found it difficult to identify herself with the people whom she had come to win for Christ, but always there was the same difficulty. There was always a distance you could not cover – she called it the fatal hiatus – because, coming from the West, missionaries in their eyes were always different.

Amy stood up for her ideas and, concerning mission work, it was not possible to persuade her to another vision. She was sure that in what she did she stood on Biblical foundations. Historically, what she did in forming her own sisterhood was not unique. Separation and the dissenting tradition went back many ages before her, and they continue into the present time. In Dohnavur she always was in good contact with the local Anglican church. As far as the sacraments and the way they had to be performed are concerned, we see that they were of secondary importance for Amy. Having dropped all denominational labels, she did not care whether one was a Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Quaker or an Episcopalian, as long as they agreed about the essentials of the faith. The crux of Amy’s objection to denominationalism was that it imposed human authority on Christian people and overshadowed the Lordship of Christ and promptings of the Spirit in the government of the Church. It is clear that she distrusted human activity and maximised the need for unction and divine calling in Christian service. Since she was raised in a strict Presbyterian home, we can trace many Presbyterian issues in her writings. There never is any negative word about her upbringing in this church. Her rather complex, strong Irish character with its many facets and her staunch Presbyterian belief from Scottish origin had always given her stability, conservatism, preference for authority and exactness of thought. The Irish is a mystic, a bit of a dreamer, emotional but not sentimental, with deep thoughts. She could deal with profound questions and give expression to the truth. Because of her uncommon mental abilities, she refused to conform to the majority and was inclined towards preciseness.

She had no patience with the nuances of compromise and was solidly consistent. Her core beliefs never varied and her mission purpose was always on the same line. This idiosyncratic and independent nature has left us a legacy; we thank God for this and in missiology and among missionaries to neglect her, would be a betrayal of the Gospel. She had a thirst for the glory and honour of the triune God, an unrivalled vision of Christ’s grace, a passion for a holy life and a deep love for the little ones who did not have a voice. As Amma she led many to Christ and helped many to understand themselves and the world in which they lived.

■ Love: Amy’s keyword

Without Christ I can do nothing,
Without His love I am nothing.
Without love self-sacrifice profiteth nothing¹⁷⁴⁴

1743. *From the Fight*, 23–24.

1744. In Amy’s Bible (1895), in the margin of 1 Corinthians 13.

‘Love is a thrilling thing. It touches the very springs of the heart. Is there anything in all the world like love? No, nothing.’¹⁷⁴⁵ Out of love Christ gave all. He gave his life also for the lost ones in India. The little *Book of the Lover and the Beloved*¹⁷⁴⁶ helped her to have this view. ‘Ramón Lull is never unmindful of the world his Beloved came to save. His is no cloistered love.’¹⁷⁴⁷

I have a Saviour, though I thought,
Through earth and air and sea.
I could not find a word, a thought,
To show Him worthily.
But planted here in rock and moss.
I see the Sign of utmost loss.
I hear a word – On Calvary’s cross,
Love gave Himself for thee.¹⁷⁴⁸

Jesus: his name was so precious to her, that she nearly could not find words to express her love for him. In her Bible she wrote:

Many Names are dear, but His is dearer. How it grows more dear as time goes on. Many friends are near, but He is nearer. Always all we want and all our own. JESUS. JESUS. Let us ever say it. Softly to ourselves as some sweet spell. JESUS. JESUS! Troubles spirit lay it on thy heart and it will make thee well.¹⁷⁴⁹

She so loved the Lord, that she felt ‘nested’ in his heart:¹⁷⁵⁰

Live to love, and you will never be lonely. Live in the lives of others, those around you. How they need love!
You will never be lonely if you live to love and love to live.

These words, once written¹⁷⁵¹ by the mother of Margret King¹⁷⁵² to her daughter, Amy found true. Amy absorbed Indian culture and came to understand its people. She longed to reach them and looked them up where they lived. Her Scottish ancestry had given her courtesy and a reserve that had prepared her for the leisurely etiquette of the East. Quick and sometimes impatient as she was, she had learned to sit and relax and have fellowship with the women she met. She had an ‘oriental’ heart. Already in Japan she had the passion to tell the people of God’s love. In her broken Japanese, she taught the people the song ‘Jesus Loves Me, This I Know’ and ‘then the “God is Love” embroidered on my dress, forms the text for a few broken words’.¹⁷⁵³ By 1906 Amy had built a family of 70 women and children; in 1913 the number was 130 and in 1929 there were nearly 700 family members; by the time her lifelong serviced ended in 1951, the number was about 900. Is this not a very remarkable record? The explanation of this

1745. *Though The Mountains Shake*, 36.

1746. Ramón Lull (1235–1315), Catalan mystic. The first missionary who had ever gone to the Muslim world and a great apologist for the Christian faith.

1747. See ‘About the Story’, in *Ploughed Under*, VIII.

1748. *Gold by Moonlight*, 2; see also J. Spencer, ‘His Faithfulness’, *The Poetry of Amy Carmichael Set to Music* (Kansas City: Adorant Records, 2006).

1749. In Amy’s Bible (1895), in the margin of Matthew 1:21.

1750. Cf. Amy’s underlined words in A.S. Way’s commentary of the ‘Second letter to the Corinthians’, in *The Letters of St. Paul*, 77. In the margin is written by Amy ‘1912 and 1935’.

1751. In Thompson, *Each to Her Post*, 61.

1752. Margaret King (1867–1941), Canadian Presbyterian CIM missionary in China.

1753. See *From Sunrise Land*, 35.

richly blessed work lay in her own words of Jeremy Taylor's prayer: 'Lord, do Thou turn me all into love, and all my love in obedience, and let my obedience be without interruption'.¹⁷⁵⁴ In her poetry she wrote: 'O Love revealed at Calvary, | Thy glory lights eternity.' In a little book (in manuscript form),¹⁷⁵⁵ prepared for the Sisters of the Fellowship, she wrote:

We are trusted to spread the spirit of love. Tenderness in judgment, the habit of thinking the best of one another, unwillingness to believe evil, grief if we are forced to do so, eagerness to believe good, joy over one recovered from any slip or fall, unselfish gladness to do anything to help another entirely irrespective of self – all this and much more is included in that wonderful word love. Love is the golden secret of life; [it is] our most precious possession.¹⁷⁵⁶

When Hudson Taylor once was asked what the supreme qualification for missionary work was, he replied with conviction: 'a supreme love for the Lord Jesus Christ'.¹⁷⁵⁷ Taylor was drawing on the fullness of Christ in such a way that the Lord met all his daily and hourly needs, and the needs of the great work that had grown up around him. A lot of difficulties and dangers concerned him deeply; he joined in the joys and the sorrows of his fellow missionaries and shared with them all that they went through. But his peace was unbroken, his rest of heart in God complete. One who knew Amy personally once said: 'Dear Amma – she never understood how the love of God within her was so powerful a magnet that all through her life others were drawn irresistibly to her'.¹⁷⁵⁸ Sometimes people thought they did not do enough for others and then Amy would reply:

But we can love. And love is like light. If the candle of love is shining, then even though it is only a little candle it gives light to all who are in the house. God make us all His candles.¹⁷⁵⁹

Previously in the work for the mill girls in Belfast and later on in the slums of Manchester a deep love had entered Amy's heart. In grappling with the realities of sin and sorrow for the young girls tempted and straying, for whom she became a real mother, she was to find the deeper certainty, the deeper faith in the saving power of the Gospel. By the power of the Holy Spirit it was God's love that transformed many unlovely into loveliness and it transfigured the dark, dull lives of many a factory girl:

God forbid that we should ever fail the soul in its need, but we are not an end to any heart, nor can we ever be. Let us then, not fastening it upon ourselves, lead the child of our love to the Beloved, and laying the dear hands in His, move aside. [...] Love will find out the way to fulfil the desires that Love inspires.¹⁷⁶⁰

Love was the keynote of her life. Love made her look beneath the surface. With the Reformed heritage, it was her belief that the divisions – that sore wound in the body of Christ – the schisms, a glory in sectarianism, were a truth at the expense of grace, a faith at the expense of love. When someone wanted to go to the mission field the advice of Amy was 'let those who cannot learn to love it, stay away'.¹⁷⁶¹

1754. See Elliot, *A Change to Die*, 125; *Windows*, 160. Originally, this is one of Augustine's prayers.

1755. In the office of the DF, Dohnavur, India.

1756. *Candles in the Dark*, 109 and 119.

1757. Taylor, once asked how he explained the great missionary advance in China, replied, 'Love first, then suffering, then a deeper love – thus only can God's work be done'. In Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years* (London: CIM, 1927), 291.

1758. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 105.

1759. *Whispers of His Power*, 06 September, 190.

1760. *Ploughed Under*, 154.

1761. *Walker of Tinnevely*, 257. Amy also quotes Père Didon: 'Nothing but a burning sanctity will convert this unbelieving generation' (p. 261).

She always combined loyalty to the old with propagation of the new. All the 'great', as for example Paul, Augustine, Luther, Wesley, Booth, Hudson Taylor and Spurgeon, brought their message of cleansing and revival to the existing co-religionists of their day.

Amy learned from the beginning that the price of spiritual harvest must always be the way of the Cross. She set her face to her one objective of rescuing girls and boys from a terrible life of sin. She did not want the blood of Christ in a basin, she wanted to pour it out. Souls around her were dying, dying, dying without a Saviour. Many pastors in the Indian Church in the district – workers for Christ – were too much engaged in routine work, much of it irrelevant, or even did not do their work in a faithful way. And the reward? 'We do not look for gratitude in this work; who does?'¹⁷⁶² In dark times, when difficulties arose Amy knew that 'the love of God sufficed for any disappointment, for any defeat. In that love was the energy of faith and the very sap of hope'.¹⁷⁶³

Sometimes it came; the grateful love of a child was a real bonus for her. In Dohnavur, in every nursery, this text was on the wall: 'Love never faileth'.¹⁷⁶⁴ Amy was fully aware of the statement she herself cited once: 'Not where I breathe but where I love I live'.¹⁷⁶⁵ When talking about living in the East, she could say 'Let those who cannot learn to love it, stay away'.¹⁷⁶⁶ Sometimes she found it difficult to understand the feelings of the people. What was behind their deeds and words? She said in such cases, 'but love India, and you will find somewhere a smile even in such a story'.¹⁷⁶⁷ Never was a night so long for Amy as when she nurtured a sick child; never was any work so hard but she persevered and never were people so difficult, but that love outlasted all. Her passionate devotion to Jesus Christ was the mainspring of her passion for the girls and boys under her care. This consuming passion of love flowed through her along with a yearning to draw the children to her and their Saviour. She focused on a living right with God, on living a holy life in private and in public, to live for God, whom had put a wall of fire around her and the DF.

It was essential for Amy that love is not a gush of feeling and emotion. It never was a mere feeling; it was a principle, a royal law. Love was the principle by which she gave God preference over everything else in the world: *if any man's work abide!* It was her leading principle by which she gave everyone else, and anything else preference over herself, in sacrificing herself for the larger interests of India's children in danger. It was a love that always turned to Jesus Christ; He was the centre of her soul. Really, this was 'that in all things He shall have the pre-eminence'! That is love! Love for her was the sovereign preference of her person for another person, and as a Christian that sovereign preference was for Jesus. Her whole personality was passionately devoted to Jesus.

The DF proved to be a community where all lived in an atmosphere of love. This was as Amy wished, but sometimes this reality was absent. In reading Temple's *Readings in St. Joh's Gospel*, she underlined this sentence:

But love must make its uttermost appeal, as very soon now it will. The Lord knows that it must fail; and He knows the terrible strain that this failure and its consequences will put upon the loyalty of the other disciples, *they shall be scattered every man to his own and shall leave me alone.*

1762. *Lotus Buds*, 67.

1763. *Gold Cord*, 268.

1764. *Lotus Buds*, 241.

1765. *From the Forest*, 116.

1766. *This One Thing*, 150.

1767. *Windows*, 60.

It is here that she wrote in the margin:

Just as in a community. The failure of one hurts the loyalty of all. Thank God when there is not a scattering – but that is what the devil is not to grant! (Prayed) 1925, 1937 and thanked in another way in 1946-7.¹⁷⁶⁸

Amy also quoted Westcott whose Bible translation she valued much. His definition of love indicated it as a persistent loyalty:

The love of Christ is, as it were, the atmosphere in which the disciple lives. It is not something realized at a momentary crisis, but enjoyed continuously. And this enjoyment depends, on the human side, upon the will of man. It can be made the subject of a command.¹⁷⁶⁹

Mission service is a costly service and missionaries are the chosen sowers whose sowing is to bear fruit unto life eternal for the people for whose sake they have given their all. It is that life of love giving all, following him who gave all. His precious blood that tells for God. He is not a God who calls us to impress the people, but to love them, and to share his treasure with them.¹⁷⁷⁰ Amy was fully aware that the crown was promised after the battle and that Christ gave the example in humbling himself to the death on the cross and – here Amy quotes and underlines Traherne's words – we should remember that:

The most tempestuous weather is the best seedtime. A Christian is an oak tree flourishing in winter. [...] I beseech Thee let my love unto all be regular like Thine, and pure, and infinite [...] And so make me to love all, that I may be a blessing to all; and well pleasing to Thee in all. [...] This and the other life are made of a piece, but this is the time of trial, that of rewards. The greatest disadvantages of love are its highest advantages. In the greatest hazards, it achieves to itself the greatest glory. It is seldom considered; but a love to others stronger than what we bear to ourselves, is the mother of all the heroic actions that have made histories pleasant, and beautified the world.¹⁷⁷¹

■ Living by the 'sparrow method'

Nor Scrip is a booklet written by Amy after Dr Inwood urged her to in one authoritative sentence: 'You ought to tell it'. He had seen which principles governed life and work in Dohnavur. Reluctantly Amy agreed to do it, and now we have an honest account of God's provisions for Dohnavur. She wrote how God had guided her by circumstance and experiences and by his Word. It deals with the 'unseen' things of the Fellowship. Things that happen in the traffic between a praying soul and God's heart. Therefore, Amy took money affairs very seriously. Amy explained how she had been led to look to the Lord alone for the provision of every need. This was not new for her, but a principle she had adopted when she was barely out of her teens and running a Bible class for mill girls in Belfast:

Then, too, we did not want to touch any money except what He meant us to use. The spending of money is a great responsibility. We did not wish to incur that responsibility unless He so commanded. Only so could we be sure of His guidance, and be fortified against the peril of building up what might show well on earth, but be of no value whatever to the Kingdom of Heaven. Also we did not want to divert anything from others. For this and other reasons we had no supported children as such, we offered no attractions, such as naturally incline the heart of the kindly to give. We did honestly seek not to attract, but only to draw by prayer to God those supplies He saw good to entrust to us.¹⁷⁷²

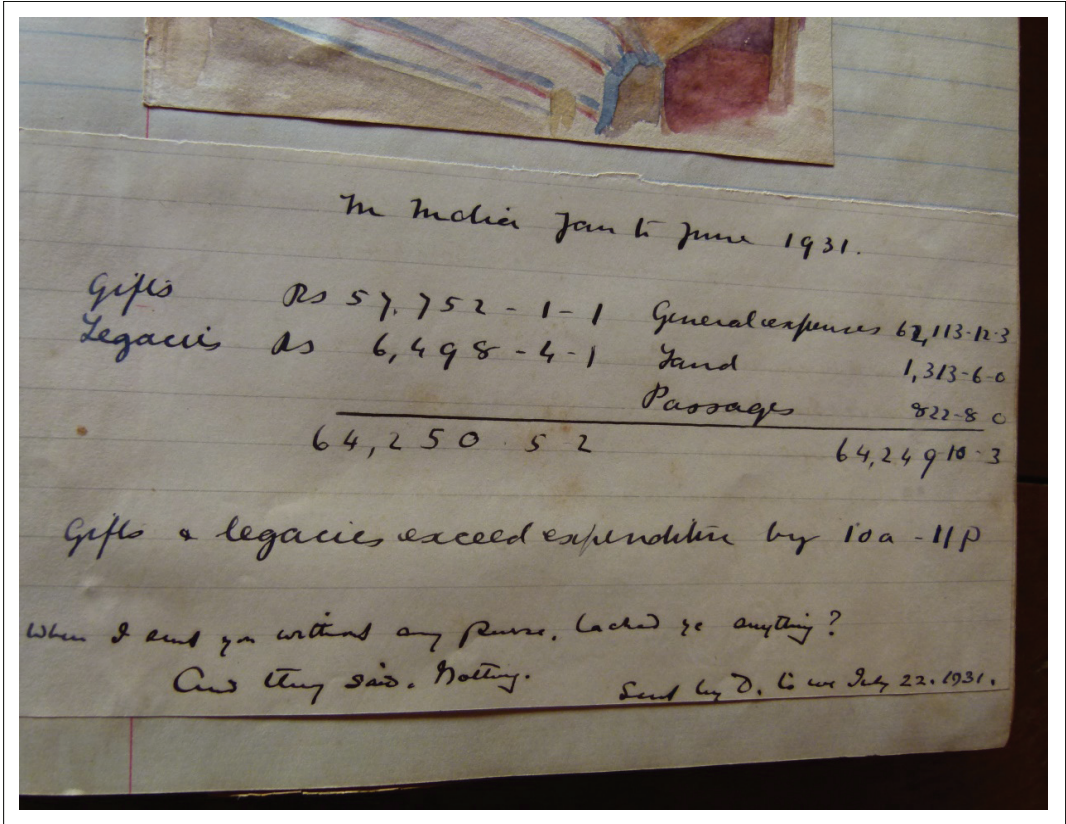
1768. In Temple, 1940, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, chapter 16. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1769. *Whispers of His Power*, 09 January, 15.

1770. Cf. G. Webb-Peploe, *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, 144.

1771. In Dobell (ed.), *Centuries of Meditations*, 95, 79, 60. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1772. *Nor Scrip*, 35.



Source: © The Donavon Fellowship. Photographer J. (Hans) Kommers.

FIGURE 31: Paper with the incoming gifts and legacies in the first half of 1931 for the Dohnavur Fellowship.

If there be a shortage, we wait upon Him about it. We ask to be shown if in anything we have grieved the Spirit, or made any mistake in running before our Guide or lagging behind. If we are shown anything, we ask for pardon and seek to put it right. If we are not, we wait peacefully, and in the end and always in time to pay the bills, the money comes.

Another of Amy's often repeated maxims was:

The Master is not responsible for uncommanded work. [It] warned us not to plan first and then ask for God's blessing and provision, but always to make sure that it was God's plan we were following.¹⁷⁷³

In the daily feeding and educating of hundreds of children it was for Amy that, when she had told her heavenly Father of a certain need, it seemed as if often her thoughts had taken wing and from all over the world the supplies came. The financial responsibility, as we can understand, was great. We can best understand this by looking at a six-monthly order of food for the household that time, mid-1930: 46 130 quarts of milk, 77 181 eggs, 54 060 oranges and 260 832 plantains (bananas).¹⁷⁷⁴

Whenever a cheque or a needed thing came, Amy laid it in the House of Prayer and with the children, God was thanked for his grace bestowed on them. Gifts large and small (Figure 31) came in:

1773. Cf. *A Century of Answered Prayer*, 4-5.

1774. In *I Dare*, 15.

We don't think of anything as 'small'. All gifts were seen as God's 'lovingkindness'.¹⁷⁷⁵ 'What is your greatest need', some wrote, 'and how are your needs supplied? Our greatest need now – and always – is earnest, fervent prayer.'¹⁷⁷⁶

Amy saw the hard fact that next to prayer is just:

[T]he simple straightforward need of money; to feed our little ones and clothe them, and to provide for the long journeys connected with their redemption, and all other expenses bearing upon the salvation of Temple children. Nurseries (so necessary too) are never built except with money specially so marked by the givers.¹⁷⁷⁷

Can God spread a table
In the wilderness?
Is our Father able?
Praise Him, Yes.

For His word is stable,
He who yesterday
Spread a bounteous table,
Does today.¹⁷⁷⁸

'In the very bricks and mortar of the Mission buildings, may be seen the monuments of God's goodness.' These words of M. Broomhall¹⁷⁷⁹ refer to the CIM work in China, but the same can be said of the houses, nurseries, the House of Prayer and the House of Healing belonging to the Dohnavur Fellowship. The hand of God is seen in providing for all these 'monuments' even today:

When the work for the children began, our Father had to teach us lessons of faith, and so He was careful that we should not have much in the bank beyond what we had of our own.¹⁷⁸⁰

Gradually, as the work in Dohnavur began to grow, and more space was wanted, land had to be bought:

Buying land in India is no trifle. Every minute section is possessed, not by one man, but by his family, and the consent of each member of the family, major and minor, has to be sought and bought.

The expenditure of time, the endless agreements and changes, the 'making' of friendship necessary for even the simplest negotiations were sometimes very exhausting. Amy played 'fair game' for no bribes were ever paid. The long time it took and the patience necessarily to continue, she bore. All had to be done in an honest way. She knew 'this is old India, not modern, and we do not pay people to carry our burden, we carry them ourselves'.¹⁷⁸¹

Amy had quit the CEZMS in 1927. She did not want the Dohnavur Fellowship to be a project of the CEZMS. To be dependent on God was what she had in mind. Also those who worked with her did not

1775. *Though The Mountains Shake*, 21.

1776. *The Beginning of a Story*, 16. Here Amy refers to Bishop Moule's *Colossian Studies*. 'Prayers are never meant to be indolently easy, however simple and reliant it may be. It is an infinite transaction between man and God.[...] And therefore very often, when subjects and circumstances call for it, it has to be viewed as a work involving labour, persistency, conflict, if it would be prayer indeed.'

1777. *The Beginning of a Story*, 19-20.

1778. *Nor Scrip*, V.

1779. In M. Broomhall, *Faith and Facts As Illustrated in the History of the China Inland Mission* (London: CIM, 1909), 28.

1780. *Meal in a Barrel*, 132.

1781. *Nor Scrip*, 17.

belong to any other society. In all her writing we see that she would start any work after being convinced it was God's will to do it and when the work had started it would end without let or hindrance. Never had there been any unfinished building.

For itinerant work when money was spent, it meant that some of the villages the team had hoped to visit had to be dropped. But children could not be dropped; they needed food and shelter every day. Who was responsible for all this expenditure? 'No one on earth is responsible for us. [...] No one is authorized to ask money for us.'¹⁷⁸² Amy gave three reasons for this decision:

We do not wish to risk doing others the wrong of receiving what, if we had not asked for it, might have gone to them. We do not want to have the responsibility of spending anything which we cannot be quite sure was intended for us; and we have found it enough to ask our Heavenly Father.¹⁷⁸³ Our needs are supplied as Elijah's were, the children would tell you if you asked them. God sent His ravens. If we are doing our Master's will, He is responsible for our supplies.¹⁷⁸⁴

The work of God seen in so many provisions was a real joy for all in Dohnavur, and for all their needs they turned to the Scriptures to see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep; above all, 'to breathe the atmosphere of the Book of books itself, was life and joy and confidence'. Fed thus, the fibres of faith were nourished with food convenient:

We have no provision made for us except what we share with the birds and the flowers, but it has never failed us'. [...] 'Most of our ravens fly to us by way of the daily post'.¹⁷⁸⁵

Sometimes income could take a deep dive. Ultimately, God, as the unseen leader of the Fellowship was also the unseen treasurer. Amy was banking in unshaken faith on the redemption of Jesus Christ in the affairs of the Fellowship, including on God's provisions. In everything, in all the providential circumstances, engineered by God, she trusted him fully.¹⁷⁸⁶ She took money matters very serious and the monthly finance meetings were called angels' meetings, 'because we think the angels are kindly commissioned to help in such affairs'.¹⁷⁸⁷ In everything, so also in money matters, she asked the Lord to guide her:

I used to sign every such cheque kneeling down by my desk, so deeply did I fear. [...] I know we never moved forward without sureness, and yet there was always this prayer at the roots of action.¹⁷⁸⁸

In the critical years after the World War I, when sometimes donations were low she wrote: 'We feed on the promises, and then we pleaded the prayer that must have expressed the cry of thousands of hearts'. In all her questions of how to provide the food for the children, she saw her great God:

He who hung the earth upon nothing was the God of this little fraction of it. To Him our line was fastened. [...] Tree of Life, from eternity to eternity the same.¹⁷⁸⁹

1782. *The Continuation of a Story*, 34.

1783. *The Continuation of a Story*, 34–35.

1784. *Tables in the Wilderness*, 39.

1785. *Nor Scrip*, 41; *The Beginning of a Story*, 17.

1786. The Dohnavur Fellowship has still the same principle. See *Praise and Prayer Notes* of the DF, January 2015: 'That we may never turn away from the principles the Lord set before us through *Amma*, in looking to Him only for our needs to be met'.

1787. See *Though The Mountains Shake*, 26.

1788. In 'Copy of Amma's P.S. to Fellowship note. Sept. 5.47', in the Dohnavur library.

1789. *Nor Scrip*, 109, 111 and 112.

During war time letters got lost and, therefore, Amy once informed the donors of the reason why they had not got a reply. 'Will anyone who have not received answer to letters, or acknowledgements for gifts, remember that all Indian mails were lost on the "Persia", and write again.'¹⁷⁹⁰

The Lord provided, even during the years of the World Wars in 1914–1918 and 1939–1945. Also after 1933, when the U.S. banking crisis came to a head and affected Europe as well, and the ripples crossed the oceans. The nurseries were built using money given by many (unknown) donors, even from Russia, and when the last of the group of nurseries was built, it was called Thanksgiving.¹⁷⁹¹ Amy wrote in 1947:

Some questions are often asked. There is no secret about the answers.

How does the money you require come? It comes from our Heavenly Father who, in answer to prayer, moves His children to send what is required.

How do they know what to send? It must be that He tells them. No one else does.

Don't you ever tell friends when you require money? Never. We tell them what was needed has come. We never mention earthly needs until they have been supplied.

What about books like the one called 'Nor Scrip'? Nothing was written for many years about needs and supplies, and yet all needs were supplied. Then that small book was written to show the goodness of the Lord to His children. It was written, as we believe, in obedience to Him. Since then similar books have been written at His command. In fifty years, five have been written. None tells of needs unsupplied. They give an account of our stewardship.

Do you authorize anyone anywhere to tell of needs? No.

Do you ever borrow money? No.

Have you ever been in debt? No. [...] By the grace of His loving-kindness, we have never been in debt.

Have you ever received Government grants? Never.

Why not? Because to receive such money would involve obedience to others.

Why do you not feel free to ask help from others? There are four chief reasons: (1) About ten years before the Starry Cluster was formed, the one who led it had found that it was enough to ask our heavenly Father, to send what was required for the work; (2) It is a serious thing to incur the responsibility to spend money. We did not want to incur this responsibility unless we were certain the Lord intended us to do so; (3) [...] We trust that what is given for a heavenly reason will effect something for Eternity, whereas we cannot be sure that what is given for an earthly reason (for example, unwillingness to refuse a request) will do that; (4) We were very desirous not to draw anything to ourselves that should have gone to others.¹⁷⁹²

Amy asked for 'covering prayer', that all who came as a child to Dohnavur would grow up and be ready to serve the Lord, 'to sacrifice and serve without thought of earthly gain'.

And we ask for prayer for all upon whom the responsibility will rest that they may be empowered by the mighty God of Jacob and so filled with love that they will never be tired out of loving.¹⁷⁹³

Money matters have always been a real issue in mission work and among missionaries. People like Hudson Taylor and George Müller and many others were convinced that mission work was a work of the Holy Spirit, and had to be done without the lure of financial gain. Not only converts were looking for such gain, But also money could easily be misused in Christian work.¹⁷⁹⁴ Hudson Taylor and Amy were

1790. In Dohnavur letter, January 1916, no. 1 [PRONI D/4061/30/1].

1791. *Nor Scrip*, 61 and 74.

1792. In *The Starry Cluster*, 6 and 7.

1793. *Meal in a Barrel*, 134.

1794. It may be said to be somewhat over the top when Griffith John, LMS pioneer missionary to Hankow, China, wrote: 'Money has been a real curse to the missionary work in China, and when it is introduced, however small the sum may be,

very accurate in their records of income and expenditure, aiming to be as fully transparent as possible. The principle of 'tent-making ministry' was a biblical principle for her, but also for the growing family: there were many mouths to be filled, and the babies needed special care; every month a certain amount was needed. Especially during World War II, when letters with money could easily get lost, people in the West needed a lot for themselves and due to the exchange rate they had lost half their money, yet people in the towns and the villages began to say: 'God is there'.¹⁷⁹⁵ A little Dohnavur child told Amy: 'Our Joseph never dies'. In those difficult years in and after World War I the books of the China Inland Mission 'were meat and drink to us. [...] We had the unflinching strength of mighty promises'.¹⁷⁹⁶ For them it was a time of walking over the water, looking to Jesus alone. From all over the world prayer friends brought the Fellowship for the Lord. For Amy their faithfulness was for Amy part of the gold cord. It was not only Christian friends from all parts of India and outside, but also many civil servants in government offices treated the Fellowship well and understood its deep intentions. From 1913, The DF had a home secretary, Mrs Streeter. From Australia, Ireland and England people offered to come and assist Amy. Who appointed them? 'It is the master of the field, not we, who must appoint workers by prayer. The field is the world. And prayer can fly over borders and hedges.' Late in 1912 R.T. Archibald came to Dohnavur, a man from the CSSM who had talked about prayer to the children and taught the importance of prayer and how to practise it. Was not the work of the CSSM in Harrogate an instrument in God's hand to bring Amy, when she was a student there, to the saving knowledge of Christ?

In the beginning, she had felt the agony of what would happen if no money for the provision of the children came. Then with her helpers of the first hour, Ponnamal and Sellamuthu, both members of the Women's Itinerating Band, a sign from God made it clear they had to continue. They had had to pay a 100 rupees for a child in real danger, whom they had saved. God let them know he would take care of the children, and if not? Suppose the children would die, and they all died with them; the Christian world would cry shame on the one responsible, but what would it matter after all? 'The children will be in heaven, and is that not better than in the temple?'¹⁷⁹⁷ There was not only the fear that there would be no money to feed the children, but also the fear of expenditure of the money. She deliberated a lot before the Ford car was bought! First she had thought it was 'anything so un-Eastern' to have a Ford. Gradually her thoughts were led from 'no' to 'yes', in which process she was led by the Bible and – she described it very extensively – in the end she thanked the Lord for the Ford, such a big help for the DF in evangelistic and medical work. The car, bought in Travancore, rode along the roads with its flag flying, 'Jesus saves, Jesus loves' and it became a familiar car to the people who called it the Car of the Flag.¹⁷⁹⁸ From the very beginning of the Fellowship Amy had learned the wholesome lesson:

[N]ot to look to men or woman, but to God, the living God, for the continuation as well as for the beginning of everything; and we never thought of any gift as something which might be repeated.¹⁷⁹⁹

.....
 (footnote 1794 continues ...)

a certain amount of rottenness must follow'. Personally he had seen much abuse of money, but one can say that, in the case of the CIM (now OMF) and within the Dohnavur Fellowship, money matters are seen in the spiritual realm and in receiving as well as in and spending it is seen as receiving and spending 'God's money'.

1795. *Gold Cord*, 123. 'We have never had to labour to prove that He hears and answers prayer; the fact of our existence witnesses that it is so.' Amy quotes Hudson Taylor: 'God's work done in God's way, will never lack God's supplies, and in our much smaller undertakings we have proved it so, too'. *Gold Cord*, 125–126.

1796. *Gold Cord*, 124.

1797. *Nor Scrip*, 6–7.

1798. See Chapter XIX, *Tables in the Wilderness*, 109–118.

1799. *Ponnamal*, 83.

Her banking account was in heaven; she laid up her confidence in God, not in the common sense. When in letters she was asked 'What is your greatest need?' And 'How are your needs supplied?' she always answered, 'our greatest need now – and always – is earnest, fervent prayer.'¹⁸⁰⁰ Again:

God sends His ravens. We have no provision made for us except what we share with the birds and the flowers; but it has never failed us. [...] Most of our ravens fly to us by way of the daily post.¹⁸⁰¹ The postman is 'a sort of visible Raven' [...] but everything is under one supreme control.¹⁸⁰²

About 1921 a very large gift was given and though they were in great need of this money, Amy felt it was not correct to keep it. 'It had not been sent to us at the bidding of God, but because of the pressure of a friend.' She sent the money back. The cheque came again and again it was returned. 'Was it folly to return it?'. At the very end, it worked out perfectly, but this incident shows how sensitive Amy was in money matters.¹⁸⁰³ Amy did not adopt children on a monetary basis, but she accepted anyone who was willing to adopt a little one as a prayer child. It satisfied the natural desire to have a child especially of one's own, and the bond was strong because it was forged not of gold that perished, but of that which endured and would endure till eternity. Amy encouraged women from nearby villages to come and serve in the Fellowship. Jobs were offered for cleaning, feeding the children and serving in the hospital. She expected them to work and only then remunerated them.¹⁸⁰⁴

No one on earth had authorized the work; no one, then, could in fairness be counted responsible. But if, as we believed, our Father in Heaven had laid His commandments upon us, to Him we had a right to look for all that was needed for the carrying out of those commands; so that our only care was to be attentive to His wishes.¹⁸⁰⁵

Many friends from all over the world had the Fellowship on their prayer list and regularly sent gifts. Few of the friends were rich; mostly people gave from their small income or left a legacy. Going through the books, we see most gifts were small:

These little loving gifts fall like small snowflakes, very quietly, without observation, like the daily little love gifts of sweet airs and sunshine and cold water that we should miss so much if we had to do without them.¹⁸⁰⁶

Amy never went into debt, 'debt is a sin'.¹⁸⁰⁷ There were periods when monthly income was very low, but Amy knew where she had to look for help. In her living with God, she laid everything in his hands, and throughout all the years she learned not to focus on money and food problems, but to rely on God's promises and thus make it God's problem.

The spending of money was a serious business. 'We do not want to have more money to spend than we are authorized to use.'¹⁸⁰⁸ Depending on the faithfulness of God in all situations was one of the

1800. *The Beginning of a Story*, 16 Here she refers to Bishop Moule's *Collossian Studies*. Prayer is the 'Christian vital breath'; 'Spiritual watchfulness generally, as against the *coma* of the world' [Chapter 4, 2].

1801. *The Beginning of a Story*, 17: 'We rely upon the verses which assure us that our Father knows our needs, and we take it that with such a Father, to know is to supply.'

1802. *The Beginning of a Story*, 18.

1803. For this story, see *Tables in the Wilderness*, Chapter I, 1 – 6.

1804. Told by Nesaruthina Carunia to B. Matthews, 07 June 2006. In Matthews, 'The Theological Contribution of Amy Carmichael', 28.

1805. *Ponnamal*, 84.

1806. *Cold Cord*, 323.

1807. *Things As They Are*, 211.

1808. *The Continuation of a Story*, 35.

foundational tenets of their faith. To have a loving heavenly Father ‘whose faithful provision’ you trust, means trusting his Word. Did not Jesus say: ‘If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given to you?’¹⁸⁰⁹ We can describe Amy’s walk of faith with the words of Spurgeon as ‘an experience of habitual hanging upon the unseen God and nothing else’.¹⁸¹⁰ Like the ones she saw as her examples, she believed she had the right and privilege to rely on the promises of God.

Faith in God led her to roll all her burdens upon him, and if necessary God’s ravens would feed the Fellowship. They went with no promise of salary but with a certainty of precious fellowship in the sufferings of Christ. As Malachi 3 reminded her:

And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.¹⁸¹¹

The dark clouds of risk and uncertainty might loom on the horizon, but trust in the Lord ensured anxiety-free joy. Trusting God meant making difficult choices, undertaking risky ventures or making costly renunciations. Trusting God when all seemed impossible was the pathway to great blessing.

As she had done in her involvement in mission within the context of her own culture, Amy lived a life of faith in India and was very much dependent upon God to supply her need. She was dedicated in her devotional and prayer life and she sought to encourage fellow workers to do likewise. Truly, the way in which Amy related Christian mission to her life context is of great importance for the missionary praxis of our 21st century. Indeed, her writings continue to influence and inspire the lives of many individuals in relation to Christian mission and the key elements required for it have an impact upon society. Asked ‘are you ever anxious about finances?’, she replied:

No, not anxious, but we feel that we must ‘walk softly’, and be guided in all our spendings, remembering that what is sent to us to use is sacred. We are very conscious that our Father does not hold Himself responsible for anything except for that which He wishes us to do; so we earnestly seek to be ‘careful in His Presence’, in all things sensitive towards Him and also in all things obedient. Also we often receive guidance through the Lord’s givings and withholdings.¹⁸¹²

God’s supplies never failed her. On the flyleaf of her account book Amy wrote ‘He hath shamed me with His kindness, and no words could more truly tell the story of the years’.¹⁸¹³ The life lived at Dohnavur was ‘care-less’ in the true sense of the word:

We are not careful for the provision of our needs. We are only careful lest we grieve the Spirit who directs us, by any unholiness of walk or character, or by any mistake as to His purposes.¹⁸¹⁴

Amy’s faith always relied on God in spite of all the confusions and temptations. She was a living illustration of the reality of the Scripture, resting in the promises of God, that he would provide and a

1809. John 15:7.

1810. Cf. A.T. Pierson, *George Müller of Bristol* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1999 [1899]), 82. Also George Müller, *The Autobiography* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1984).

1811. Malachi 3:10.

1812. *The Starry Cluster*, 14.

1813. *The Continuation of a Story*, 35.

1814. *The Continuation of a Story*, 36.

fulfilment of the promise made to those who had first given themselves to the Lord. 'My God shall supply all your needs.'¹⁸¹⁵ Howard Somervell said:

Nobody could possibly be in touch with Miss Carmichael and the work of the Dohnavur Fellowship in South India without seeing that prayer is answered again and again, often in unmistakable and specific ways.¹⁸¹⁶

God had made her a woman with a single motive, a single eye to the glory of God. God was enough for her, and when someone told her that without a mission organisation behind her, she could not go on, she just replied 'We have God. [...] Wars in the world make no difference to God'. And to the question: 'This way of counting on him, was it safe?' the answer was 'You will see that it is safe. [...] Is there anything more helpful than just to find out what more He can do?'¹⁸¹⁷ Once a week there was an 'angels' finance meeting':

Once a week those who are responsible for the use of the money sent to us, gather for the angels' finance meeting (as we call it), 'angels' because we believe that they have an interest in our accounts, and let no one think this is too small a matter to interest them [...] We pray then for supplies and for direction about the spending of what is entrusted to us; and we pray for the givers, and also for any who have been givers and are now in need themselves. We pray that they having watered others may themselves be watered.¹⁸¹⁸

For everything, much time is spent on the knees for:

[I]f we first seek the Kingdom of God, as much money will come for God's work as He will. If our treasure and our hearts are in heaven, to give earthly treasure will seem but a small thing. Sacrifice is not the best line of approach. Those who have formed the habit of simple living, and regular, liberal, unostentatious giving, are not conscious of making sacrifices. They are simply contributing money to what their heart loves best.¹⁸¹⁹

In a true sense, Amy lets us know that the life in Dohnavur was 'care-less', and she was grateful that the full accent of the work was on the rescue work for the children and that she was not bothered day to day by financial issues:

We are not careful for the provision of our needs. We are only careful lest we grieve the Spirit who directs us, by any unholiness of walk or character, or by any mistake as to His purposes. We are often grateful that financial burdens are never allowed to press, for the cares and anxieties of other kinds we have many.¹⁸²⁰

Never in the existence of the DF was a child left unsaved or unfed because of lack of money or fear that there was not enough for the future. Never was a bill ever left unpaid. Soon after the war, when the pound had fallen in value until it appeared to be about to dwindle away altogether, there was a night when Amy walked up and down the verandah in the moonlight, thinking of the children. She said: 'For once the unearthly beauty failed to rest me, and I found myself saying aloud, "But, Lord, the children cannot live on moonlight", for she knew that real faith believes not only that God *can*, but that He *will*.'¹⁸²¹ And ever the Lord has been faithful. He assured the Fellowship members that he had their matters in hand.

1815. Philippians 4:19.

1816. Somervell, *After Everest*, 35.

1817. See *Nor Scrip*, 38 and 22. Cf. what she wrote: 'Never once in fifteen years has a bill been left unpaid. Never once has man or woman been told when we were in need of help; but never once have we lacked any good thing' (*Nor Scrip*, 11).

1818. *Windows*, 19.

1819. This is a quotation from W.K. Lowther Clarke's *Almsgiving: A Handbook*, which Amy read (*Windows*, 226).

1820. In *The Continuation of a Story*, 36–37.

1821. *Gold Cord*, 124; *Nor Scrip*, 46.

■ Faith deepened through trials

Talking about faith, Amy, rooted in the Scriptures, saw in Abraham the type of believer she was looking for. She studied Biblical commentaries, and in one of them she read about Abraham's belief and underlined this sentence:

A faith, which laid hold of the word of promise, and on the strength of that word gave up the visible and present for the invisible and the future, was the fundamental characteristic of the patriarchs. This faith Abraham manifested and sustained by great sacrifices, by enduring patience, and by self-denying obedience of such a kind, that he thereby became the father of believers.¹⁸²²

The Pauline adage that the righteous lives by faith¹⁸²³ was deep in her heart. That was what connected her so closely with the mystic Madame de Guyon. In one of Guyon's letters – and Amy made a mark in the margin – we read:

The greatest wrong you can do to God, is to doubt His love. [...] Do not afflict yourself because you do not at all times realize a sensible confidence in God, and other consoling, happy states. Walk by faith and not by sight.¹⁸²⁴ It is true that our Lord and Redeemer calls us to a crucified life; but He calls to a great joy too, and it comes by way of the Cross. And there is something beyond that; there is a peace that cannot be understood till it is tasted, and it comes when all questions about life, its discipline and its guidance cease, and we cannot be offended in Him who is the joy and rejoicing of our hearts.

Amy wrote these words¹⁸²⁵ after Linnet's very difficult life and the way the Lord had led her to faith and after Linnet's baptism:

Linnet's story, like Mimosa's, has helped us to hope. [...] If we take courage to expect, we shall have crushing disappointments sometimes, but often we shall find. And we shall tap deep wells. We shall discover a power and abandon of love to our blessed Lord Jesus that overflows our poverty of faith. Not the emotion of a moment, but the passion of a lifetime, this is what the Lord our God can effect, if only we rise to His thought.¹⁸²⁶

One day Amy was reading in her Bible, and these words were for her:

Unto you it is *given* in the behalf of Christ to suffer for His sake. [*And*] unto me, who am less than the least, is this grace *given* that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ'. *Given to suffer, Given to serve*. Is there not a connection between the two? Had He not called us to follow Him through the very shadow of death, where He keeps His treasures of darkness.¹⁸²⁷

For the last 20 years of her life, Amy, due to an accident, suffered a physical affliction. Often unable to move around she wrote many books, some especially for the comfort of others. The fortune of misfortune, so to say, was her way of looking at her 'captivity'. She did not want the children and the other people in Dohnavur to be depressed on her account, or even to imagine that her situation hindered

1822. In C.F. Keil & F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary of The Old Testament*, vol. I (Edinburg: T & T. Clark, n.d.), 183. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1823. Romans 1:17.

1824. In M.W. Moorhead (ed.), *The Spiritual Letters of Madame Guyon* (Milwaukee: The Gospel Message Publishing House, 1898), 66.

1825. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 87.

1826. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 91.

1827. *From Sunrise Land*, 28.

God's purpose. Like Paul, she could see it to be 'for the furtherance of the Gospel'.¹⁸²⁸ The very things that looked so disastrous turned out to be the most opportune. Moreover, for her, this suffering was 'fellowship with His suffering'.¹⁸²⁹ She agreed with Thomas Walker who used to say: 'Those who have been pierced with the thorns from their dear Lord's crown will be very indifferent to all other thorns'.¹⁸³⁰ She did not want people to focus on her physical suffering. Seeing it in the light of Christ's sufferings, she destroyed every element of self-pity and of self-interest. Being Christ-centred in her life, she had lost all interest in herself in an absorbing passionate interest in Christ. Is not tried faith the pure gold? Her life got stronger because in this 'desert' Amy's life was deep-rooted in God while he spelled out for her the ABC of what the Cross of Christ meant. Are not the sufferings of the sanctified caused by growing into the idea of the will of God? He did not spare his own son, and he does not spare his sanctified ones from the requirements of saint-ship. Amy once quoted an unknown author, who said 'ye will not get leave to steal quietly to heaven, in Christ's company, without a conflict and a cross' and she added:

[E]ven so, even though we must walk in the land of fear, there is no need to fear. The power of His resurrection comes before the fellowship of His sufferings.¹⁸³¹

Amy knew that jewels are made only under hard pressure, and very poignantly she once wrote in her Bible: 'God setteth in Pain the Jewel of His Joy'.¹⁸³² Amy often wondered 'Do we ask enough of ourselves?' She quoted Brenton Thoburn Badley's thinking of what Christ had suffered for us to redeem us:

Lord, when I'm weary with toiling,
And burdensome seem Thy commands,
If my load should lead to complaining,
Lord show me Thy hands-
Thy nail-printed hands. Thy cross-torn hands-
My Saviour, show me Thy hands.

Christ, if ever my footsteps should falter,
And I be prepared for retreat.
if desert and thorn cause lamenting,
Lord, show me Thy feet-
Thy bleeding feet, Thy nail-scarred feet-
Lord Jesus, show me Thy feet.
O God, dare I show Thee, My hands and my feet?¹⁸³³

Is there a reason for difficulties, hardships, opposition, sufferings? Was there a reason for the accident Amy had? She saw there must have been a reason for this break in all her plans. She could see it in God's light. 'Changing the *D* of *disappointment* into an *H* makes everything right'.¹⁸³⁴ For her the presence of the Lord was her strength and joy. She had the gift of healing but was very reluctant to practise it and never set up a ministry of healing. She made use of doctors and of medicines and even was the driving force to get a hospital on the compound.

1828. See Philippians 1:15.

1829. See Philippians 3:10.

1830. See *This One Thing*, 126.

1831. *Gold by Moonlight*, 16.

1832. In Amy's Bible (1895), written above Psalm 22.

1833. In *The Widow of the Jewels*, 92.

1834. *From Sunrise Land*, 57.

Mostly bedridden, she managed to lead the Fellowship through prayer, talks and books. There was full surrender to God and total trust in him in her painful experiences. Whatever crisis marked her inner life – we know something of it but it is not given to us to know much – Amy did not reckon the momentum of her life to lie in any experience from the past, but ever thought to maintain a living fellowship with God. He needed her weakness. She learned that the Keswick teaching had left an unforgettable impression on her and several times she had evidence of following what had happened there. It was in 1897 that Evan Hopkins had said in one of his prayers ‘Give us a divine conscience about keeping our time with Thee untouched’. Evan Hopkins was fond of the antithesis ‘crisis and process’ and, undoubtedly, there was signal deliverance in Amy’s experience. The DF went through several crises, but no one’s life more clearly illustrated the *process* of abiding in Christ and of faith continually exercised towards God and expressing itself towards the people in works of love. Keswick had given her the practical bend of mind, ever drawn to real things, and ever intent on getting things done, which wrapped her in the Keswick teaching. This made it that her life’s work in India was authenticated among the Tamil people. Clearly we see expressed her communion with God in the daily short notes she gave to the Fellowship members.¹⁸³⁵ Many times Amy had the experience of God’s peace after her eyes had been drawn away from all the problems, difficulties and pain to his eternal love for her and the Fellowship, as described in Ruth Graham’s poem:

And I lay, where for long in despair I had lain,
 entered, unshod, the holy,
 there where God dwells with His pain-
 alone with pain of the price He had paid
 in giving His Son for a world gone astray-
 the world He had made.
 My heart lay in silence,
 worshipped in silence; and questioned no more.¹⁸³⁶

■ Practical: Contextualisation of a mission vision

Amy found a way to contextualise her mission vision in what was apt and truly functional. Shelter and safety is combined with longing that focuses on Christian initiation and Christian discipleship. This kind of evangelism is not a casual ministry. This work was a ministry to the faint-hearted, the ignorant, the emotionally unstable, or the spiritually immature. It required costly sacrifices, deep compassion for the lost, intense intercession, flexible methods, the capacity to withstand hostile opposition, and serious personal engagement. Failure on any of these fronts would have had serious consequences. This work was intimately related to a firm grasp of the Gospel, a robust vision of Christian initiation, and radical openness to the Holy Spirit, all done in practice through a healthy doctrinal tradition. Amy longed for Christians who were natural, ‘as children are at home’. She hoped that the new converts would never learn ‘the cold reserve of grown-up Christendom’.¹⁸³⁷ How to prepare oneself to the work! A letter, in which she refers to her sister Eva who was in training for missionary work in South Africa, gives us some insight in her thoughts about this issue:

God knows what He is preparing for her in darkest Africa, so He knows how to do the preparing work. The great lesson we can’t learn too well is that of adaptability – the faculty of fitting oneself quite happily into one’s

1835. Collected in *Edges of His Ways, Whispers of His Power, Thou Givest ... They Gather*.

1836. R. Bell Graham, *Ruth Bell Graham’s Collected Poems* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997), 275.

1837. *From Sunrise Land*, 166.

circumstances, be they ever so uncomfortable and changeable. [...] I would advise missionary candidates to practise balancing themselves on pinpoints – it will all come in useful!¹⁸³⁸

In all the aforementioned characteristics, we see what had been learned from the Gospel in the little church of Ballycopeland where the Gospel was preached for heart and hand. Amy's life story is one of practical mission work done in a practical way. This God-gifted woman used all her talents for the sake of the Gospel. We see in her a characteristic of holiness which is no less the outcome of the indwelling of God than a blazing truthfulness with regard to God's Word, and an amazing tenderness in personal dealings. She never forgot to be the broken bread and the poured-out wine for the lifting up of the children of India in making God known to them and in being there to rescue them from a life of shame and death. She always placed God's methods first. Foolish to those who do not know God but right in the eyes of her God. A disciple had to learn to follow only and all the visions God's children may have had were not always woven into the texture of the life the Lord had prepared for them. Learning the implications of the 'Yes Lord' was to die of oneself and to give up the right of making one's own decisions. Just look to Jesus. The shaping of the DF was not settled in a meeting, but a succession of experiences shaped themselves into what became the pattern of the Fellowship.¹⁸³⁹ The Dohnavur Fellowship became a model of Christian living. However not perfect, the growing community had few parallels in modern times for the unity, prayer and love that emanated from it. The following quotation, taken from a little manuscript Amy wrote for some of her closest co-labourers, shows that Amy's heart was for all of Dohnavur:

We are trusted to spread the spirit of love. Tenderness in judgment, the habit of thinking the best of one another, unwillingness to believe evil, grief if we are forced to do so, eagerness to believe good, joy over one recovered from any slip or fall, unselfish gladness in another's joys, sorrow in another's sorrow, readiness to do anything to help another entirely irrespective of self- all this and much more is included in that wonderful word love. If love weakens among us, if it ever becomes possible to tolerate the least shadow of an unloving thought, our Fellowship will begin to perish. Unlove is deadly. It is a cancer. It may kill slowly but it always kills in the end. Let us fear it, fear to give room to it as we should fear to nurse a cobra. It is deadlier than any cobra. And just as one minute drop of the almost invisible cobra venom spreads swiftly all over the body of one into whom it has been injected, so one drop of the gall of unlove in my heart or yours, however unseen, has a terrible power of spreading all through our Family, for we are one body – we are parts of one another. If one member suffers loss, all suffer loss. Not one of us lives to herself.¹⁸⁴⁰

1838. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 78.

1839. See *Roots*, 2. 'Each little incident offered something which went towards the forging of a principle.'

1840. Unpublished paper in the DF office in Dohnavur.

The enduring missionary

The first long look of an old missionary, into the eyes of the young missionary, has always behind it, I suppose, the same thought, Will he endure to the end? Will she? I often marvel at the courage of these young ones, of these I mean who satan in the spiritual vanguard in this or in other land. It is true, of course, that no one knows, as he crosses over the gangway to his ship for the first voyage, to what he is crossing over. Even so, I marvel. What is it that grips the heart of the story, of a valiant life? Not the achievements, not the renown, but what was endured without flinching.

Often one misses this note in a book: that which would make the book vital is just not there.

Though The Mountains Shake.

'I have but one candle of life to burn, and I would rather burn it out where men are dying in darkness than in a land flooded with light'.

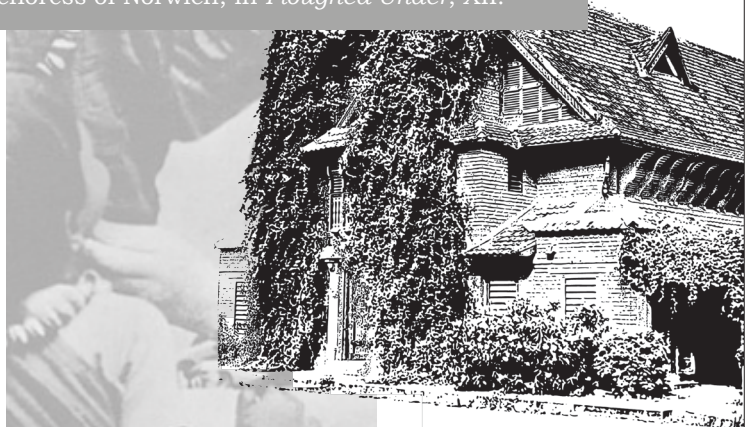
From the Fight, 59.

'Christ the Son of God hath sent me through the midnight lands, Mine the mighty ordination of the pierced Hands'.

Mrs Bevan.

'Yet again the soul breaks away to its own, with the natural flight of a bird from its Autumn nest at the call of an unseen Spring, to the far-off land that is nearer still than the nest, because it is in its heart'.

Julian, anchoress of Norwich, in *Ploughed Under*, XII.



The Missionary: ‘I was sent, so speak’ (1)

■ ‘Grace to help in time of need’

Amy Carmichael was a missionary in south India, initially working – from 1895 – with the CEZMS and from 1926 as an independent; she was also the founder of the un-denominational Dohnavur Fellowship in Tinnevely district. She realised that the Indians in the Tinnevely district not only would receive the Gospel through the traditionally proved evangelism tools of itinerant proclamation and persuasion, but she also employed a combination of direct evangelism with deeds of love, and literature, all undergirded by a lifestyle of nearness, love and encouragement. As illustrated throughout the book she continuously crossed the by then settled boundaries. Raised in a Victorian environment, her active mission work continued several years after the Edwardian era, yet she kept high several Victorian ideals, while also pushing Victorian boundaries. She absorbed the conviction that a life in service to God and to womanhood was more valuable than fulfilling the Victorian ideals of marriage, motherhood, and domestic bliss.

As she felt to be called by God she claimed her religious authority directly from God rather than any earthly authority. Many times in her life, as we have seen, she took decisions after having consulted the Word of God. So she was not afraid of crossing and challenging national and ethnic boundaries to indulge herself in a complete acculturation to a non-Western society. She brought things meant to be kept secret in a religious sphere out into the public world and by her pen, she brought the life and the culture of south India into the fashionable British and other countries’ homes. She did not run away from situations that were very hard. She not only saw things happening without lamenting over it, but she was one who stepped into the gap and tried to change the situation.

She did this in the starting of the Welcome in Belfast, the work in the slums of Manchester and in south India where she could not bear children to go on perishing:

O God, forgive us if we are too hot, too sore at heart, for easy pleasantness! And, God, raise up in India Christian statesmen who will inquire into this matter, and refuse to be blindfolded and deceived. His laws and ours clash somewhere; the question is, where?¹⁸⁴¹

Her drive, which she had in common with many other missionaries, to spread Christian faith ultimately had an impact on mission thinking in the first half of the 20th century. She is remembered as the founder of the Dohnavur Fellowship and this Fellowship was a real pioneering idea of saving little children in danger. In her time, this was a radical idea and the implementation would have far-reaching consequences for the social and religious order. She had to do it, commissioned, as she believed, by God. But it is one thing to hatch a plan after many years of research, and quite another to carry it out. And carry it out Amy did! Amy, with a grand independence of soul, was a woman of strong convictions, but not a doctrinaire missiologist obsessed with academic considerations:

Her burden for the lost was too great to permit her such intellectual luxuries. In the spirit of the One Who came to seek and to save the lost, she gave her life unhesitatingly in His great service.¹⁸⁴²

During her 56 years in the south of India, she pioneered means and methods to reach the south Indian people, which, in retrospect will be considered to be 100 years ahead of her time. Day by day, decade upon decade, through the seasons of her life, Amy 'looked' with 'heart sight' as well as 'eye sight' in words and in the Dohnavur Fellowship, her observations filtered through her communion with her heavenly Father: God working out his purposes on a land and in a people.

I trust we are all sufficiently aware of our missionary debts to her. Her footprints are visible all over her mission work and mission theory. Amy's creative achievements were the books she wrote and the Fellowship she started in Dohnavur. Books and the Fellowship are complementary. In the one, her mission ideas are scattered all over; in the other it is systematically applied. The modern-day reader will note how, repeatedly, Amy stresses that the aim of mission is to restore humankind to God and to exalt Christ in the lives of those who first were under the dominion of the evil one. Her intent is always pastoral, arising out of a concern for the well-being of men and women, eager to see that men and women would see the secret of eternal happiness:

Soon we had a crowd of men at one side of the large well; the other side they left open for the women who came with their water-vessels, let down their palm-leaf baskets, drew up the water, poured into their vessels and moved off without taking much notice of us. The splash of the water hardly seemed to matter in that wide open air. It did not distract our hearers, so it did not disturb us. And we searched the faces before us to find the face of a seeker. [...] We had prayed to be led to souls prepared; we had not, so far as we knew, found one yet. It mattered tremendously that these people who were so near us now, and yet so far away, should know the true God and Jesus Christ whom He had sent. Nothing else really mattered. And thoughts of India's millions who are though the Saviour of the world had never died on Calvary, had never risen, was never to return, swept over me.¹⁸⁴³

Most profoundly emerges before our eyes a spiritual reality of hers: a vision of the invisible. Frances Bacon wrote, 'God has two textbooks – Scripture and Creation – we would do well to listen to both'. Amy 'listened' to both. In the early hours of each day, she studied Scripture. The many annotations in her Bible and in commentaries from her hand are proof of this. *Daily Light* was also a true companion and many devotional works were read by her to hear God's voice. In reading God's Word, the Creator nourished her beauty-loving spirit as well as her God-loving soul. From the Bible she drew lessons for

1841. 'She couldn't ignore the issue, believing that with knowledge comes responsibility' (in Williamson, *Amy Carmichael*, 53).

1842. In F.S. Leahy, *Great Conversions* (Belfast: Ambassador, 1998), 110.

1843. *Ploughed Under*, 25 and 27.

her personally as well as for design and processes of the DF. Her books and poems are filled with lessons learned from the natural world, and her language is laced with such expressions as ‘the daisies have been reading me’.

Stamped on every page of her books and letters we see a woman fully immersed in the practical realities of strenuous everyday Fellowship life even as she is totally engaged in assimilating these realities through an eternal perspective. It is from the tension of these two realities, the seen and the unseen, that hard spiritual truths and lessons are hammered out, which in one or another way appeared in her life and work. Everything is organised under the great unifying themes of her life: Light, Life and Love. She continually integrated the world around her with the verities of the unseen, as is seen in the following text:

The holy beauty of moonlight in India is such that the heart is carried away to the moonlit garden where, very early in the morning, the women came bringing the spices which they had prepared, and found the Lord of Life had risen. After Calvary, after that strange visit to the spirits in prison, did our dear Lord find (as we so often do) thoughts of peace in the pure moonlight? That same holy peace, that air of purity, was about us then. [...] And yet how sweet and simple it was: The soul breaks away to its own, with the natural flight of a bird from its Autumn nest, and the call of an unseen Spring, to the far-off land that is nearer still than its nest, because it is in its heart. [...] I am told by one, wise in the way of birds, that young birds do fly alone. The old birds do not show them the way to the land across the sea. How do they find it, then? How did the bird of this story¹⁸⁴⁴ find the land of her heart's desire? God helps us to reckon with a more courageous confidence on the infinite power of Love to direct the flight of His birds. For the call does not come from nowhere. It is the pledge to the bird that across the sea lies the Summer (for if there were no Summer, there would be no call) and it flies in a sure faith. This is the mystery of the call of Christ to a human soul, even though it be only the soul of a child. [...] There is a power that is not of earth about these stories. For searching or for strengthening they find the soul just where it is, and do their mighty work. They are far more than stories, just as the words of our Scripture are far more than words. That is why we do at times find something, perhaps quite simple and familiar, shine forth as though illuminated in gold and precious colours. For so are we given, by the mercy of the Lord, grace to help in time of need.¹⁸⁴⁵

She personally felt responsible for the salvation of the people. In meeting the people you have:

[T]o yearn over them, and pray for them as souls who must live eternally somewhere, and for whom each of us, in our measure, is responsible to God. [...] Are we coming, giving, praying till it hurts? [...] Let us be still for a moment and think. Christ counted souls worth Calvary. What do we count them worth?¹⁸⁴⁶

With her long missionary experience she could give young recruits good advice and she quoted from one of the letters of an Indian missionary, Louise Benedict Pierson. It is a warrior's message to a brother, a comrade-to-be:

I write words for you to ponder and pray over. Do not go to any foreign field until you know beyond a doubt that God has Himself sent you to that particular field at that particular time. There is a romance or halo about being a missionary, which disappears when you get on the field, I assure you. And, believe me, from the first moment you step upon shipboard upon your way to the field, the devil and all his agents will attack, and entice, and ensnare you, or try to do all these, in order to defeat the purpose for which you cut loose and

1844. The child here is the little lover Arulai Tara, Star of Grace. Her story is in *Ploughed Under*.

1845. *Ploughed Under*, 89, 90 and 91. Interesting here is her quotation of Wilson of the Antarctic, Scott's companion: 'A happy life is not built up of tours abroad and pleasant holidays, but of little clumps of violets by the roadside, hidden away almost, so that only those can see them who have God's peace and love in their hearts; in one long continuous chain of little joys; little whispers from the spiritual world; little gleams of sunshine on our daily work' (in *Ploughed Under*, 82–83).

1846. In *Things As They Are*, 271, 272.

launched out. Nothing but the fullness of the Holy Spirit will carry anyone through; and if you do not know that you have received this, do not fail to obey the command to 'tarry until you be endued with power from on high'. Believe me, the foreign field is already full enough of prophets that have run, and He did not send them. If you know beyond a doubt and you may that God is empowering and sending you there, and now, go and fear not; and when, through the days, months, and years of suffering, that are sure to be in this cross-bearing life, the question arises again and again, 'Why is this? Am I in God's plan and path?' The rock to which you will hold in this sea of questions and distresses is, 'God sent me here, I know beyond a doubt; therefore I may go on fearing nothing, for He is responsible, and He alone'. But if you have to admit, 'I do not know whether He sent me or not', you will be thrown into an awful distress of mind by the attacks of the great adversary, not knowing what will be the outcome, and you will find yourself crying out, 'Oh that it were time to go home. What a fool I was to run ahead of the Lord'. Do not think, my brother, that God sends us to the field sweetly to tell the story of Jesus, and that is all. He sends us there to do what Jesus came into the world to do to bear the cross. But we will be able to trudge on, though bowed under the weight of that cross of suffering, and even of shame, if our hearts are full of Him, and our eyes are ever looking upon the One who is invisible, the One who sent us forth, and therefore will carry us through. Forgive me for writing so plainly. I pray that this message may shake in you all that can be shaken, that that which cannot be shaken may remain firm as the Rock of Ages.¹⁸⁴⁷

And when on the field a lack of diligence was felt, she gave this advice:

The besetting sin of Evangelistic work is slackness. [...] If you want to see Duty spelt with a capital letter, go to a well-worked mission school. Such a visit is a tonic. Another tonic is to be found in another wing, the Medical. There you can study the opposite of your own defect, for a medical mission is nothing if it is not thorough. [...] Only the thorough succeeds. In our Evangelistic work, it is somewhat different. The result of a slack hour does not show at once. The stain it leaves on the conscience, the absence of something that might have been wrought in another soul, these are symptoms of decline often invisible to our eyes. Only God and the sorrowful Angels read them aright from the first.¹⁸⁴⁸

■ The interposition of God

To get an indication of Amy's thoughts about mission we have to see that her missiology is woven through her books and letters. This means that her mission thoughts were always wrapped around with the greetings and thanksgivings, the prayers and the praise, personal explanations and day-to-day happenings in Dohnavur. She connected her mission thoughts with the practicalities and all kinds of little things of human relationships. Never were her thoughts about mission complex and high-flown. It was from first to last an attempt to make sense of the Gospel as she understood it. It was the key to everyday life and in Dohnavur it made practical daily living possible, which was Christian through and through.

Amy's book that most seized her readers and had such a tremendous impact is *Lotus Buds*. It is in this book that she expresses her deepest motivation for mission. The question of the last chapter, also for her personally when she wrote the book, asks for an answer. *What if she misses her chance?*¹⁸⁴⁹ She portrays herself at the fireside in a country house. No doubt she sees herself in Broughton Grange, where 'curled up in a roomy arm-chair by the fire sits a girl with a kitten asleep on her lap. She is

1847. *Overweights of Joy*, 57–59.

1848. *Overweights of Joy*, 60–61.

1849. Chapter XXXVI of *Lotus Buds*, 335–341.

reading a missionary book'.¹⁸⁵⁰ In this autographic chapter, she reveals her thoughts while she is thinking for many of her contemporaries who may think the Lord needs them in his service. Questions such as 'Where does the Master need me?', 'What is the cost?', 'How far out of its selfish track does it move a life into ways of sacrifice?' Did not Calvary cost? For that girl it is important that if there is a readiness for God, 'a pure passion of love that knows nothing of hesitation and grudging, and measuring, nothing of compromise. [...] Let us have done with limitations, let us be simply sincere'.¹⁸⁵¹ At the time when the first children arrived in Dohnavur Amy was more and more aware that 'some Power beyond our own guided our footsteps'.¹⁸⁵² When in dark days, when everything seemed to be against her and against her work to rescue the children, others, in England and in India were praying for her. She learned the great lesson, even in the bitterness of defeat: to wait upon God. He alone, 'Divine interposition can save'.¹⁸⁵³ The worker who would come to India needed to be one whom no disappointment could discourage, a woman to whom the word had been spoken, 'Go, love, according to the love of the Lord'.¹⁸⁵⁴ Yet, *What if she misses her chance?* Amy stresses, that one cannot glorify in the work one has:

It will not lead to anything great, [...] but if the Call is a true Call from heaven, it will change to a song as she obeys. [...] And she will be sure – with the sureness that is just pure peace – that she is where her Master meant her to be.¹⁸⁵⁵

The Spirit of God in her gave her a worldwide outlook. Amy did not develop any explicit theory of mission. Only one small booklet, *God's Missionary*, written in 1939, systematically deals with mission and, however small, it straightforwardly seems to set an utterly impossible standard, explained in Jesus' own words: 'If you want to be My disciple, you must give up your right to yourself, take up the Cross, and follow Me'. Several chapters in *Overweights of Joy*¹⁸⁵⁶ also explicitly deal with mission strategy. Three years before she went to India, we see her in Japan and Ceylon. A record of her work in Japan is found in the many letters sent home, which were compiled in 1895 and eventually published under the title *From Sunrise Land*.¹⁸⁵⁷ In this book, we find valuable insight into how mission theory and practice are combined.

Amy's missiology is strongly related to the church work in south India and both Keswick and several evangelical church and mission leaders influenced her views. During her itinerant work with Thomas Walker in Tinnevely the preaching went along the Keswick lines. 'For nearly two years we have been preaching full salvation', the team writes from Pannaivilai where they were stationed at that time. Or in preaching to the people in Travancore it is 'that the people might be not only evangelized but perfected'

1850. *Lotus Buds*, 335. In one of the rare photos of Amy she sits in a chair with a kitten on her lap. The photo is taken in the garden of Broughton Grange.

1851. *Lotus Buds*, 336 and 337. 'To be filled with the Spirit means readiness for Him to take us out of our present sphere and put us anywhere away from our own choice into His choice for us' (p. 336).

1852. *Lotus Buds*, 307.

1853. *Lotus Buds*, 330.

1854. *Lotus Buds*, 338.

1855. *Lotus Buds*, 340.

1856. I here use the third edition [1908; first ed. 1906].

1857. I here use the first edition of 1895. This book from Stanford University library [California] was presented by Amy on 13 July 1895 to Mrs Hopkins, 'with Amy's love'. And on the front page she wrote, 'Ye also helping'.

and 'then for about one-and-a-half hours they listened in silence in the heat to a message about the Second Coming'.¹⁸⁵⁸ Before World War II, the behaviour of Christian missionaries in India was predominantly paternalistic. Almost unconsciously, mission work in India was regarded as part of the British Raj. The influence of Indian Christians in church work was practically nothing at all and Indian Christians were not allowed to be involved in decisions concerning church and missionary work. This prevented them from maturing in leadership and decision-making.

Just as in Japan and Ceylon, from the very beginning Amy worked closely together with her Indian sisters during her itinerant work. Her clothes were like theirs, and she ate and slept with them.

In Dohnavur she was the absolute leader, but she did it in close cooperation with Indian staff members, for example with Ponnamal, Kohila and Mimosa. She also emphasised that after her death the leadership of the DF should be entirely Indian.¹⁸⁵⁹ She was patient and offered help without condescension. In an environment hostile to the Christian faith Amy developed a Christian lifestyle and culture in harmony within an Indian setting and yet throughout Christian. She never forgot the purpose of the creation of the DF as a family: 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister'.¹⁸⁶⁰ With her whole heart, she had to be in Dohnavur for the children, 'those happy little-sunbirds'.¹⁸⁶¹ After she had been away for some days, on seeing the children again there:

[W]ere kisses and embraces so eager and so loving that we might have been parted for weeks. [...] We all went up to the house, and my tiredness fell from me in the happiness of being with the children again. It was one of those earthly pictures of heavenly things that cannot be forgotten. How many mothers every evening must cross the last stream, and be met by their own dear children who reached Home first.¹⁸⁶²

We can also readily discern the contours of her vision of mission from her practices and from the reports that are available. She clearly believed that a Christian has a calling in this world. She knew what she wanted. It would go too far to call her an obsessive-compulsive woman. An authoritarian personality a psychologist would say and reckoned with an unhealthy character to whose influence people trace a good deal of religious psychopathology.¹⁸⁶³ This Irish woman had a magnetic attitude: she could relax and she could be cheerful, but she was a fundamentally serious person, always having a Puritanical and stern side. She set high standards for herself, and she expected others to do likewise. Twenty-four hours a day committed to her work in Dohnavur, she could be critical of any not fully committed workers in God's vineyard.

We have to get past the hagiography and the appropriate praise and start coming to terms with the stark realities that lie at the core of Amy's thinking on mission. The salutary fact to notice at the very outset is this: it is a mission vision that Amy – as a child of her time – practised in Japan, Ceylon and India, and which saw a drastic decline in the second half of the 20th century.

She fathomed the native hostility in the human heart due to sin and believed the blood of Christ to be the only appropriate way to redeem those lost. It is the utter imperative to find the lost sheep and introduce them to the green pastures of the Gospel, and see to it that they are given the initial formation

1858. See *This One Thing*, 101, 111 and 114.

1859. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1860. *Gold Cord*, 326.

1861. *Ploughed Under*, 21.

1862. *Gold Cord*, 188.

1863. Cf. Curtis, 'Amy Carmichael'.

that will enable them to both survive in and make a real difference to the world. All over the world, the hearts of the people are the same and all need the Saviour. While reading Psalm 33:15, 'He who fashions the hearts of them all (alike), and observes all their deeds', she wrote in the margin: 'Alike. Noticed in Japan same types of heart as in England, same here in India'.¹⁸⁶⁴ Her ideas came from a world that was explicitly Christian and confessional; how much more must we face this challenge in our world today? We are living from the capital of the past, more so now 'the bank is running out of reserves'.

Amy in her time saw the need for proper grounding in the Christian faith as vital for any viable practice of mission. In 1893 she wrote, 'truth in the inward parts, and fearless truth-speaking – *that* is our need today!'¹⁸⁶⁵

Today, many feel feeble on their legs with this vision. They opt for a solution of translation; the goal today is that of making the core available in the idiom and conceptuality of contemporary culture, not knowing that when perfume is poured out from one bottle into another you always lose something! This strategy is a recipe for decline and death. It offers a woolly Christianisation of contemporary highbrow cultural commitments in the name of faith. Be sure that the contemporary norms of thought will swallow up the content of Christian faith. The Christian Gospel and faith with the claims of repentance and forgiveness of sin become hostage to our present world culture. Communication of the Gospel ends up for outsiders being the echo of our own interests, of personally interesting ideas, but not an issue for modern man. Amy was very protective of her mission enterprise and she tried to keep worldly ideas out of her compound.¹⁸⁶⁶

■ Her spirituality: Intimacy with solidarity

To capture Amy's spirituality, one enters immediately into sky-high thoughts and deep human thinking. Spirituality is a container idea, and when writing about spirituality of missionaries, it is possible to write about certain facets of their life:

Their motivation, their style of life and their attitudes towards their task, and that each of these should be affected by the Bible, the theological understandings of their tradition and contemporary events.¹⁸⁶⁷

Born and raised in Ireland, Amy knew the history of the early Christian Church in England. Celtic spirituality was in her veins. In her foreword to *Gold Cord* she quotes, in translation, an old Gaelic prayer:

Jesu, Son of the Virgin pure
 Be thou my pilgrim staff,
 Throughout the lands,
 Throughout the lands,
 Thy love in all my thoughts,
 Thy likeness in my face,
 May I heartwarm to others
 And they heartwarm to me,
 For love of the love of Thee,
 For love of love of Thee.¹⁸⁶⁸

1864. In Amy's Bible (1895) in the margin of Psalm 33:15.

1865. *From Sunrise Land*, 48.

1866. Daugherty writes that in this she 'went to extremes' (*Bishop Stephen Neill*, 102).

1867. Here I follow L. Nemer, 'Spirituality and the Missionary Vocation', *Missiology* XI(4) (October 1983): 421.

1868. *Gold Cord*, IV.

I feel an uneasiness to write about Amy's spiritual life because of the difficulty of entering into the realm of her intimate walk with God. But one can speak of things going beyond her prayer life, her attitudes towards her work in Dohnavur and towards others working with her. It was due to the Bible and her theological understandings that she found her approach to mission, but certainly the events during the first half of the 20th century in India, and the things she discovered, must have shaped her spirituality. All this she needed to face 'the battle' to save the children in danger.¹⁸⁶⁹

Amy's spiritual receptivity was already quickened when she was very young, in her teens and in her early twenties during the deeper-life conferences in Keswick and other places. Quaker influence can be noticed as she gave great weight to the 'inner light' of the Spirit, but a distinction between her and the Quakers was that for her the Scripture had the last word. 'Inner light' and Scripture are not on the same level. She also did not give up going to church and in Dohnavur the sacraments were administered. Quakers would often call the clergy 'hirelings', but Amy always honoured the clergy of the Anglican church who lived next to the Dohnavur compound. Many pastors were her personal friends.¹⁸⁷⁰ The DF does not have committees and here the influence of the Quakers can be seen. When a decision is made for a building project or a decision made to accept a new worker, all will kneel down and ask for guidance:

And prayer passed into silence of which I have spoken. [...] And still we waited. When at last we rose from our knees we all knew we had received the thing that we had desired from the Lord.¹⁸⁷¹

Amy had her moments of doubt and anxiety. After the Lord had given her comfort and strength and the assurance he would never leave her and that she would never be alone – this in times when someone had proposed to marry her – she strengthened herself in the Lord. She was alone in the garden and 'the Lord drew near to her and showed her His hands and His feet'. What does any showing matter after that? This faint far away following after him in showing something was kept private all those years.¹⁸⁷²

Her vigorous nature was under the obedience of Christ. Always hungry for nourishment that would draw her closer to her heavenly Father, she found her understanding of Christian faith and practice clarified and solidified.

The Biblical teaching and lessons taught by many Christian mystics echoed in her heart: *tout par amour, rien par force*. Her nature was capable of the full appreciation of all the deeper forms of joy, beauty and peace God's creation had to offer her, and from its richness and by his grace developed the capacity for supreme sacrifice.

I see in the life and writings of Amy a representative and expression of the best elements of late Victorian evangelicalism. Beneath all the activities of her full life, which can be chronicled, her life was devoted to serve the Lord. The practice of intimacy with God and the cultivation of his presence she dealt with in the more intimate of her prayers and letters. She was always apprehensive of offending her Master. In England as well as in India Amy experienced nominal Christianity, i.e. Christianity without a passionate edge, which did not actually care for personal and intimate contact with God and never thought of evangelism.

1869. Cf. P. Parshall's remark: 'The spiritual Christian does not ghettoize his faith in a harbour of like-minded believers where all is safe and calm – but rather, courageously puts forth his ship into the sea of life where danger, difficulty and distress abound. Such is what "spiritual ships" are built for'. In P. Parshall 'Applied Spirituality in Ministry Among Muslims', *Missiology* XI(4) (October 1983): 446–447.

1870. Cf. *Nor Scrip*, 101: 'Finally we had the help of our oldest friend in India, Rev. John Stewart, secretary of the United Free Church of Scotland Mission'.

1871. *Nor Scrip*, 72. See page 71.

1872. In a printed document written by Amy, 'Taken Out Of The Autobiography', in the Dohnavur library.

The simple grace of continuance is in danger of withering when all help of every sort is absolutely cut off, and the soul is, to begin with, not deeply rooted in God. Plants, even when they have life, need water and sunshine and air. Babies need milk. You find it hard to grow, if one may judge from the constant wails about 'leanness', and yet you are surrounded by every possible help to growth. You have a whole Bible, not just a scrap of it; and you can read it all, and understand at least most of it. You have endless good books, hymnbooks, and spiritual papers; you have sermons every week, numerous meetings for edification, and perhaps an annual Convention.¹⁸⁷³

Often Amy was asked to tell converts' stories, but she saw so many other things:

But we who live in the Terrible's lair, and know how he fights to get back his prey, even after it has escaped from him, are afraid to tell these stories too much, and feel that silence is safest, and strange as it may seem to some, for the present most glorifies God. For a certain connection has been observed between publicity and peril and we have learned by experience to fear any attempt to photograph spiritual fruit.¹⁸⁷⁴

As we have seen, in Bangalore, she so dearly missed the fellowship and the understanding of those for whom the Cross was above everything. In her walk with God she felt alone. Many things happened on the mission field that were alien to her spirit:

I began to feel like a fish out of the water and such a fish is a discouraged creature. One day, when this feeling was upon me, a letter came from a Keswick friend at home. She wrote of the prayers that were round me, of the sure and certain faith she had that the Lord Jesus Christ had a special purpose in sending me to India. 'Do not cool. Look to Him to keep you burning and shining'. That letter was like a drink of cold water on a hot day. I can never be grateful enough for the tender mercy that brought it then.¹⁸⁷⁵

Her life was not always easy, but she was allowed to share in the experience of the very few in a close and heavenly walk with God. The Cross was the attraction for her; she kept her mind and inmost heart in constant aspiration towards him, desiring to receive nothing that did not come from him. Her whole life she saw in one sentence: 'Didn't you know I had to be in My Father's house?'¹⁸⁷⁶ Surely, she was a child of her times, and she certainly struggled with the limitations placed on single women during that era. But all this resulted in a deeper dependence upon God, and her transparent radiance of testimony speaks as freshly to us today as it did 100 years ago. Consecration never becomes outdated!

Amy rose to greatness in Dohnavur, set apart since her youth for that vocation. We may not always be able to follow her into the hidden places of her spiritual life, but we know that the depth and the reality of its existence was in no way contradicted by the day-to-day works and words of service in the DF. The life she led made several demands on her in many directions; however, her eyes focused on 'one thing I have desired'. In her youth her freshly kindled faith was stretched and applied to volunteer mission work with the then fledgling YWCA in Belfast and with the mill girls meetings in the Welcome, offering them practical training and introducing them to the Good Shepherd, a work some time later to be continued in Manchester. 'Christian spirituality deals with faith and the lived-out experience of becoming fully human in Jesus Christ.'¹⁸⁷⁷ Parallel to her zeal for evangelism and practical Christian service was a passion and talent for expression born of an innate sensitivity to beauty, matched by an exceptional God-given artistic writing talent. She was awed and affected by the exquisite grandeur and beauty of the mountains,

1873. *Things As They Are*, 37–38.

1874. *Things As They Are*, 38–39.

1875. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 89.

1876. Of this verse in Luke 2:49 (NIV), Amy said: 'Whole life in a sentence'. Comment in Stevens & De Witt Burton, *A Harmony Of The Gospels*, 29, in the Dohnavur library.

1877. G. Capaque, 'Spirituality for Asian Contexts – the Philippines and Beyond', *Mission Round Table, OMF Mission Research* 6(2) (February 2011): 19–23.

the stars, the clouds and all the walking, creeping and flying creatures of God. Her love for flowers, even the tiniest ones, lasted throughout her life. This love for nature was a constant factor throughout her life, and the transcendent power of its beauty must have stirred her heart toward thinking of him, the Creator of all these beauties. She had the rare talent of nicely writing down her communion with God.

As a little child Amy longed to be close to the Lord and inherent to that she wanted to help others: people in need and animals. She knew she would drift apart if she were not in the love of God. For her it came first to love the Lord and be in his love, then, as his love re-kindled her, to love one another. She gave the advice that when one felt as though the love that we should have if we are to help anyone was beginning to 'run dry', to 'think of the Fountain'. We see this clearly in her next poem:

Love through me, Love of God;
There is no love in me.
O Fire of love, light Thou the love
That burns perpetually.

Flow through me, Peace of God;
Calm River, flow until
No wind can blow, no current stir
A ripple of self-will.

Shine through me, Joy of God;
Make me like Thy clear air
That Thou dost pour Thy colours through,
As though it were not there.

O blessed Love of God,
That all may taste and see
How good Thou art, once more I pray:
Love through me – even me.¹⁸⁷⁸

This verse is a desire for ministry:

[T]o be a channel of God's transforming power, moved by the belief that if love would flood the world, it would bring healing and joy to all that it covered.

This verse is the same in thought and pattern as E. Hatch's 'Breathe on Me, Breath of God' (1878). The words appeared in *Wings*, in the section entitled 'Prayers of humble access'. The same with Amy's 'Think Through Me, Thoughts of God'. To be filled with the thoughts of God is to occupy a state of stillness and peace away from busy day-to-day life. One must take time to rest and spend time with him. This thought will not surprise us, for we know Amy's close contacts with the Keswick Convention and the holiness movement. She had a deep desire to depend on and trust in God:

As John upon His dear Lord's breast,
So would I lean, so would I rest;
As empty shell in depths of sea,
So would I sink, be filled with Thee.

1878. *Mountain Breezes*, 248; *Edges of His Ways*, 01 August and 05 August, 110 and 112. Amy got the idea for this poem from the German pietist Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741–1801) who wrote 'Oh, let the glow of Thy great love, through my whole being shine' [quoted in *Edges of His Ways*, 110]. In *Toward Jerusalem*, 19, there is another poem with the same title but different verses: Love through me, Love of God; | Make me like Thy clear air | Through which, unhindered, colours pass | As though it were not there. | Powers of the love of God | Depths of the heart Divine, | O Love that fails not, break fort; | And flood this world of Thine.

John was ‘the disciple whom Jesus loved’ (Jn 21:7). She claimed that she would like to have a similar identity. She saw herself as a vessel immersed in God’s love, being one with the Beloved, which may be likened to the Bible’s teachings about marriage, as being a mystical state where two become one. God abides in peace as well as in love with the soul fulfilled. This she described in the next verse – like a still and beautiful water lily:

As water-lily in her pool
Through long, hot hours is still and cool,
A thought of peace, so I would be,
Thy water-flower, Lord, close by Thee.

The water lily is the icon for contemplation as seen in the tradition of the East. In many Indian religions, the lotus flower is held sacred. Here she uses Indian symbolism. Also in Victorian language, the water lily denoted ‘purity of heart’ and within Western Christianity the lily stands for purity. Christ saw the loveliness of the lily.¹⁸⁷⁹ Here in Amy, Western thinking was combined with Indian circumstances. In Amy’s thinking, there was an abundance of Indian thought and she enculturated it in her hymns and in her books. Growing in spirituality depended for Amy on ‘study, concentration and determination. [...] Every written record, inspired by God is also helpful for teaching’.¹⁸⁸⁰ Like meditating for a moment on God’s way of dealing with her and the Fellowship.¹⁸⁸¹ Spirituality encompasses the ‘lived-life’ or the experiential aspect of faith, although it has a certain inherent resistance being defined.

We come close when we say that in talking about Amy’s spirituality, we see her interior life as it relates to and informs her external life. In what way are her motivation, foundation, values and worldview related to what we see in the Dohnavur Fellowship, so what is the connection between one’s interior and outward life? Here the image of a tree can be helpful. What we can see are the parts of the tree that are above the earth. Yet, from what we see we can draw conclusions about the roots, the parts underneath the earth, which are instrumental in sustaining the tree.

An overall tendency in her life was her intimate relation with her God. Like Enoch and Abraham in the old days, she walked and talked with God. One day, being alone – in her own words ‘a girl sat alone with earth and sky’ – she remembered John Wesley’s words: ‘I remembered there was an eternity’. Why did this thought come to her at that moment? She saw no reason and settled again to her language study. Sitting there under:

[A] wide-spreading tree with all about her the little sounds of bird and insect. [...] There were rustlings, and soft murmurings of wind among leaves [...] till through the multitudinous voices another Voice began to speak.

Of this vivid, unforgettable encounter with her God on a lower slope of a hillside near Ooty, her thoughts went as follows:

First and chiefly there was an enfolding sense of a Presence, a Listener. He was listening to the voice of our brother’s blood crying unto Him from the ground. That voice was crying to Him everywhere. And He looked for some to listen with Him, Wilt thou listen with Me? He said: ‘Canst thou not watch with Me one hour? For a life of hours – with Me? But to write is to fumble among things of the spirit and yet some words were clear. ‘Many follow Jesus unto the breaking of bread, but few unto the drinking of the cup of the passion’. ‘Art thou willing to drink of that cup, and to drink it to the end? Art thou willing to refuse all that would interrupt the

1879. See Matthew 6:28.

1880. *Whispers of His Power*, 25 July, 160.

1881. About the caves near the Forest House, see *From the Forest*, chapter X, 60–66.

drinking of that cup? Art thou willing to turn from all that would dull thine ear to the voice of thy brother's blood that crieth unto Me from the ground? That day under the tree on the hillside in South India coloured the years that were to follow and gave depth to them all.¹⁸⁸²

It is an interesting insight Weber gives, when he recognises the specifically religious character of the Protestant vocation, in the use of the label 'ascetic',¹⁸⁸³ alluding to the otherworldly and possibly monastic associations of Protestant movements. In the Protestant Puritan ethics, he notes an ascetic detachment from worldly pursuits, which is deeply influenced by a sense of the religious calling and which no longer is restricted to a religious elite. This Protestant missionary movement is like a laicisation of the Roman Catholic monastic movement. Does not the modern missionary movement have its roots in the revivalist or holiness movements of the 18th and 19th centuries? In Puritanism, renunciation is 'the severe control of social life so as to make the environment suitable for the ascetic to continue to live in the world'.¹⁸⁸⁴ The ascetic is no longer locked up in a monastery, distracted from society and its corrupting temptations and distractions. In this case Wesley's 'holy club' may, therefore, rightly be seen as laicised monasticism. It is possible to find an adaption of the threefold monastic vow of poverty, chastity and obedience in the holiness movement, and to see these vows contributing to the development of a lay ascetic tradition, which communally affirmed the ideals of the priesthood of all believers. Under certain conditions and priorities, they are allowed the retention of family and marriage, primarily by declaring that the loyalty must be to Christ and his kingdom, because the union with Christ transcends any earthly relationships. It is found in the New Testament injunction that the disciple must 'deny' (or renounce) self and take up his cross to follow his master.¹⁸⁸⁵

In exploring her inner life, we can understand her way of operating in Dohnavur. She had 'another side'. As a missionary, she had a deep spiritual side, and followed the track which she saw as God's vocation. The experience at the fountain in Belfast changed her life's values: 'nothing could ever matter again but the things that were eternal' was her outlook until the end of her life.

How she loved her Bible. This was for her the fountain of life. From early childhood, she heard God speaking to her, and during her whole life she acted like Samuel: 'speak Lord, and I your servant listen'. Faith was for her 'trusting God', not only when we understand his ways, but 'faith is trusting when nothing is explained. Faith rests under the Unexplained'.¹⁸⁸⁶ In Amy's own words God always dealt in a tender way with her and the DF. It was his intimate way with her before she took action, always his Word alone was her warrant. He who has felt the touch of God can go on in quietness and the heart is refreshed in the multitude of peace.¹⁸⁸⁷ One gets the impression that there was a direct line between her and God. The lure of stillness was always intense. Often Amy sought the stillness or for some days stayed in the Forest House to be filled with the great brooding stillness of nature and through everything she felt the presence of God. She knew that the 'deepest knowledge comes in stillness. Be still and know. Stand still and see. Sit still and wait'.¹⁸⁸⁸

1882. The whole story is in *Windows*, 236–239.

1883. M. Weber, 'Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism,' in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's sons, 1958), 155–183.

1884. In N.F. Cantor, *Medieval History* (New York, NY: Macmillan Co., 1963), 182.

1885. Cf. Mark 18:34; Matthew 10:38; 16, 24; In 13:13. Also 'put off the old self', in Ephesians 4:22–25; Colossians 3:8–10.

1886. *Whispers of His Power*, 21 February, 45.

1887. See *Gold Cord*, 329.

1888. In Amy's Bible (1895) in the margin of Psalm 46:10.

From very early childhood Amy had been told about God. The God revealed to her in the Scriptures is *sovereign*. He is 'supreme' and 'He works all things after the counsel of His own will'.¹⁸⁸⁹ The final cause of all God's purposes is the manifestation of his own glory. Amy, knowing the truth that glorified God, was convinced that a right understanding of this truth about God stemmed from the right relationship between the sinner and the Saviour. For her it produced deep reverence, deep repentance, deep humility, a spirit of worship and a concern for those who did not know him. In actual life, in all her work and writing, she lived from this *source* of God's sovereign rule and this, too, was the ground for her *confidence*. She believed the Lord Jesus was keeping his promise never to leave nor forsake her. The consciousness of his presence was her salvation. By resting in the Faithful One it was for her looking unto Jesus daily. In this way she reinterpreted the threefold monastic vow, requiring unconditional obedience to the 'call' of Christ, for one must be willing to forsake family and country, leave all, and follow him. Amy's spiritual experiences of visions of God and of mysticism were tested in the day-to-day reality in Dohnavur, where she was often confronted with the demon-possessed world around her.

Never did she play the ostrich mentally and ignore the dark, evil things with which she was confronted, banking in confidence on God's organisation of what she did not see. Her true life she found in things that corresponded with her inner life. This kept her on the right track. For her the real energy of life lay in her right relation to God, and therein she found peace and joy. Her whole life in relation to God was a sacrament for God.

In Dohnavur, education, daily life, the building activity, everything had a Biblical component. In everything, she sought to return to the Biblical foundation and due to her strong belief in the authority of the Scriptures, she sought to purify and strengthen all around her. Before she went to the mission field Amy had already learnt, that 'the grace of God is given us for real life'.¹⁸⁹⁰ She was influenced by the teaching of her childhood, in which in an evangelical way both Pietism and Puritanism stressed the necessity of new birth, the experience of the heart, and the reality of regeneration, which served as the natural outcome of justification; this heritage added a strong ethical dimension. Brown¹⁸⁹¹ showed that Puritans, Methodists and Evangelicals shared a 'serious' approach to life and agreed on the importance of emotions and will, as well as reason as conscience. Nearly all who endorsed non-denominational mission enterprise, like LMS, accepted the Puritan theological principles. In 1943 almost all the first generation of LMS missionaries had no difficulty whatever in signing the full Westminster Confession,¹⁸⁹² so one can say that the doctrines of grace provided a common platform for the best missionary action. Murray concluded that the evangelicalism of the age of modern missions, which began with Carey in essence, was that of Puritan Christianity.¹⁸⁹³ Amy, steeped in many of their writings, together with Quaker and Keswick influence, weaved all these influences into her trust in the living God, wishing to live for his glory in word and deed. As far as we see and know her thoughts and deeds, it appears right to conclude that Amy was ground in a non-dualistic spirituality that reflected the experience of her communion with God. He was in charge of the reality. There was a profound correlation between her deep sense of the reality of God

1889. Ephesians 1:11.

1890. *Whispers of His Power*, 24 February, 47.

1891. F.K. Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 169.

1892. In *The Congregational Quarterly*, 1943, 223–236. Quotation in Murray, *The Puritan Hope*, 147.

1893. In *The Puritan Hope*, 149. Speaking of the men needed in missionary work, Carey writes: 'The Missionaries must be men of great piety, prudence, courage, forbearance; of undoubted orthodoxy in their sentiments [...] and, above all, must be instant in prayer for the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the people of their charge' (in Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians*, 75–76).

and the world around her. Rooted in this faith she laid the foundation of the DF. The mystical experience of the fellowship with her God can be seen as the reason for her freedom to act prophetically against the evil she had discovered in Hindu temple worship. The more she became aware of God, the more the notion of love dominated her whole work, because God is love! There is a constant double and circular movement of practice: between the inward practice of worship, prayer and meditation and the outward practice of running the DF.

Between 1925 and 1930 the Webb-Peplow brothers and Amy had some controversies about their views and links with Buchmanism and this brought them some stress. Frank Buchman started this movement, known as the Oxford Group.¹⁸⁹⁴ Murray, having been in England, was positive about this man and his teaching.¹⁸⁹⁵ Coming back in Dohnavur Amy and Godfrey were anxious that Murray's involvement with Buchman and his doctrines would go too far. Buchman had visited Amy in 1925 and he admired her work. At that time, Amy saw no harm in what he stood for. 'Let no one judge this man by anything written about him. Frank Buchman is out for one thing only, to win men for Jesus Christ.'¹⁸⁹⁶ Six years later Amy's mind had changed and she saw a threat for the whole community. She was afraid that Christians would be alienated from the Dohnavur family. Amy, Godfrey and also Murray's fiancée Oda van Boetzelaer were now against Murray and in him against Frank Buchman, to whom Murray owed so much.¹⁸⁹⁷

The internal controversy was solved when Murray signed a statement in which Dohnavur dissociated itself from the Oxford Group. The whole affair had a great impact upon Murray. He was exhausted and needed a rest. He went for some weeks to the Forest House where his friend Hugh Evan Hopkins kept him company. Of their stay there, Hopkins writes:

I did not know what to do with him. He had nothing to say, most unusual for Murray. He used to read a bit, but could not concentrate. He was not happy – just trying to be happy. It was a strange sort of forgotten month out of one's life. Looking back it seem to me that he was suffering from a severe depressive disturbance caused by a combination of exhaustion, driving himself too hard, and he had conflict in his mind over the Oxford Group. I do not think he had the theological insight to see that the movement was drifting from the central truths of the

1894. The Oxford Group was a Christian organisation founded by the American Christian missionary Dr Frank Buchman. Buchman was an American Lutheran minister of Swiss descent who in 1908 had a conversion experience in a chapel in Keswick. As a result of that experience he would later found a movement called *A First Century Christian Fellowship* in 1921, which eventually became known as the *Oxford Group* by 1931. The Oxford Group enjoyed wide popularity and success, particularly in the 1930s. In 1932 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Lang, in summing up a discussion of the Oxford Group with his diocesan bishops, said, 'There is a gift here of which the church is manifestly in need.' Two years later William Temple, Archbishop of York, paid tribute to the Oxford Group which is 'being used to demonstrate the power of God to change lives and give to personal witness its place in true discipleship'. In 1938, Buchman proclaimed a need for 'moral re-armament' and that phrase became the movement's new name. Buchman headed MRA for 23 years until his death in 1961. In 2001 the movement was renamed *Initiatives of Chance*.

1895. Cf. what Norman Grubb wrote in April 1983 to C.U.M.B: 'I am glad a biography of Murray is being written [*Grubb refers to K. Makower, Follow My Leader*], and I have been able to include a few reminiscences, as we were in prep school together, and then our Trinity days and many close contacts since then. I touched a bit on the impact of Frank Buchman and the Oxford Group on him and some of us in its early days, when I personally had a vital challenge through its Four Absolutes, with forgiveness at the Cross, listening to God, and open sharing, before it slipped off its Christ-centred moorings and became MRA' in [Winter, ed., *My Dear C.U.M.B.*, 206–207].

1896. See K. Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 129.

1897. Murray had been in long contact with Buchman. In P. Boobbyer, *The Spiritual Vision of Frank Buchman* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2013), note 54 of Chapter 4, is a reference to a letter Buchman wrote to Murray Webb-Peplow, 24 August 1921.

Christian faith; he thought of it still as he had experienced it, and he had put his own truth and knowledge in it. Not being accepted by Amma and Godfrey – this conflict must have caused depression, I would think.¹⁸⁹⁸

Eventually Murray and Oda were married by Hopkins on 23 April 1933, after which the young couple left for Australia. Here Murray could get full rest and stay in a cooler climate to recuperate completely.

The DF has no official association with any church denomination. The Holy Communion in the House of Prayer was done either in an Anglican or in a Brethren way. In Amy's spirituality we see that in the day-to-day business in Dohnavur and in the way of education Brethren influences can easily be seen. Quaker spirituality has two components, an inward and an outward one. In Quaker (Friends) religious doctrine there is a profound ethical dimension. "Their pattern of worship is contemplative yet corporate, blossoming into experiences of deep communion and community."¹⁸⁹⁹ Integrity in life, word and deed is also stressed. In the Friends' vocabulary 'truth' is one of the basic principles. All individuals are addressed by the singular second-person pronoun 'thou' or 'thee', rather than the formal and plural form 'you'. All are equal, and so all people are treated in this way. 'Simplicity' of life has to do with trust and with focus. A simple life is based in the confidence in God's faithful providence; it enables life to keep God at the centre. In Dohnavur, in God's Garden we see no markers or tombstones. Only a little stone shows the place of a grave. The simplicity stretches back to a code of plainness that applied to dress, language, home furniture and the small markings in the graveyard. As we have seen, the pre-millennial view was dominant in Keswick, and also in Quaker circles. I think the DF has an eschatological dimension. In Quaker spirituality the home is at the heart of life,¹⁹⁰⁰ 'one small plot of heaven',¹⁹⁰¹ and in Dohnavur Amy articulated a family spirituality. As a laboratory for Christian worship and testimony, it was close to what she had experienced in Millisle, Keswick, Broughton Grange and India – with a blend of Indian taste. In Amy's life, we see that she did not like to stay at the centre of interest, and she did not fan her own flames in an effort to heighten her spiritual experiences.

Very special for Amy was the 200-foot long Path of Quietness in Dohnavur, at the end of which was the tamarind tree with the stone cross under it. Here she liked to sit and meditate, especially when so many things had to be done or when a pandemonium of voices sounded, or when there were so many questions, cares, etc. In listening to the stillness there near that cross, she listened to God's voice and God's answer to all her questions:

1898. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 130.

1899. In M.L. Birkel, *Silence and Witness, The Quaker Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2004), 105. Cf. J. Woolman's remarks on simplicity: "Our gracious Creator cares and provides for all His creatures. His tender mercies are over all His works; and so far as His love influences our minds, so far we become interested in his workmanship and feel a desire to take hold of every opportunity to lessen the distresses of the afflicted and increase the happiness of the creation. Here we have a prospect of one common interest from which our own is inseparable – that to turn all the treasures we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives" (in Birkel, *Silence and Witness*, 113–114).

1900. Rufus Jones describes the spiritual life in the family of his boyhood: "When I was too young to have any religion of my own, I had come to a home where religion kept its fires always burning. We had very few "things," but we were rich in invisible wealth. I was not "christened" in a church, but I was sprinkled from morning until night with the dew of religion. We never ate a meal which did not begin with a hush of thanksgiving; we never began a day without "a family gathering" at which mother read a chapter of the Bible, after there would follow a weighty silence. These silences, during which all the children of our family were hushed with a kind of awe, were very important features of my spiritual development. [...] When I first began to think of God I did not think of Him as very far off [...] He seemed to be there with us in living silence" (in Birkel, *Silence and Witness*, 119–120).

1901. Birkel, *Silence and Witness*, 119.

It requires much courage to be alone with God, to elect to retire for a time, and even for long times, and to listen to His voice only. [...] We of the Fellowship have found that this stillness is not a spiritual luxury but sheer necessity. We cannot live without it. We may work without it, but there is no breath of life in the work. [...] And yet we perish if we let our Quiet go. And we believe that our Lord can command a stillness within us and about us, which neither noise of words can break nor press of duties shatter. And we believe that He can teach us how to meet each duty with a welcome, and we ask Him wholly to free us from the snare of fuss, and from that kind of occupation which leads to spiritual deafness and throws the dust of earth in our eyes so that we cannot see His face in clearness. Keep us from these hindering things, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer.¹⁹⁰²

Next to her Bible she profoundly read Biblical, exegetical works and biographies of men of state, church leaders and missionaries. She nourished from the same sources as Gerhard Tersteegen did. She never had an academic theological education; she was an autodidact and required tremendous theological insight in the field of spirituality and missiology.

Purposely she went through the lives and works of evangelical mystics from the Middle Ages and their works were studied thoroughly. Through them, she found what she was after, and they gave her everything to shape the DF. Next to her Bible the *Imitation of Christ*, written by Thomas à Kempis, was her almost daily source of inspiration and through him she learned of Geert Grote, the founder of the religious community 'Brothers of the Common Life'.

Bee Trehane characterised Amy as 'a down-to-earth mystic'.¹⁹⁰³ Amy believed in a simplified Gospel Christianity and found this in the 14th century contemplatives and their successors in the pietistic movement known as the *devotio moderna*, whose best-known monument is *The Imitation of Christ* attributed to Thomas à Kempis. His teachings and that of others in those days did in effect point towards an interior and non-institutional Christianity. Thomas à Kempis's ideas did not lose their connection to real life led by ordinary people. The great mystical literature of the 14th century – Eckhart, Tauler, Suso, Rolle – expressed itself in the not-so-cloistered quietism, best illustrated by the Brethren of the Common Life. The adherents renounced private property and led regulated lives in community, yet without taking irrevocable vows. They put the stress on practical piety and character rather than upon ritualism or theological analysis. These ideas are also in the 16th century mystical writings. The emphasis is that without the love of God nothing can be done, but that by the love of God the humble husbandman who serves the Lord is better than a proud philosopher who, neglecting himself, labours to understand the movements of heavens. Thomas à Kempis set this tone for the movement. The accent was on an interior religion based on the communion of the humble and receptive soul with God. Its theology is Christ centric. With the Reformers, particularly Luther, it was replaced by a *theologia crucis*, involving a profound anguish both for Christ and for each man chosen to follow him along the way of the Cross.

■ The mystics she read

Amy liked to read books about mystics and the way they lived. Of Scudder's *Brother John* she wrote on the first page: 'One of the dearest of all dear books'. Even long before that, in 1893 she had read F.

1902. *Meal in a Barrel*, 140, 143 and 145.

1903. In the prologue of *Fragments that Remain*, IX.

Bevan's *Hymns of Tersteegen*,¹⁹⁰⁴ *Suso and Others*. She wrote, 'Read first, on board ship. March 1893', and then 'these men suffered for Christ's sake; their words are not chaff'.

Amy was a real Bible student and the books she read apart from the Bible were books through which she knew the Lord had revealed himself. That drew her to the English, French, Dutch and German mystics. She was excellent in expressing mystical Christian insight, also due to her knowledge of the way the mystics expressed themselves. She had no other affiliation with any contemporary religious group, having always been in Keswick lines since 1893, but most of her interest was in medieval writers and Roman Catholic saints of the 16th and 17th century. Margaret Wilkinson writes that Amy had read the mediaeval mystics and 'felt a spiritual kinship with them'.¹⁹⁰⁵ Writing of a time early in the Fellowship's history, Amy says: 'These were ignorant years, but the thoughts which came coloured that which was to be and so they belong to the story of our "gold cord"'. Then she quotes Traherne:

His earnest love, His infinite desires, 'Tis death, my soul, to be indifferent;
His living, endless, and devouring fires, Set forth thyself unto thy whole extent,
Do rage in thirst, and fervently require And all the glory of His passion prize,
A love 'tis strange it should desire. Who for thee lives, who for thee dies.¹⁹⁰⁶

In 1916, Amy, in one of her rare visits outside Dohnavur, met Dr Eleonor McDougall in Madras¹⁹⁰⁷; this first meeting Amy labelled as 'an unforgettable hour'. In Houghton's biography, we read of this meeting:

All the time I was with her I seemed to see a field under the plough, and to hear one of the finest of our Tamil proverbs, 'Better is it to plough deep than to plough wide'. She is going to plough a deep furrow.¹⁹⁰⁸

Amy had met now a woman with whom she could really have fellowship. Their friendship was based on mutual appreciation and on common intellectual interests. Amy, deeply rooted in the Scriptures, who knew that the way of the Cross is a narrow one, had none of the small-mindedness that mars the testimony of some whose basis of belief is identical to hers. With her new friend she could talk about God's work in India and about literature. Both women were fond of reading and Eleonor introduced the mystics, like Saint Teresa and others, to Amy. She admired in Amy her faculty to distinguish the *essentials* from the *externals*. Sometimes they crossed swords on certain issues but they

1904. On 12 June 1896, in a letter from Kotagiri, she asks for a new copy of this book for lending it to someone (PRONI D/406/1/1-D; D4060/6/8, p. 14).

1905. Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 32.

1906. Thomas Traherne (1636–1674), British poet and prose writer. In *Gold Cord*, 10.

1907. She is the founder and first Principal of the Women's Christian College (WCC) in Madras. The college was founded on 07 July 1915 as a joint venture of 12 missionary societies from England and America. Eleanor McDougall was born in Manchester in 1873 and educated at Manchester High School and at a Moravian School in the Black Forest in Germany. 'The mission of the WCC in Madras, as it was stated by the founder-Principal Dr Eleonor McDougall is specific and contextual. [...] We can do no better service to India, than to liberate the energies of wisdom and devotion which are latent in her women and to infuse into them the vital ideals of Christianity. [...] The mission was reinterpreted from time to time to suit the changing aspirations and needs of its wards, and of women in general. [...] While the mission is still couched in its original ideal of liberation of women for uninhabited total development, it is made comprehensive to include the objective of offering and education that can create generations of intellectually excellent, morally upright, spiritually inspired and professionally sound young women to illuminate their own homes and their home land. Within the first week of its start, it was decided, that the College motto would be "Lighted to lighten"; the College flower, the sunflower (flower of light) was chosen; the College crest was designed and the College song, "Alma Mater" was set to the tune of Finlandia composed by Sibelius' (from 'Founders', Women's Christian College, accessed 09 October 2014, wcc.edu.in/about-us/founders).

1908. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 192.

respected each other deeply. It was good for Amy, too, to have someone who was more or less her equal though, due to Eleanor's academic study, Amy sometimes had to acknowledge her superiority. For both it was good and refreshing that someone from outside could give an opinion. From 1921 onwards Dr McDougall annually came to Dohnavur and spent some weeks with Amy in the Forest House.

One wonders why Amy could recommend authors whose doctrine she could not follow, but she thought the Fellowship members could well discern what was gold and what was chaff. Missionaries who intended to come to Dohnavur got the advice to read *The Spiritual Letters of Père Didon* as well as the second volume of the *Life of Hudson Taylor*. In them, she found the 'joy of sacrificial living', often to be found more 'amongst those whom we cannot follow in doctrine'. As Protestants:

[W]e have had some who have gone back to the early ideal, and lived it out. But they have had to press through the solid weight of modern Christianity, a sort of piled up decorousness, comfortableness, utter negation of the Cross lived, shocked surprise at the bare thought of that. [...] My most longing prayer is that as a Fellowship we may go on there, and not become mere talkers or singers about it.

Amy read the work of several mystics. She, with her Reformed background, nourished herself with pious Roman Catholic believers and those representing the contra-Reformation. She integrated them as if they were evangelical Christians.

Throughout history, men and women have arisen to call upon the Church to return to the narrow way of Christ. In times of growing wealth and prosperity for the Church, Christians of deep thought renounced these things, took a vow of poverty and lived away from bustling everyday life. Some retreated behind monastic walls, others sought to follow the *via apostolica* and became itinerants, preaching and caring for the poor and sick among the common people. Others became well known for the Orders they established with their specific rules while the adherents vowed to renounce marriage, living a simple life and giving themselves to a life in complete devotion and obedience to God.

Mysticism was an alternative to the scholasticism of the schools and theology of the monasteries, 'an alternative especially available to women'.¹⁹⁰⁹ Amy often turned to prayer and books of devotion written by mystics. Amy had the books and biographies of several of these mystics in her bookcases¹⁹¹⁰: men and women like Thomas à Kempis, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), the anchoress Julian of Norwich, Vincent de Paul (1576–1660), Sainte Chantal (1572–1641), Angélique of Port Royal (1591–1661), Madame de La Motte Guyon (1648–1717), François Fénelon (1651–1715) and Saint Teresa of Jesus (1515–1582).

Amy read many books from these mystics as we can see in the annotations (Figure 32) she made in many of them. In Tauler she read:

1909. Severance, *Feminine Threads*, 121. 'Mysticism may be defined as a human mind's effort to merge indescribable thoughts with transitory feelings in an effort to seek joyful communion or oneness with God' (p. 121).

1910. C. Winkworth, *The History and Life of the Reverend Doctor John Tauler with Twenty-Five of His Sermons* (London: Smith, Elder, Company, 1867); H.A. Reinhold (ed.), *The Spear of God. Revelations of the Mystics* (London: Burns Oates, 1947); E.A. Peers, *Mother of Carmel. A Portrait of St. Theresa of Jesus* (London: S.C.M. Press Ltd, 1946); Sainte Teresa of Jesus, *The Interior Castle or The Mansions* (London: Sands & Co, 1944); Moorhead (ed.), *The Spiritual Letters of Madame Guyon*, H.E. Govan, *The Life of Gerhard Tersteegen* (London: James Nisbet & Co, 1898); Ramón Lull, *The Tree Of Love*, ed. E. Allison Peers (London: SPCK, 1926); V.D. Scudder, *Brother John. A Tale of the First Franciscans*. [London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1938 [1931]]; E. Underhill, *The Mystic Way* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1929); A. Whyte, *Santa Teresa* (London, Edinburgh: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1900); T. Traherne, *Centuries of Meditations*, ed. B. Dobell (London: Dobell, 1927); E.K. Sanders, *Fénelon. His Friends and His Enemies* (London: Longman's, Green, and Co, 1901) – Amy wrote on the first paper of this book: 'Except for the chapter on Madame Guyon, a book to enjoy'; Amy got this book as a present on Christmas Day 1942: *Fénelon's Conversations with M. de Ramsai. The Truth of Religion* (1869) and wrote of it 'To understand this book read life of Fénelon by Sander'; J. Newton, *CARDIPHONIA or, The Utterance of the Heart* (London: Morgan & Scott Ltd, 1911).

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pletion of its splendid tomb in the chapel. He had bidden her keep all she wished to tell him until they met at Annecy. The nuns remembered that she spent many hours during those three months in silent prayer beside him, but she never gave way to violent tokens of distress or faltered as she took up the burden shared till then. There was much of her inward history and of his which she imparted freely to the Sisters of the Visitation that they might profit by it, but a veil drops over the experience of those months. On earth these two renounced the joy of personal communication. Mme. de Chantal, having left behind all the world gives at the call of Religion, was required also to lay down the gift that had seemed to come to her direct from God. We know that she did not do so without a long and bitter struggle, and perhaps the battle was only won at the time of their last parting. But she had won it, and it may be that their voluntary severance in life, completed just in time, achieved for them a new and more perfect union when death seemed to divide them.

Thank God, I do not ^{yet} always ask for this
 she was asked of Jeanne ^{de} Chantal. But He does
 ask for the First Place in our lives. Fleeting
 friendships can be a danger. Spiritual friendships,
 the honest open air kind, can be a tremendous
 help, if it is kept in heavenly places.

The only safe attitude is, Whom have
 I in heaven but Thee. & there is none upon
 earth that I desire beside Thee.

Source: © The Donavon Fellowship. Photographer J. (Hans) Kommers.

FIGURE 32: One of Amy's annotations in E.K. Sanders, *Sainte Chantal*, 1572-1641.

Moreover, our Lord has so ordained it for our good, that the Evil Angel, Satan, has power to transform himself before the inward eye of the mind into an Angel of Light; and he does it most of all at those times when a man gathers up all his powers to enter into communion with God.¹⁹¹¹

Then Tauler spoke of the fact that John divided sin of the world into three kinds: 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life'.

Children, I commend you from the bottom of my heart into the captivity of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; that it may be in you, over you, behind you, and before you, lying heavy on you, and yet received by you with free and full acquiescence to the will of God, whatever it may please Him to do with you.¹⁹¹²

Amy wrote on the front page of this book 'The captivity of the Cross', marking this as very important for her. When God withheld his love, she underlined:

The reason of His thus withholding sensible delight is that our spiritual fruitfulness and highest blessedness do not lie therein, but in our inward trusting and clinging to God, in our not seeking ourselves either in sorrow or joy, but through joy and sorrow devoting ourselves to God. [...] When a man seeks himself too much, and with eager desire strives after warmth and sensible devoutness, to the end that he may always be in a state of contentment. [...] When such a one has none of these sweet emotions, he is quite troubled and becomes peevish and very impatient in the trifling mishaps that befall him, though they are really of no importance whatever.¹⁹¹³

In *The Spear of God* she underlined the words of Catharine of Sienna who wrote about the 'wounded heart' and about her communion with God. Her life is consumed and shed for this sweet Bride (Christ's redeemed) and then talked about 'such sweet physical tortures'. In the margin, Amy wrote, 'Can physical tortures be "sweet"?' After having read *Angélique of Port Royal*¹⁹¹⁴ she wrote in the book, 'There is much here for the DF. [...] There are many dear things in this book'.

On the front page in Govan's *The Life of Gerhard Tersteegen*, she wrote: 'The writer is now with the Lord – he lived to bring others to Him'. In March 1893 she read, on board a ship to Japan for the first time, the *Hymns of Tersteegen, Suso and Others*.¹⁹¹⁵ 'First sung for Christ so their words are not chaff.' These words Amy wrote on the title page. On the journey to Japan, she marked the following song:

We follow in His footsteps
What if our feet be torn?
Where He has marked the pathway
All hail the briar and thorn!¹⁹¹⁶

Amy had read a lot of books and her library was and still is really a *mère à boire*, indicating where her interests laid. Here you can find a little book in which Amy had written: 'This is the dearest book I ever

1911. In Winkworth, *The History and Life of the Reverend Doctor John Tauler*, 318. The book is in the Dohnavur library. John Tauler (1300–1361) was a German Dominican mystic. He is known as one of the Friends of God, an informal group of Catholic mystics who strove to deepen both their communal relationship as well as their spirituality. Tauler was the leader of this group. His sermons demonstrated his mastery of combining the mystical with the concrete. He desired to be detached from earthly things.

1912. Winkworth, *The History and Life of the Reverend Doctor John Tauler*, 375.

1913. Winkworth, *The History and Life of the Reverend Doctor John Tauler*, 419.

1914. E.K. Sanders, *Angélique of Port Royal* (London: SPCK, 1908), 1591–1661. This book is in the Dohnavur library.

1915. F. Bevans, *Hymns of Ter Steegen, Suso and Others* (London: James Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1894).

1916. In *Hymns of Ter Steegen, Suso and Others*, 6, 100, 48 and 142.

read'. It is *The Chronicles of Brother Wolf*,¹⁹¹⁷ a book that must have attracted Amy because in it she read the way Francis of Assisi, who saw animals as his brothers and sisters because they were God's creatures, treated the animals, not hurting them. And even stronger: how to be of service to them wherever they required it. Just like Francis (born about 1181 in Assisi, Italy), who had lived during a period of transition when the world was moving out of the Middle Ages into the Renaissance, Amy's world and society were in a transition which culminated in the independence of India in 1947.

In Sainte Chantal, she found the devout life she herself wanted to live in Dohnavur. For Chantal, the secret of spiritual life was to keep close to God and to constantly maintain the realisation of his presence, but this presence had to be known by faith and not by feeling. This you could reach 'by a firm resolve to surrender to God, and an unswerving purpose of self-discipline and renunciation of all things without reserve'.¹⁹¹⁸ E.K. Sanders' *Sainte Chantal* was for her 'a living book and a dear book too. But I am glad that I can depend on our DF to hold fast to the pattern'. She also wrote, 'Sorrows are not mine, blessed be God, 1943'. And in 1945 she read the book again and wrote 'O God, Father of all of us, keep us true to Thy purpose at all costs'. This book is of interest for us because every time she sees herself in Sainte Chantal. As in this verse:

She was a traveller who, starting on her journey with a clearly-marked and time-worn route before her, she found herself checked by the Touch that was not human and turned to a way, very difficult and hard to find, that led to a destination which she had not desired.

Next to this sentence, she wrote in the margin, 'March 3. 1893 and March 6. 1901'. Reading about Chantal's service to Jesus crucified, she wrote: 'But He spent His life in helping others'. When a congregation was needed, she reads 'the Spirit of Perfection'. She wrote in the margin, 'Or was it compromise?'¹⁹¹⁹

In St Francis of Assisi, Amy saw an example of simplicity of faith in action. His simple, straightforward way of dealing with the established Church and with civil authorities appealed to her. Just like St Francis, Amy wanted to live as an imitator of Christ, to live her life closely to what she believed the Gospel taught her. Francis's example inspired her to the possibility of a life totally centred in the teachings of Christ. Like St Francis she was an enormously free and spontaneous person, faithfully giving credit to the Church, while living her life in Dohnavur to Biblical principles.

In 1813 *A Guide to True Peace, or The Excellency of Inward and Spiritual Prayer*, was published.¹⁹²⁰ This manual on prayer was drawn from the works of Madame Jeanne-Marie Guyon (née Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de la Motte), François Fénelon and Miguel de Molinos. Their influence among Friends dated back to before 1813. Some Friends, a century earlier, had especially learned French in order to read Guyon and Fénelon in the original.¹⁹²¹ The little manual speaks of union of the soul with God through 'death of self', 'resignation', 'surrender of your will to the divine will', 'submission to the cross', and 'annihilation'.

1917. By Tertius, least of the Brethren of the order of Friars Minor and servant of Francis: Tertius, *The Chronicles of Brother Wolf* (London: Mowbray & Co, 1939).

1918. E.K. Sanders, *Sainte Chantal, A Study in Vocation* (London: SPCK, 1918), 306. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

1919. In Sanders, *Sainte Chantal*, the quotation is in the introduction and on page 79.

1920. Edited by the Friends William Backhouse and James Janson. The chief source of this manual was the *Short and Simple Method of Prayer (Le moyen court et très facile de faire oraison)* by Jeanne Marie Bouvier de la Motte Guyon.

1921. See Birkel, *Silence and Witness*, 77. About prayer, the manual says: In order to be suitable to all sorts, it must be a form of prayer not 'of the head, but of the heart'. It is a prayer of 'inward silence, wherein the soul, abstracted from all outward things, in holy stillness, humble reverence, and lively faith, waits patiently to feel the Divine presence, and to receive the precious influence of the Holy Spirit' [Birkel, *Silence and Witness*, 77].

Many times Amy quoted¹⁹²² Madame Guyon, who like Amy, 'suffered in every sensitive fibre of her being'. For her it was a real help to understand the way the Lord was dealing with her own life. In her eyes Madame Guyon was 'His faithful servant'¹⁹²³ and an example of true holiness. In questions about God's guidance and understanding God's way, she once quoted Madam Guyon:

Through the dark and silent night
On Thy radiant smiles I dwelt;
And to see the dawning light
Was the keenest pain I felt.¹⁹²⁴

In reading the mystics, Amy was no exception. Other evangelical leaders, like John Wesley had studied Madame Guyon's 20-volume commentary on the Bible and at the Keswick Conventions her word was mentioned.¹⁹²⁵ Also Adoniram Judson (1788–1850), a missionary to Burma, had read her books and imitated her steadfastness and acceptance during his two years in a Bangkok prison. William Cowper translated one of her songs, written in 1681, into English. The song is known as 'O Lord, How Full of Sweet Content'.

Amy highly valued the Scottish Presbyterian pastor Samuel Rutherford (1600–1661) and loved to read his letters and sermons. She often quoted him and once she wrote: 'As old dear Rutherford has it'.¹⁹²⁶ In *Gold Cord* she cited him: 'It cost Christ and all His followers sharp showers and hot sweats ere they win to the top of the mountain'. These words Amy wrote after having written about the obedience to the call and then the practice to continue 'when the sharp storm blows that takes the hide of our faces'.¹⁹²⁷

In choosing new workers, Amy made clear that the sole sufficient reason for their coming to Dohnavur was that they had to learn 'how to bear the Cross of our Lord by denial of themselves, surrender of their wishes, mortification of all desires'. Also that she was the leader and that they should follow her directions 'with the humility, sincerity, and simplicity which our Lord requires'.¹⁹²⁸ From Saint Teresa de Jesus she underlined an important sentence. It must have given her the reason for her own book *If*:

This love of one another is so important, that I never wish it to be forgotten. If you go about remarking in others little nothings, which often are not even imperfections, but perhaps, in our ignorance you take them amiss, you will lose your own peace of mind, and trouble that of others.¹⁹²⁹

Also for Teresa de Jesus, Christian life was a fight; she wrote – and Amy agreed with these words, which she marked in red:

1922. *Gold Cord*, 178, 180.

1923. *Gold Cord*, 180.

1924. In *Gold by Moonlight*, 38.

1925. See *TKW* [1955]: 174.

1926. In Dohnavur letter, no. 1, 1923, 11 (PRONI D/4031/24/1A).

1927. *Gold Cord*, 182.

1928. Sanders, *Sainte Chantal*, 98.

1929. In Saint Teresa de Jesus, *The Interior Castle*, 15.

All hell will combine to force her to leave the castle. [...] But she (the child of God) should make up her mind that she is about to fight against all the demons, and that there are no better arms than those of the Cross.¹⁹³⁰

Amy combined elements of character which are very rare in our superficial and worldly age. Hers was a life that was holy, humble, and that seemed to keep the 'unstained spirit of a little child'. She had a heart and mind pure as the heart of a flame. She desired a life dedicated to God and through these mystics she found a paradigm of what she had in mind with DF, and the tools to interpret and create the fundamentals of the Fellowship. Even in the establishment of the formal institutional pattern, she followed the design of these Roman Catholic institutions. The personal religion provided by mysticism attracted Amy. She was devoted to the Eucharist and the desire of the mystical union of the soul with Christ and was looking for the sacred in her and the Fellowship family's own lives, going beyond the creeds, dogmas, and ideas of faith in an effort to actually experience of God.

She sought to live close with God but she did not fizzle off into mere abstractions. Holiness in the Lord meant for her an unsullied walk with the feet, unsullied talk with the tongue, unsullied thinking of the mind, unsullied transactions of the bodily organs, and unsullied life of the heart. The holiness of the son of God is actually manifested in our ordinary bodily lives. This is the actual experience of sanctification working out in each detail. In this sanctified life, she was led through the Cross for a life of outpouring service to God. She had moments in which she was lost in wonder, love, praise and adoration of her Saviour. But her daily life with God was in the valley encountered by the power of the devil, fighting against the bad deeds in a demon-possessed environment, with eyes fixed on the Lord who for her had always been the God rescuing his people out of dark Egypt. Through self-concentration and inner contemplation, she sought to bring herself into absolute subjection to God.

Her spiritual communion can be explained as the devotion of her heart where she could be alone with God and as a penitent observe the passion and the suffering of Christ. Her body, soul and mind lost in God. For her the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ were not only historical, redemptive facts, but also the experience of having the 'inner Christ' in the heart. When in 1902 Julian's *Reflections on Divine Love* came from the press, it found in Amy a welcome reader. Disagreeing with many of Julian's statements, Amy valued the way Julian understood the greatness of God and the importance of his love.

All the great mystics orientated their range of thought on the early Church fathers, of whom Augustine (354–430) was the most important. We see in Amy's work that she, too, quoted Augustine several times. The brides' mysticism and the stylising in their books attracted Amy who with deep thought entered into the thought of the mystics. In the mystics of the Middle Ages the focus was on the Christ in the flesh, the suffering Christ; a concentration on the life and suffering of Jesus on earth, in all his human aspects. We see that the theology of the Cross, as we find it in Paul's letters, bears deep marks in the work of the mystics. Christ's sufferings were for our salvation. This soteriological aspect we see in his life, death and resurrection. As mediator he saved us and his life shows how we have to follow him.

The mystics emphasised the practical benefit: what Christ did for us, and what he does in us. In this way we can speak of a practical Christology. In his great compassion, Christ gave himself for others and those who love him, out of love, serve others. In full devotion and continuous concentration on the wounds of Christ, and in a practical way, the believer will serve others. All hope and strength of the Christian is anchored in the crucified Christ. Those who love Christ are on this earth in the meditation on what Christ had once done for them and they long for what in the future he will be for them. They walk from memory to presence. In him the victory is present:

Before the winds that blow to cease,
Teach me to dwell within Thy calm:

1930. In Saint Teresa de Jesus, *The Interior Castle*, 15.

Before the pain has passed in peace,
Give me my God, to sing a psalm.
Let me not lose the chance to prove
The fullness of enabling love.
O Love of God, do this for me:
Maintain a constant victory.¹⁹³¹

Some of the mystics, like Geert Grote and Thomas à Kempis, formed a community of Brothers of the Common Life, but also for women communities were formed in the Middle Ages. Often they were called *mulieres religiosae*, communities open to lay people, to serve the Lord and live a life in reading, meditation, lent, periods of silence and in total love serving the Lord and others. Amy's Starry Cluster was a modern variant of a very old medieval practice. Amy wanted to bear the Cross in a practical imitation. She strongly believed what she *heard* and *saw*, was what the Lord told and showed her. Usually it was a Bible word and so the Lord was talking directly to her. Therefore, according to Davies:

[T]he way Scripture was interpreted owed almost everything to her own blend of mysticism and practicality. [...] She felt she probably belonged to an uncommon band of Christians who lived on a higher plane of spirituality.¹⁹³²

She had a narrow focus, the Bible only, but a wide-open heart for all who needed help. In India, a country with the 'mysterious aloofness of asceticism'¹⁹³³, Amy's mysticism and her knowledge of the ways of the East served her well in allowing her to be often on familiar terms with the people.

■ The desert sanctuary

The work in Dohnavur asked for strategic thinking. Taking care of hundreds of children, protecting them, educating them, feeding them and preparing them for servanthood, marriage or profession, required prayer, planning and good coordination. This kept Amy busy from early morning until late night. Along with the strategic aspect was the consecrated part, the focus on the one whom she followed. Utilised in her capacity and calling as a real lover of God, she was in south India on the front line of missionary work. She showed in her work the love of Christ and a life of full consecration as a life of a contemplative in action.

She embraced the Cross and not the retreat: sacrificial life in ordinary daily work in a special setting, working with others and led by God. Not bound to any institutional church she had formed a Fellowship – the Sisters of the Common Life – knowing:

[T]hat victory can be won in no other way than Thou, O Lord Christ, with Thy apostles didst seek to win it, by love and prayer, by shedding of tears and blood, by self-sacrifice, by spiritual not by carnal weapons.¹⁹³⁴

The road she followed was filled with 'landmines', but she followed 'The Gleam', obeying the call 'let us go forth to Him outside the camp, and bear the abuse He endured', seeking 'the city which is to come'.¹⁹³⁵ The focus on this 'exile motive' in Amy's life and work reveals her deepest intentions and explains us how the DF got its shape during the first half of the 20th century:

1931. In *Rose from Brier*, 16.

1932. In *Genius and Grace*, 207 and 210.

1933. In *Ragland*, 71.

1934. Here Amy quotes Raymond Lull [*Gold Cord*, 160–161].

1935. Hebrews 13:13–14.

When a soul sets out to find God it does not know whether it will come and by what path it will be led; but those who catch the vision are ready to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes, regardless of what that following may involve for them. And it is as they follow, obedient to what they have seen, in this spirit of joyful adventure, that their path becomes clear before them, and they are given the power, to fulfil their high calling. They are those who have the courage to break through conventionalities, who care not at all, what the world thinks of them, because they are entirely taken up with the tremendous realities of the soul and God.¹⁹³⁶

I gave the full quotation because Amy must have recognised what Bardsley had written. She, too, broke through conventionalities, she wanted to be led by God, she was an independent missionary, and did not look to others, but upwards to God alone, the ultimate reality. To know Christ and the power of his resurrection was always with her. The one thing necessary! She fully agreed with Bardsley and immediately after the quotation she wrote: '*The Cross is the attraction*'. This was one of our words from the first.¹⁹³⁷ Like the mystics, Amy experienced personal visions. Her writings show that she was consumed with the suffering of Christ and she was willing to share in that suffering in service for others. In one vision, she saw Christ kneeling in the garden, praying for the children in danger. And she knelt next to him. Like the abbesses of their respective institutions sought to reform the orders, so she established the DF in a strict way, with clear rules on the overarched principle of love.

Amy's life of inward-looking, contemplative mysticism, however, contrasted greatly with the lives and thinking of those who belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. Nourished in the Protestant Reformation with its strong emphasis on the *Sola Fide*, *Sola Gratia* and *Sola Scriptura*, she lived up to her personal life and experience and she knew God from his revelation of himself in the Scriptures, not through visions or mysticism. She lived her Christian life in daily communion with others, and not in an austere isolation. She came to know God in a deeper way by a greater knowledge of the Scriptures and obedience to the Word of God, not through a self-imposed abnegation of the body and extra Biblical meditative techniques. The influence of the Quaker home in which she lived in the years before she went to the mission field is felt in the way she was sensitive to listen to the voice of God, but she never went beyond the Scripture as the ultimate authority. She might have thrown away all denominational labels, but never left what she had already heard at home in Millisle, where she grew up with the concept of the faithfulness of God and the authority of the Bible. She never boasted of her Quaker credentials.

Of the medieval authors Amy read, all represented a monastic spirituality. This spirituality was characteristic of the way of life of these medieval missionaries. In the history of Christian missions, we often see the merging of the monastic vocation and the missionary vocation. The DF is completely different from the medieval monastery, but in the whole setup, we see a tendency to withdraw from the natural environment and create a Fellowship that is closely knit. Besides the deep personal commitment of those who belonged to it, the Fellowship members had their own rules and behaviour, and at the same time undertook missionary activities. The typical vocational mission as the Irish formerly carried out,¹⁹³⁸ we see again many centuries later in Amy, this other Irish missionary in the south Indian setting of the first half of the 20th century in a life desirous of personal holiness and concern for reaching out to others.

1936. Here Amy quotes Bishop Bardsley (*Gold Cord*, 161).

1937. *Gold Cord*, 161.

1938. See J. Schmidlin, *Catholic Mission History* (Techny, IL: Mission Press, 1933), 182. The Irish missionaries highly valued scholarship; they had a passion to preach the Gospel and were uncompromising, keeping a strict religious discipline. They made long pilgrimages (*perigrinatio pro Christo*) for the sake of Christ and in imitation of Christ. Schmidlin distinguishes in his study two divisions of mission and missionary methods of the early Middle Ages in Europe: the vocational mission and the Frankish imperial mission (pp. 181–182).

Amy remained in the love of Christ by surrender, faith and obedience and she knew that what she was, she was by the grace of God. In one way we can say that she had nothing to do but live in union with Christ and all else followed. However, with her this union with Christ was a union in dynamics. Her passivity and her receptivity transmitted a mighty activity.¹⁹³⁹ She was a mystic full of common sense, with a mind that grasped truth clearly, and she had the power of expressing it simply. Beyond all doubt, it was the constant presence and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who dwelt so fully in her, who clothed her word with such a power and made the results so permanent. To us, her sane mysticism, instead of being an excuse for effort, was the very mainspring of her ceaseless activity, and those whom she could not reach or who lived far away, she inspired by her anointed pen. Like Madame Guyon in her itinerating work, she taught the importance of seeking and knowing Christ and started to help others (the children rescued from moral danger), establishing an educational institution and building a hospital.

Her piety never denied natural life. You can shine in the sun, but Jesus wants us to shine where there is no sun, where it is dark with the press of the practical things. Amy learned from the Holy Spirit to take the words of Jesus out of their spiritual setting and put them into the setting of her personal life. Such a life has its message for our day. I see her as a practical mystic: she both combined fellowship and service, the fullest use of human means with the most complete dependence upon God in prayer, the absolute loyalty to Christ, yet with a tender heart for others with whom she differed in minor convictions. She went for 'this one thing I have desired'!

■ A holy, loving, lowly life

Missionary candidates, accepted for Dohnavur, received letters from Amy in which she wrote what they could expect in missionary life:

Above all my prayer for you is that you may be a good soldier, ready to do anything, and suffering, any misunderstanding, any blame, anything for Jesus' sake. The life of a missionary can be as easy and as pleasant as any life at home. Crossing the sea does not make any woman a missionary in spirit, nor does it turn soft iron into steel. Spend much time at Calvary before you come. Look at that love, look and look till you can say to Him, 'Yes, Lord, anything'. [...] I long to have you out tomorrow and to pour the language into you, and send you out to fight the powers of evil with the Powers of Love. Do not fear - the mud-throwing will not be over when you come. You will get thoroughly splashed. I am so glad you don't mind the prospect. [...] If her soul leaps to hardship for the sake of the Crucified all will be well. It is those who for His sake choose to follow Him in this way who make the valiant warriors. [...] We shall begin to perish if we do. (lower the standard). That is, the deepest in us will do so. We shall get bigger, but gradually we shall slip into soft iron, not tempered steel. What a mix-up of simile, but I leave it. God keep us true to the heavenly vision. [...] I delighted in your action and decision, and when I heard of your parents' response - their soldierly response - I just sang for joy [...] The soldierly choices of the soul - it is those that are assaulted, and with one voice most Christian parents and friends join in the assault [...] I can see no reason for the creation of our D.F. if we are to be satisfied with the usual.¹⁹⁴⁰

1939. Cf. the remark of E. Stanley Jones in his *In Christ* [p. 85]: 'The quietism in Christ is the same kind of quietism which is at the centre of a cyclone - a place of rest, but the place where the power of the cyclone resides'.

1940. Letter in the office of the DF.

In all her thoughts and deeds Amy drew from the Bible her ideas and initiatives. When she read Luke 1:19:

And the angel answering said unto him, 'I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak unto thee, and to bring thee these good tidings'.

Amy wrote in the margin 'Ideal Missionary. I stand... I was sent... So speak... Unto thee... to bring these good tidings...'¹⁹⁴¹ When Amy was together with other missionaries, she always tried to know what their missionary motives were. Were they driven by a passion for Christ and his honour? Would people not be stirred to go and tell the Good News when they would know that in India alone, 28 000 people a day – this 3 is as it was in 1903 – go to their death without Christ? She could write very strongly about missionaries seeking an easy life:

Surely we should not deliberately leave so many to starve to death, because those who have the Bread of Life have strong desire for sweets. Oh, the spiritual confectionary consumed every year in England!

She even wondered why there was so much earnest Church life in England with so many evangelistic campaigns and conventions, and yet so poor an output as far as the lands abroad. Can it be that so many are meant to stay at home?¹⁹⁴² 'God open our eyes to see if we are doing what he meant, and what He means should continue.'¹⁹⁴³ She often prayed for parents who would not:

[C]all their children back from going to the last extremity of the jewel mine. It is just there that the richest jewels lie. [...] It is the utter earnestness of purpose to be wholly on the altar of our Lord that speaks to me, the earnestness in 'downing' the 'I'.¹⁹⁴⁴

During a convention week in a hill station in India, Amy was confronted with an Indian woman whose words led Amy to think about the essence of mission work. Was it true that so many missionaries were not 'warm and loving and keen to win souls'? And did they not lead 'specially holy lives'? The Indians observe missionaries. They observed them when they work but they also are observed when they are off work. Concerning missionaries, an Indian girl said to Amy, 'We look to you to show us patterns *and you are showing us crooked pattern*'.¹⁹⁴⁵

These words scorched Amy. The picture painted thus might not wholly be true, 'there was enough truth left to lay at least the one who listened low down in the dust'. This narrated conversation led Amy to think further of her own functioning and that of her colleagues as missionaries. In short, she related her missionary beliefs and Christian stance in the little book called *God's Missionary*.

God's Missionary is for 'younger fellow-missionaries who have not made up their minds'. We will follow here Amy's arguments, because they are so fundamental and give us her key thoughts about mission and missionaries. The overall thought is that 'all had to be done for the sake of our Master's glory'. She urges:

1941. In Stevens and De Witt Burton, *A Harmony of the Gospels*, 22.

1942. Cf. *Lotus Buds*, 340.

1943. *Things As They Are*, 295–296.

1944. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 342.

1945. *God's Missionary*, 14.

Comrades in this solemn fight – this awful conflict with awful powers – let us settle it as something that cannot be shaken: We are here to live holy, loving, lowly lives. We cannot do this unless we walk very, very close to our Lord Jesus. [...] For the sake of the souls that may stumble if we turn even ever so little aside, for the sake of our Master's glory – dearer surely to us than all else – let us ask Him now to show us whether in anywise we have been showing 'crooked patterns'.¹⁹⁴⁶

Missionaries, after being trained, go to the mission field and very soon, many are disappointed. They feel 'befogged' due to the many traditions in the stations. Many things crowd into their lives and no room is left to separate oneself for the Lord. Others are wrecked on 'the rock of compromise'. So many things are rather hindrances than aids to the deeper life in the mission house.

What will help them? Only to know nothing among any save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. '*Give yourself wholly to this office* whereunto it has pleased God to call you.' Paul gives us the answer in Acts 27:23 'God, whose I am, and whom I serve'.

'A missionary should not be entangled in the affairs of this life.' There can be *social* entanglement. What is expected from us is not always what is required. Let your windows be open towards Jerusalem and not towards any earthly city. *Talk* can be another entanglement. Make it a law of the house that those who are absent are not to be discussed to their detriment:

Talk can pull down as well as build up, and it can entrap and weaken in a very curious way. But the talk that is the kind Christ would enjoy – frank and simple and sincere and happy as the song of the birds – this kind of talk lifts up and helps. [...] How would our talk sound to Him? All we need, all we want, is to have His un-grieved Presence with us always.

Overwork is another entanglement. Don't put unreached weights upon your hearts. *Ambition*, that love of the praise of the man that brings a snare.

The outcome is that the Lord is farther from us than he used to be and then comes the thought – with shame and sorrow: '*If I had spent more time with God for souls I should have had more power with souls for God*'. Today it is just as in Paul's time. The fight with the spirits of evil is just as desperate now as it was then. 'We cannot go in for entanglements of any sort and expect spiritual power at the same time.' What we need is a life of 'consecration and faith'. Avoid the 'spiritual malaria', the fever of a restless soul, which has a power to enervate the very fibre of our being and so unnerve us for the fight.

God's missionary is a Nazarite; he has made a special vow: to separate himself unto the Lord. He 'narrows down' his life. She quotes Arnot of Central Africa, 'I do not think there is anything as essential to real service for God as an entire separation and devotion to the work'.¹⁹⁴⁷ In full dedication a missionary, who loves will not ask 'How little', but 'How much':

We are bound to look upon the world, with all its delights and all its attractions, with suspicion and with reserve. It is not for us, not for us. We are called in the higher Kingdom, we are touched with a diviner Spirit.

Here she quotes the mystic Tauler: 'A pure heart is one to which all that is *not of God* is strange and jarring'. We all are in the searchlight of the Cross. The best recreation is 'the re-creating of the holy fire'. And if you go out for a short while? 'All depends upon where you go when you get away.' Try to become more and more one with the people where you work. Mission work has something of a sacrifice. 'Be on the spot *if we are needed*.' This came from the pen of one who had been in India for 56 years uninterruptedly. In defence of that, she once said:

1946. Here and further I quote the main points in *God's Missionary*, 21, 53, 23, 27 etc.

1947. *God's Missionary*, 34, 40, 43, 44 etc.

A mother does not leave her children.¹⁹⁴⁸ Our life is a life with the people and for them. We can never know the Eastern people while we find our chief recreation to be an escape from their companionship into the society of our fellow-Europeans. The people of the land are keenly observant: they mark our preferences in the choice of our friends, as in everything else. [...] In this way there will always be a reserve in their confidence.

Think of this: 'You cannot be a good missionary if you cannot be happy among them'. This even Ragland advised! First things first. What is the missionary's first thing? It is 'always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh'. 'Separation unto God in its true sense does not mean narrowness.' In quoting Conybeare and Howson's translation of 2 Corinthians 6:12, Paul advises the Corinthians 'to come out from the unclean ways of the world'. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' Liberty for what? 'Liberty to reflect as in a mirror the glory of the Lord. Here is a positive corollary of the "negativeness" of separation.'

In what way can a missionary most effectively touch our world for Christ? When in all our work there is no room for the Lord Jesus Christ then the hardened people will never be won. Use the opportunities when they pass by, 'to speak for the Lord, then, is not to write on sand'. Use the very Cross of shame, to attract the wandering souls of men! 'God's true missionary is an anointed Priest, and as a result of his consecration, he is crowned.' Amy refers here to Leviticus 21:12. The crown of God is enough for the missionary. He also will receive 'the crown of rejoicing'. And he will also receive 'the crown of converts won for Him, when we stand in the presence of the Lord'. It is here we have to talk about Amy in her deep fellowship with Christ and in her complete acceptance of what he was doing with her and through her. In her library is a copy of Evelyn Underhill's *Immanence*.¹⁹⁴⁹ She got this book in January 1932 from Mary, who added the poem:

I come in the little things
Saith the Lord.....
Amidst the delights of bladed wheat
That springs triumphant in the furrowed sod.
There do I dwell, in weakness and in power.

In her own writing in the margin on pages 18–19 we read: 'Oct.24, 1931 and Oct.24, 1943'. On these pages is the poem 'STIGMATA'. I give here the whole poem because these words reflect Amy's closest intimacy with God.

Must I be wounded in the untiring feet
That hasted all the way
My Dear to greet?
Shall errant love endure this hard delay,
Limping and slow
On its ascents to go?
Chorus *Yea, this must be*
 If thou would'st come with Me:
 Thus only can
 My seal be set on man.

Must I be wounded in the busy hands
That labour to fulfil

1948. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

1949. Evelyn Underhill, *Immanence* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd, 1931).

Industrious love's demands
Within the circle of thy sovereign will?
And can it fall within that will to let
Thy child from all repayment of its debt?

Chorus

And is it thus? then gladly I go lame,
Bring nought within my hands save this thy sign:
See, I exult! all bliss is in the flame
That mars, yet brands me thine
Thine are my members: strike again and give
A deeper, sweeter hurt, that dying I may live.

Chorus

Make thou thy blazon perfect; let my heart
The piercing wound of thy swift love receive,
That only cunning lance which hath the art
Man's sickness to relieve.
Make the place deep and wide,
That thou may'st find a nook, therein to hide.

Chorus.

In *Rose from Brier*¹⁹⁵⁰ she refers to Underhill's poem 'STIGMATA', 'of which one verse spoke with a special tenderness'. She mentions verse one:

So there could be nothing but a peaceful acceptance, and when one accepts, all that is included in the thing accepted too – the helplessness, the limitations, the disappointments of hope deferred, the suffering. [...] But if we refuse that wisp of cloud and look up and meet the love of the Lord that shines don on us, and say to Him about that particular detail of trial, 'Dear Lord, yes' (for it was not included in the first act of acceptance?), then in one bright moment our sky is blue again.

Also on 23 September 1943 she read this poem and wrote: 'Read in Neyyoor first in October 1931. STIGMATA spoken then though only six weeks of lamed life was expected. Often and often since'. She often reread this poem. In 1947 she wrote under it, 'Sept. 23. 1947. STIGMATA'. That she too wanted to experience a deep fellowship with the Lord, as she read in some of the mystics, will not amaze us.

In life and work she longed to be completely transparent with the Lord. The whole truth had to be explained:

May the Lord save each one of us from shipwreck on the rock of compromise. He will make all things right if only we follow and obey. [*Be honest*] are we 'other-worldly' in the secret center of our soul? Is there no failure in this direction, or leakage of spiritual strength? Are we often in His presence, [*because there is so much*] outward whirl? May God search us, and try us, and show us if we are living on lower levels than He intends for us ... Lord instruct me by all holy discipline.

Free me from evil passions and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that being inwardly healed and thoroughly cleansed, I may become fit to love, strong to suffer, constant to persevere.¹⁹⁵¹

1950. *Rose from Brier*, 26–27.

1951. See *God's Missionary*, 53 etc.

Love carries a burden without being burdened; and it makes all that which is bitter sweet and savory.
 Love desires to have its abode above, and not to be kept back by things below.
 Love desires to be at liberty and estranged from all worldly affection.
 Love knows no measure.
 Love feels no burden, regard no labours.
 Love is able, therefore to do all things.
 Love watches.
 Love is not tired, not constrained.

Whosoever loves knows the cry of this voice.¹⁹⁵² Love is the answer to all things: love ends all questions. Lord, ever more give us this love. Only His voice may speak the 'Go!' which sends. Only in the power of His Spirit may one obey.¹⁹⁵³ With these words, we notice the divine authority in sending his servants and Amy was aware that God himself had called her. The call of God to do mission work irradiates with the awe of the presence of God:

It is such a solemn thing to work with God – our holy God. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name for Thou only are holy! The more one realizes that unspeakable holiness, the more utterly one abhors and 'retracts' oneself.¹⁹⁵⁴ True Mission Work is not play. It is tremendous earnest. It is not a thing, which can be lightly taken up and laid as lightly down again. 'The Vows of God are on me', and for life.¹⁹⁵⁵

The emphasis on the last three words indicates the full surrender and obedience to God's call upon sacrifice and service. To see and to use the opportunities the Lord gives to his servants to reach others with the Gospel, the servants themselves 'need to live close to their Master, and in the full stream of the Holy Ghost Power'.¹⁹⁵⁶ The missionary is called and 'never should one be urged to come, unless he felt the burden of souls and the Master's call'.¹⁹⁵⁷ Once in Japan it overwhelmed Amy: England has so many well-educated people. Why don't some of the leaders come? Why does she not give more of her very *best*? Cultured minds are wanted, simple workers are wanted'. God's plea comes:

[W]ith the chorus of pitiful waiting. It comes with the plea, which is strong and prevailing. For Christ's sake to me, for Christ's sake to thee. Oh what, oh what, shall the answer be.¹⁹⁵⁸

Together with those 'who hold the ropes for us' – here she used the words of William Carey – she urged everyone to be involved, pray that 'the one soon follows the other'.¹⁹⁵⁹ It burned in Amy's heart as she thought of India:

1952. Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, III, Chapter 5.

1953. *From Sunrise Land*, 10.

1954. *From Sunrise Land*, 104.

1955. *From the Fight*, 60–61.

1956. *From Sunrise Land*, 2.

1957. *From Sunrise Land*, 18.

1958. *From Sunrise Land*, 37.

1959. *From Sunrise Land*, 37.

It is incredible that He wants all these lands to remain as they are in the very depths of the darkness of death, and the question now to be faced is this – *Am I where He means me to be? If not I am missing my lifework. And I may be keeping back blessing from those for whose sake I am staying, by staying with them.*¹⁹⁶⁰

Three basic Biblical themes were leading for her: a missionary is: *Disentangled*, 2 Timothy 2:4; *Separated*, Numbers 6:2–4; *Crowned*, Leviticus 21:12.¹⁹⁶¹

In the third edition of *God's Missionary*, Amy was surprised that so soon after the appearance of this book a new edition was necessary, despite the sharp criticisms. The book was tossed in the fire, torn into fragments and thrown into wastepaper baskets, dissected, misquoted, used as a foil in at least one missionary college. 'Yet it refuses to die.'¹⁹⁶²

A leading word of the Leonine Sacramentary,¹⁹⁶³ gave her the direction. Those who follow 'that Thou may grant them rather to cleave to eternal things'¹⁹⁶⁴ instead of being attracted by bodily pleasures. Amy was nothing if not serious. Working in the light of God, she wanted to be transparent, thoroughly earnest and steadfast. In all her doing, she did nothing lightly or casually. She had an amazing concern for sinners, but no pity for sin.

1960. *From Sunrise Land*, 61.

1961. Note to the first edition of *God's Missionary*, 5–6.

1962. Note to third reprint of *God's Missionary*, 7.

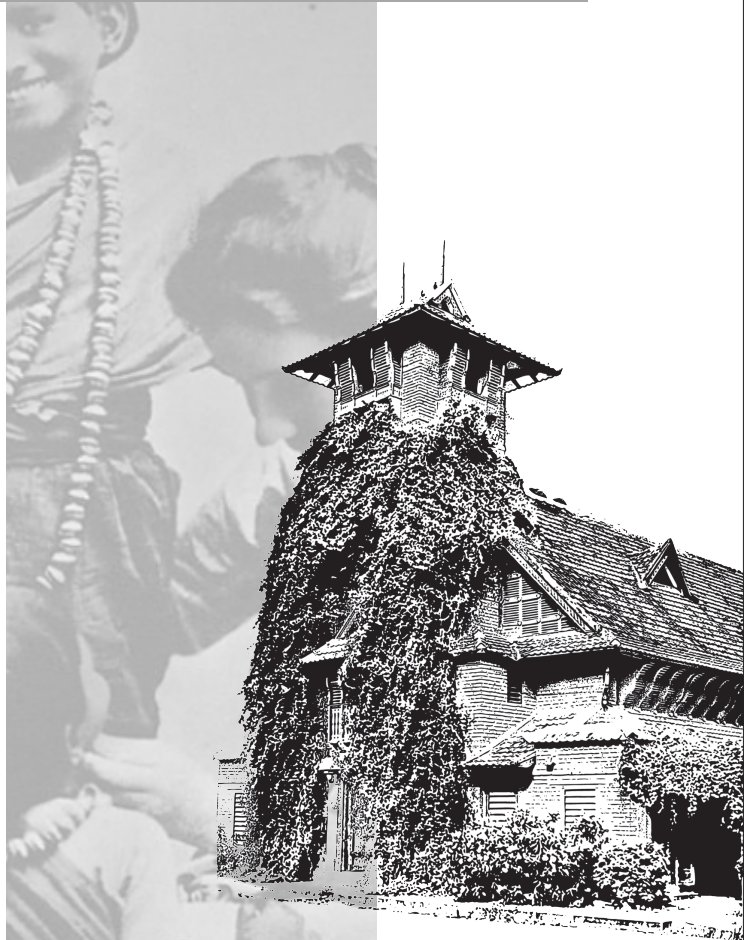
1963. Named after Pope Leo the Great [440–461].

1964. *God's Missionary*, 13.

**Look at the millions without Christ, and you will find an
Altar. And may God help you to be a sacrifice!**
Bishop Hill (in *From the Fight*, 36).

**The love of God must shine through us unhindered if
we would live to Him here. Surely, whatever makes for
holiness of life, for the clearing of the glass through which
the light shines, this is for us and nothing else. [...] Take
St. Paul as our example. He stood forth in the midst of his
shipmates and said, 'God, whose I am,
and whom I worship' (Acts 27:23).**

God's Missionary, 20–21.



The Missionary: ‘I was sent, so speak’ (2)

■ The Bible in Amy’s life and work

There are certain defining moments in every life, key crossroads along the way. Moments when a person’s destination is consciously revealed. M. Scott Peck calls it a choice between going down the path everyone else was following and taking another path – what he called ‘the road less travelled’.¹⁹⁶⁵ Amy did not choose her life destination. Her destination had chosen her. There are occasions when life gives us no choice at all; we are chosen by God to go the way less travelled. Once one has entered upon that road with its permanent consequences, one travels the road or, in Amy’s words, one ‘follows the Gleam’. She trusted the Lord in the way he was leading her and in what is in the Bible. She had the traits of character of a visionary mystic, and the visions she had – in her own words – ‘may be given to confirm, reassure, rather than to reveal’¹⁹⁶⁶ ‘Prayer to know God’s will is not begging, it is communion, conversing with God, and He gives you peace.’¹⁹⁶⁷ The most important thing is, ‘in whose name do we pray?’¹⁹⁶⁸

A good deal happened last week which caused some stress and strain, and I felt rather at the end of everything. I turned to my Bible, and happened to open on Acts 16:29, Then he called for a light, which was exactly what I was

1965. Cf. M. Scott Peck, 1978, *The Road Less Travelled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

1966. Amy’s remark written on p. 146 of B.H. Streeter & A.J. Appasamy, *The Sadhu*, 1921, A Study in Mysticism and practical Religion, London: MacMillan & Co. In the Dohnavur library.

1967. Here she has the remark on p. 94 in *The Sadhu*, ‘True of one form of prayer that of Philipians 4 to which the answer is peace’.

1968. See in her own handwriting p. 98 in *The Sadhu*.

doing. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path (Ps 119:105) what would be the word of light? It was a word so familiar that we could all say it backwards. But take it for yourself today, and you will find it as

welcome as the lamp which somebody brought that night to the jailer in the prison of Philippi. It was Isaiah 40:29-31.¹⁹⁶⁹ Those who know the Dohnavur Fellowship know that it could not be at all if it had any doubt about the truth of the Scriptures.¹⁹⁷⁰

As Amy says:

[W]e are all of one mind in an house as regards the Bible, very Word of Very God, and no one would be at home with us who was not happy in the simplest form of evangelical religion. [...] 'Surely all who love meet in essentials'.¹⁹⁷¹

With these words Amy wants to underline, that everything in Dohnavur, what is done, what is built and the aim of the education, the inspiration and the foundation of it, comes from the Word of God. In days of joy or of sorrow, she had her Bible at hand and sought God's guidance. In her Bible we read next to Psalm 112:7: 'Heneratgoda. Ceylon. 94. Nov. 27; Kotagiri. 1896. May 7; Ooty. 1899. June 10' and then a place with the name written in Tamil, dated '1900. Oct. 9'.¹⁹⁷²

Amy's faith, to a large extent, was founded on reverence for and knowledge of Scripture.¹⁹⁷³ She had a very high view of the Scriptures. Already as a child she was surrounded by God-fearing people who taught her the Scriptures. We can say that she was under and in the Word of God. She not only used to go through the Bible, but many times it had gone through her. She refers to 2 Timothy 2:2¹⁹⁷⁴ to mark that hearing and telling it to others go hand in hand. I had the privilege to study the remarks Amy wrote in her Bibles and I was amazed by the way she had studied the Word of God thoroughly. She must have 'crept' through every chapter. 30 September 1895, just before her departure for India, she received a Bible¹⁹⁷⁵ from Mary Biggs. With different colours Amy marked the things that were for her important. For example, a yellow dot means: 'Millennium glory'.

Also, many commentaries on Bible books were thoroughly studied. In the bookcases (Figure 33) still in Dohnavur, we find many Bible commentaries in which are many indications that Amy went through them very carefully, occasionally making several remarks in the margins. We do not only find her remarks, questions and encouragements in the margins, but often she mentions a date.¹⁹⁷⁶ She says that

1969. *Whispers of His Power*, December 6, 256-257.

1970. *Gold Cord*, 121.

1971. *Nor Scrip*, 122.

1972. In Amy's Bible in the margin of Psalm 112:7.

1973. Cf. Bebbington, *Evangelism in Modern Britain*, 12-14.

1974. 'And what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.'

1975. This Bible is in the UK office (Brentford) of the DF. On the blue cover is in capital letters: 'THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD. AMY WILSON CARMICHAEL, 11 OCTOBER 1895'.

1976. In G. Campbell Morgan's *The Gospel According to Luke* she wrote: 'Full of suggestions, very helpful. The writing has none of the charm of Bishop Moule or the depth of Westcott. [...] But it is true to the Truth and opens windows, and though not the greatest, surely he is a great Bible teacher'. In the margins of this book Amy wrote many comments. From the same author she read *The Acts of the Apostles*, the book she got 27 January 1947. Her reaction is short: 'Full of light'. *The Emphasised Bible* by J.B. Rotherham shows that she read this Bible thoroughly and on nearly every page of O.E. Daniel's *A Combined Harmony of the Gospels* we find some of her comments, as is the same with A. Stevens and E. De Witt Burton's *A Harmony of the Gospels*. All books here mentioned are in the Dohnavur library.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 33: One of the bookcases in Amy's room.

spiritual growth depends upon 'study, concentration and determination'.¹⁹⁷⁷ For her the Bible is the inerrant and inspired word of God, and every promise in it has with it the backing of the faithful and eternal God. Thus, it is her supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice,¹⁹⁷⁸ a guideline for her in the establishment of the DF. God, 'a living and a loving God must speak'.¹⁹⁷⁹

Great books have been written to buttress faith in the truth of the Bible, but the ultimate proof is that this Book of books finds us where we are, meets our deepest needs, and speaks to us with a voice utterly different from any other voice.¹⁹⁸⁰

Her Bible was always open because for her the study of the biblical text was an integral part of the whole running and educational process of the Fellowship:

There is one beautiful thing about life lived in this way. We are perpetually rediscovering the wonder of words of our Bible. Not only the great fabric, but each little jewel in it sparkles; each little facet of each minutest crystal catches the light and brightens as we look into it.¹⁹⁸¹

Amy welcomed every new translation and scholarly commentary, but she grew up with the King James version and so she returned every time to this beloved version. The Bible offered Amy an endless wealth. It was difficult for her to understand that a real lover of the Lord could so thriftily read the Bible, for then he would miss what is stored up for him. She once referred to Psalm 37:3, and said that this verse gave her the richest treasure of all.¹⁹⁸² *Feed on faithfulness* is Kay's translation, and for Amy this is 'the faithfulness of God':

Here are various ways of feeding on faithfulness. One way is found in Bible reading. How do we read? In snippets? In little bits chosen for the lambs of the flock? That is good while we are lambs, but it is not enough for us after we grow up into Christ. 'I read a chapter a day', say some, and feel that is quite enough. It is not enough. Are you earnest to be fed? The soul of a sluggard desires, and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat (Prov 13:4). Our Father wants His children to be diligent, to take trouble to find what He has stored up for them.¹⁹⁸³

Everything in the Bible is of some use. What we learn from the Bible we give to others, 'sooner or later'. The treasures Amy found in the Bible and which she had marked were given her to be turned into life. 'Did we use it as a precious substance for our nourishment in weakness or encouragement in difficulty, or victory in temptation, or jot in weariness or peace in strife?'¹⁹⁸⁴ And so she did. She took God's promises from the page with her into her daily life and service in Dohnavur of the ensuing hours. She taught the children to learn it, believe it, and to trust him who gave it to fulfil it, and so their feet would be kept from many snares in their lives. For some her use of the Bible is too mystical. Many times God gave openings which came by surprise and there were things she encountered for which she always had an appropriate Bible verse. At home or during itinerant work Bible study came first. On one of her journeys with the Starry Cluster she wrote:

1977. *Whispers of His Power*, 25 July 1960. To make sure she had a good translation she looked up in various versions of the Bible. Once she even studied in seven versions to have the correct word. See *Thou Givest...They Gather*, 68.

1978. Cf. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

1979. In Amy's Bible [1895]. These words Amy wrote on top of Hebrews, Chapter 1.

1980. In *Whispers of His Power*, 13 September, 196.

1981. *Tables in the Wilderness*, 10.

1982. Amy quotes here the Septuagint: 'Hope in the Lord, and do good; and dwell on the land, and thou shalt be fed with the wealth of it'.

1983. In *Whispers of His Power*, 28 October, 227.

1984. In *Whispers of His Power*, 29 October, 228.

Later in the morning the band went home, or back to the tent, breakfasted, and studied the Bible together, searching its pages through and through for that without which our work would have been in vain.¹⁹⁸⁵

She trusted the Lord completely and his word was the last word. When she wrote of the Lord speaking to her she did not claim a revelation, but putting into words the teaching experiences all believers have when the Lord directs our thoughts to give us some particular instruction.

After the accident in 1931, when moving around became difficult, she daily wrote a 'note' to her 'children' to encourage them. Mostly it was a short explanation of a Bible verse. To her family she explained the reason why she did write every day these notes:

It is a great cheer to know that these notes are sometimes a help. There are so many of you, and your needs are so various and your ages so different, that it is impossible any one word should be for everybody. No archer ever shot several hundred targets with one arrow. But if any arrow finds its target I am content – and grateful. I do not want you to be spoon-fed children, but to get your food direct from your Heavenly Father. But this is my only way to reach you, my own dear children, and I often read things I long to share with you, and sometimes our Lord speaks a word to my heart which I think would speak to yours.¹⁹⁸⁶

Within this scriptural framework, she saw that God gives freedom to believers and churches to utilise a variety of approaches, strategies, and styles to accomplish their objectives. She believed what came to her from the Bible, and therefore, she did not concentrate on obscurities. Using for herself the King James version, she felt free to look in other versions to get a clearer meaning of the text:

In case any are puzzled by the different translations from which I draw strength and help and delight, it is like this: In studying any object with the microscope we use different lenses and turn the mirror in various ways; each change brings out some new wonder and beauty. So it is for those who are not Greek or Hebrew scholars, and who use the work of scholars to open the meaning of the inexhaustible Word – the Bible is richer than any single version can fully show.¹⁹⁸⁷

To a group of Sitties in the Forest House, she once said about Bible versions that they have to look through the New Testament 'with all the versions you can lay your hands on, and find out everything the Lord says about love and unity':

You will find some amazing verses [...] At dinner you could talk over the finds of the day. It would be a wonderful study, and very searching [...] But be sure to end your talks with singing together some love song, some prayer for love, something kindling about His love. Let us humble ourselves very low. Let us ask Him to make us moss for His feet in this matter of vital intertwined love and unity that nothing can sever – no, not for an hour. I long and thirst to have our Fellowship utterly satisfying to Him. He must be so often disappointed. Let us not disappoint Him.¹⁹⁸⁸

For believers, even the young ones, it was for her important that they know the Scriptures and be grounded in it for their whole life. The Bible, 'the most wonderful book', is not meant to have 'a quick run through the appointed chapter or portion. We must look closely and continue looking'.¹⁹⁸⁹ She said, 'Try using Bible words as a sword with which to fight the devil of discouragement'.¹⁹⁹⁰ For Amy the study of the Bible with the children and others was important, because studying the Bible marks the

1985. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 122.

1986. In the introduction of *Whispers of His Power*, 5–6.

1987. In the note in *Edges of His Ways*, VII.

1988. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 343.

1989. *Whispers of His Power*, 22 September, 202–203.

1990. *Whispers of His Power*, 20 February, 44.

beginning of their journey to faith; Bible study will lead to meet its composer. Reading the Bible in a reverent spirit, she was convinced that it is the inspired Word of God, and that the Holy Spirit would speak through it to her, and enable her to see 'great and unsearchable things you do not know'.¹⁹⁹¹

In reading with a prayerful heart, she found in the Bible a reservoir of untapped resources. She was a missionary who 'crept' through her Bible and was always ready to expect and to discover new things. Reading in the new translation of James Moffat¹⁹⁹² she underlined Luke 13:18, 'but all the crowd rejoiced over all the splendid doings', and at the end leaf she just wrote 'Luke 13:18'. In Orville's *A Combined Harmony of the Gospels*, we see many comments in the margins. When the angel tells Mary that she will become the mother of Jesus and that 'He shall be great' (v. 32) she wrote in the margin 'His greatness found in His service and sacrifice'. In her Bible she had a never-ending source of life and encouragement. 'I am more and more impressed as I read the Bible', and 'there are so many promises, [...] the promises are enough to rest upon'.¹⁹⁹³ Amy knew that in India the Lord could speak to his children in dreams. 'We do not explain this or defend we only know that it is so'.¹⁹⁹⁴

It was important for her to have a listening attitude. In application for her it was always, 'What did Jesus say?' Concentrating on what he said, she could stake all her trust upon his Word; it was Scriptural concentration and not sentimental consecration. The Bible was not an object of contemplation, no cause for subtleties, but support and companion on the path of life. God's revealed Word was always the starting and pivotal point of all reflective thinking for her. The wagon wheel (Figure 34) on the bungalow's veranda shows exactly from which premises Amy was thinking. 'Feet accustomed to the road to God can find it in the dark'.¹⁹⁹⁵

Her study of the Bible and her spiritual experience gave her full assurance of the truth of the Christian religion. The key of her understanding of the Bible was not her general knowledge, nor her intelligence, but a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. She developed her thoughts and mission theory after she had got into the inside.

'This Book of books finds us where we are, meets our deepest needs, and speaks to us with a voice utterly different from any other voice'.¹⁹⁹⁶ The content of her devotional writings focused on lively immersion in the Scripture and reproduced the message in songs, most of them now gathered in the Dohnavur songbook *Wings*. For her message, she rambled all over the Scripture. 'It is an unfathomable jewel mine – this Book of ours'.¹⁹⁹⁷ She was just digging for gold. By every means, Amy tried to make her children genuine Bible Christians. She tried to give them a thorough knowledge of the Bible in Dohnavur and above everything else, to receive 'the one thing necessary' in their lives. A life of full concentration to God.

The themes dealt with issues related to Christian initiation and the Christian life, repentance, dedication and holiness, obedience and the infilling of the Holy Spirit, working with joy for the Lord, experiencing living waters flowing eternally, bearing the Cross for the Lord and redeeming the debt of

1991. Jeremiah 33:3 [NIV].

1992. The New Testament [New York: Association Press, 1918]. This Bible in the Dohnavur library.

1993. *Edges of His Ways*, 01 March, 32.

1994. In *Gold Cord*, 87.

1995. Amy quotes Dr Maclaren on Psalm 3:4 [in *Whispers of His Power*, 28 April, 93].

1996. *Whispers of His Power*, 13 September, 196.

1997. *Candles in the Dark*, 44.

the Gospel, and enduring trials that foster faith. We can be sure that these themes were set in the wider horizon of the salvation secured for all in the Cross and resurrection of Christ.

She looked for solid conversions and lasting faithfulness. Her use of the Bible to bring people to repentance, to awaken faith and to nurture holiness signals the older pietistic conception of the Bible that focuses on a soteriological reading of the text. Amy clearly holds the Bible to the reliability if not inerrancy of Scripture, but this is not what holds her attention in practice. She stands here in the tradition of John Wesley and early Methodism. Amy worked at the edges of the Church where she saw many Church members just as nominal members who need to be born again. The doctrine of Christian



Source: © J. (Hans) Kommers.

FIGURE 34: On each of the six segments of the wheel on the bungalow's verandah is a Tamil word which indicates some part of the Fellowship's work. The whole is bound by a band of shining brass which looks like gold, and signifies the bond of love which holds the Fellowship together. In Amy's time the wheel stood in the church, so that all the members of the Fellowship were constantly reminded of their high calling, and helped to magnify their office and to do the will of God from the heart. A vision the Dohnavur Fellowship still has in this present day.

life was for her as important as the great canonical faith of the Church. However, love was essential to the feeding of Christ's little lambs.

She never argued about the inspiration or criticised the text; she watched its influence upon human lives and that gave her a definite and distinct evidence that this was from God and that what he said was true. Through faith in God, she saw, trusting God's Word, closed doors opened, closed hearts opened for the redeeming grace, unoccupied fields possessed, funds supplied, and fruit obtained. God's presence, God's promises and his salvation through his Word have proved to be a reality in her life. Never in all those years of mission work, had God's faithfulness failed or his Word been found to be other than trustworthy.¹⁹⁹⁸

For Amy the Bible was like a flower. We cannot see the fragrance of a flower, as we cannot see the presence of the Lord, 'but you can let its sweetness refresh you'.¹⁹⁹⁹ We need to take 'the time and the trouble',²⁰⁰⁰ to absorb it, otherwise we do not gain anything. 'Isn't the Bible amazing?' 'In Scripture every little daisy is a meadow.'²⁰⁰¹ What weighed on her spirit was the fear that missionaries would not tend towards a view of the Bible, leading eventually to 'quicksands'.²⁰⁰² Such an attitude would not build the Church in India, but sooner or later would lead to rubbing out the boundaries and rob the Church of its foundation.

A decision was never taken in Dohnavur without seeking the Lord in prayer and ruminating over the Word before claiming a promise from God. Care and prayer took every new step. She combined intellectual pursuit with intimate fellowship with God, resulting in a faith that was strong, bold and sound. God is faithful and trustworthy. 'Does He *ever* break His Word? No, never.'²⁰⁰³ In all her work she was keeping on the steady track of the Bible. She saw many changes during her life, but the essential Bible track remained. She studied in the Bible until the very end. Every time she found new thoughts. For example, when reading 'For thus says the Lord, you are Gilead to me' (Jr 22:6), she exclaimed, 'That's it. That is what I am. *I am Dohnavur* – all that I am, loved in the beloved place'. She was one with the Fellowship, which she believed was God's creation.

■ An eye-opener

During a convention week in India, the attendants – about 70 missionaries – hurried out after the lecture to get a cup of tea. There Amy heard from an Indian woman who lingered around, stories about missions and the behaviour of missionaries, which caused her to write *God's Missionary*. By writing this booklet, she wanted to help new missionaries who have not yet made up their minds.

1998. Cf. Hudson Taylor's statement about the principles of the CIM: 'We concluded to invite the co-operation of fellow believers, irrespective of denomination, who fully believed in the inspiration of God's Word, and were willing to prove their faith by going to Inland China with only the guarantees they carried within the covers of their pocket Bibles' (Broomhall, *Faith and Facts*, 24).

1999. *Whispers of His Power*, 13 September, 196.

2000. *Whispers of His Power*, 14 September, 197.

2001. *Candles in the Dark*, 40.

2002. See *When God Came*, 15.

2003. *God's Missionary*, 24.

First:

We are here [*in India*] to live holy, loving, and lowly lives. Anything that would hinder us from the closest walk that is possible to us until we see Him face to face is not for us. [...] Are you burning hot people?

We look to you to show us patterns but you are showing us ‘crooked patterns’? The very moment the missionary is on board the ship that will bring them to the assigned place, pray God, ‘asking Him to keep *you*, as we ask Him to keep *us*, from showing “crooked patterns”’.²⁰⁰⁴ The danger for missionaries is that they are too much entangled in worldly affairs. She saw in the community where she was that the Church was very active but there were no changed lives.

Then Amy told of her own experience, without mentioning her name. Three missionaries in three different mission stations had sought light upon the separation for God and his service. All three had come to India with the longing to win souls for the Lord. They felt ‘befogged’ in the tradition of the mission station. Too many things had to be done, and all three felt the danger of losing the touch to their Lord. Two gradually gave in. They did not understand that all over the mission field ‘the sent reflect the senders. Is the Church at home one upon this matter?’ The two who had given in said, ‘If only I had been prepared’. Another said: ‘Society had been a snare to him at home’. And in the end, ‘he was wrecked on the rock of compromise’. Some missionaries are ‘hindrances to the deeper life in the mission house rather than helps’. ‘Remembering these things’, Amy writes, ‘we are writing. [...] We are to know *nothing* among any save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified’.²⁰⁰⁵ The main purpose for being on the mission field is ‘the showing of Christ, the living of Christ, among those who do not know Him’. Whatever makes for holiness of life, for the clearing of the glass through which the light shines, ‘this is for us and nothing else’.²⁰⁰⁶

She advises all new missionaries to be sure that the way they go is from God and that this gives them assurance. In this case missionary calling is a ‘*special calling*’ and is ‘giving yourselves wholly to this office’, wherever you are, whether this be on board a ship or on shore. She quoted Paul, standing in the midst of his shipmates, who said, ‘God, whose I am, and whom I serve’.²⁰⁰⁷ And where to serve? ‘Is it not true that the point is not so much *where* we are, as *whether* we are where our Lord wants us to be?’ The work is one, what would become of us, out here, if for one day the Lord ceased to ‘hold the ropes’? Only wherever we are, let us pour out our ‘love like the rush of a river, wasting its waters forever and ever’, and ‘when the King comes back, forever and forever we shall rejoice together’.²⁰⁰⁸ Be constantly among the people you are sent to. We are in:

[N]eed of a fresh touch, as we speak with them and see them day by day. We need renewed compassions, renewed earnestness. It is easy to grow accustomed to things, easy to get cool. [...] We pray for ourselves with ever deepening intensity: Oh, for a love, for a burning love, like the fervent flame of fire! Oh, for a love, for a yearning love, that will never, never tire! [...] Lord, in my need I appeal unto Thee; oh, give me my heart’s desire!²⁰⁰⁹

Amy could not understand that there was alienation between Indian Christians and missionaries. By experience, she writes, she knew so little of these difficulties. ‘We have found India friendly, and her Christians are our friends. [...] Nowhere could there be warmer love, more tender affection’.²⁰¹⁰ She had

2004. *God’s Missionary*, 15.

2005. *God’s Missionary*, 17–20.

2006. *God’s Missionary*, 20.

2007. Acts 27:23.

2008. *From Sunrise Land*, 125.

2009. *Lotus Buds*, 51.

2010. *Lotus Buds*, 56.

experienced meetings with other missionary women, drinking tea and gossiping, but showing very little concern for the eternal souls of those about them.

■ In the searchlight of the cross

'Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden and ever since in every garden of His lovers there has been a cross.'²⁰¹¹ In what way will God's servant appear and present the Gospel? Did not Paul write, 'For I am determined not to know anything among you, save Christ and Him crucified!' She underlined these words in Saint Teresa's *The Interior Castle*, 'there are no better arms than those of the Cross'.²⁰¹² Thinking about the Cross of Christ, she agreed with Mrs Hodgkin who wrote in a figurative speech:

[B]orrowed from the outward Tree, or Wooden Cross on which Christ submitted to the Will of God in permitting Him to suffer Death at the Hands of Evil Men. So that the Cross Mystical is that Divine Grace and power which crosses the Carnal Wills of Men. [...] For nothing else can mortify Sin or make it easy for us to submit to the Divine Will in Things otherwise contrary to our own.²⁰¹³

The Cross on which Jesus died was for her not a thing to admire, but she saw in it the sense of Matthew 16:24: 'If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me'.

Always in everything, the missionary stands in the way of the Cross in doing his duty; therefore, mission work can only be done in putting off the old man and putting on the new man. In this she discovered, that she belonged to God, and therefore, could not live her life autonomously, but had to do it in connection to him, to whom she belonged.

Since Amy had been in the Keswick circles, she had met many influential holiness preachers of whom some were so ablaze for the glory of God that they presented the Word of God emphasising only the glory side while they ignored God's method, as Paul explained, in presenting the Gospel. Since her arrival on the mission field – even earlier in Belfast – Amy had presented the side represented by the Cross. Christ was exalted on the Cross and in the Cross his glory is revealed. In her talks with the people in India and in her books, she never dealt with the Cross doctrinally, but she did what Jesus told us to do, to lift him up. 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.'²⁰¹⁴ At the time when the call to the mission field came, she was pulled back and forth between her love for her family, the DOM, the work for the Keswick Convention and the obedience to God's call. Someone sent her a poem, which encouraged her and strengthened her faith.²⁰¹⁵ Several times she came back to this poem and frequently quoted the verses:

2011. *Gold by Moonlight*, 47.

2012. On page 18.

2013. These words in L.V. Hodgkin, *Gulielma: Wife of William Penn*, (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1947), 131. Amy loved these words: 'God often touches our best Comforts, and calls for that we most love, and are least willing to part with. Not that He always utterly takes it away, but to prove the Souls' Integrity, to caution us from Excesses and that we may remember God, the Author of those Blessings we possess, and live loose to them. I speak my Experience: The Way to keep your Enjoyments is to resign them: and though that be hard, 'tis sweet to see them returned with more Love and blessing than before. ... The Way of God is a way of Faith, as dark to Sense, as mortal to Self' [p. 131].

2014. John 12:32.

2015. Author unknown. The lines are a paraphrase of pages 83–85 of Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1981), Book II, Chapter XI. See *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 42.

Many crowned the Saviour's Kingdom, Many sit at Jesus table,
 Few receive His Cross, Few will fast with Him
 Many seek His consolation, When the sorrow-cup of anguish
 Few will suffer loss Trembles to the brim-
 For the dear sake of the Master, Few watch with Him in the garden
 Counting all but dross. Who have sung the hymn.

Many will confess His wisdom, But the souls who love Him truly
 Few embrace His shame, Whether for woe or bliss,
 Many, should He smile upon them, These will count their truest heart's blood
 Will His praise proclaim; Not their own, but His;
 Then, if for a while He leave them, Saviour, Thou Who thus hast loved me,
 They desert His Name. Give me love like this.

In dealing with these things, Amy did not write for others, 'but we are writing to *ourselves*'.²⁰¹⁶ 'We, as missionaries treat the world not only in its corruptions but in its legitimate joys, in all its privileges and blessings', but eyes fixed upon the Lord, 'to receive the manna that falls from Heaven'. There are things in this world, which 'are not for us, not for us'. It is not that the Lord *forbids*, but we should '*voluntarily and gladly lay aside*' the things that charm and ravish the world. Reciting Tauler's words, 'a pure heart is one to which all that is *not of God* is strange and jarring', she urges us to search ourselves in the searchlight of God.²⁰¹⁷ Years later she would underline the following sentence:

One of the great risks [...] is the worker's surprise at vocations to share the passion. So many of us recoil from the real Cross. We have our limits and we too easily find reasons for this way or that of dodging painful calling.²⁰¹⁸

Amy saw God's missionary as a soldier, disentangled, a Nazarite, separating himself unto the Lord, a Priest, crowned. A soldier on service is out on campaign, and he cannot be entangled in the affairs of this life. He has to be aware to walk 'in the cross-marked path of Jesus'.²⁰¹⁹ The Greek has here 'the little affairs'. The things here are so little compared with the great affairs of the war. Missionaries see many things and yield to the temptation of closely studying cases rarely seen, but does it 'hasten the coming of the Master's Kingdom'?²⁰²⁰ Amy had seen the *social* entanglements, where missionaries were often drawn into futile discussions. The daily affairs on the mission compound were often so overwhelming: this thing had to be done and that, but where was the quiet time to talk with God? The windows were often closed and not open to Jerusalem. In Amy's opinion, there was too much empty talk:

Too often colleague missionaries are hurt by our talking. Be sure when you are talking, you have the three sieves: Is it true? kind? Necessary? [...] Imagine the Lord at table or in the room (and He is). [...] All we need, all we want, is to have His ungrieved Presence with us always.²⁰²¹

Many missionary women would be busy with their dresses. What to do?:

2016. *God's Missionary*, 37.

2017. *God's Missionary*, 39–40.

2018. In H.M. Smith, *Frank, Bishop of Zanzibar. The Life of Frank Weston (1871–1924)* [London: SPCK, 1926], 150. In the Dohnavur library.

2019. *From Sunrise Land*, 170.

2020. *God's Missionary*, 33.

2021. *God's Missionary*, 24–25.

Let us go to our Lord, the Crucified, and ask Him what He thinks about it. And if He asks us to change our ways even in this, for his sake and for the sake of those whom we might help [...] shall we not do it?²⁰²²

Here she must have thought of the opposition she received after having changed her Western clothes into Indian dress. As for recreation, of course there is no harm in recreation, but only if it is seen as 're-equipment for future work with no leakage of spiritual power'. If not, 'we dry up and become a desert in a desert', it 'hinders' rather than 'is a help'.²⁰²³

There is the entanglement of *overwork*. The burden of the unreached can overwhelm a missionary and often result in unconfessed, perhaps unrealised *ambition* – this deadly entangling – the love of the praise of man that brings a snare. When we fail? Then the heart breaks with the shame and the sorrow of the thought: 'If I had spent more time with God for souls I should have had more power with souls for God'.²⁰²⁴ Powers of darkness creep in!

Here she quoted Coillard²⁰²⁵ of the Zambezi who said, 'The evangelization of the heathen world is a desperate struggle with the Prince of Darkness'. For Amy mission work was 'a serious task'. It should mean 'a life of consecration and faith'. In the Bible the word 'entanglement' is connected with something dangerous. Missionaries are afraid of malaria. This sickness sometimes drives them out of the mission field. 'Should we less dread this spiritual malaria, the fever of a restless soul, which has a power, we know not how. [...] It unnerves us for the fight.' 'What is the good of a fit body with an unfit soul inside it?' And the better way?:

O to be holy
Thou wilt not say me nay
Who movest me to pray:
'Enable to endure'.
Spiritual cleansing Fire,
Fulfil my heart's desire:
Make pure.²⁰²⁶

In conclusion, Amy saw the secret of fruitful mission work in Arnot's words: 'I do not think there is anything so essential to real service for God as an entire separation and devotion to the work'.²⁰²⁷

For Amy, one of the secrets of going on was to 'get away'. Breathe in sea air or mountain air, air that is pure and strong, and you come back refreshed! Do this with your Indian friends and when you come back be busy and you will experience being 'on the spot *when we are needed*'. Unpractical? 'It works.' You come and your work with the people is successful, 'because *they* have come in real love, and because *they* know they do'. Then she concluded:

2022. *God's Missionary*, 25.

2023. *God's Missionary*, 37.

2024. *God's Missionary*, 27.

2025. François Coillard (1834 in Asnières-les-Bourges, France – 1904 in Lealui, Zimbabwe), of Huguenot descent. Offered himself in 1854 to the *Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris*. In 1857 he went to Cape Town. Robert Moffat at Kuruman urged him to move north where he founded the Zambezi Mission in 1885. He sent a lot of lively and moving letters to the mission office in Paris. Many of these letters were published in 1889 as *Sur le Haut-Zambèze: voyages et travaux de mission* [*On the Threshold of Central Africa*, 1879].

2026. *God's Missionary*, 28–29.

2027. *God's Missionary*, 34.

We can never know an Eastern people – it is fallacious to imagine we can – while we find our chief recreation to be an escape from their companionship into the society of our fellow-Europeans.²⁰²⁸

Missionaries should be aware that the people of the land are keenly observant: they mark our preferences in the choice of our friends, as in everything else, if we find our rest and pleasure in being away from them, will they open out to us and let us understand them? No, we shall be farther away from them than we know. They may be affectionate, there will always be a certain reserve in their confidence – unrecognised by us, because we are not near enough to them. You cannot be a good missionary if you cannot be happy among the people you are working with. Amy does not want to define someone else's duty but she urges that each of us should be sincere in finding out our own. There is a sense, even physically, in which the joy of the Lord is strength. First things first. What is the missionary's first thing? 'Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.'²⁰²⁹ 'O that in me Thou my Lord, may see of the travail of Thy soul, and be satisfied.'²⁰³⁰

For Amy the death of Christ on the Cross was the gateway to enter into the union with God. The Cross of Christ is often seen as a type of the cross we have to carry. But Jesus did not say, 'if any man will come after Me, let him take up "My cross"', but, 'let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me'.²⁰³¹ For her the important question was: 'How can we missionaries most effectively touch our world for Christ?' We should know to draw the line. There should always be room for Christ and we know that there are places where there is no room for Christ. We have but one responsibility that is not to miss 'the *opportunities*' as they pass. 'To speak for our Lord is not to write in sand.'²⁰³² No plans or strategy, but 'the Cross is the attraction'. In the Cross Amy saw the dimensions of divine love. The Cross is not the cross of a man, but the exhibition of the heart of God:

We never touch the realm of the cross until we are suffering vicariously, until our suffering of sympathy with others, and our strength is being poured out in order to help others. That is the cross. We can only interpret the cross by His cross.²⁰³³

With all her Keswick experience, she followed her own path. Since the beginning of the 20th century the Keswick movement has begun to shift away from its Christ centric and mission characteristics and to grow introspective in spirituality. The danger was that people more and more see their own experience rather than the source of that experience, the person and the work of Jesus Christ. Amy always concentrated on the objective side, the work and the person of Christ Jesus. He was always the first and the last, always in the centre of her thinking. Her spiritual experiences were founded in Christ's work on the Cross.

If a missionary works in another way, 'be aware not to shipwreck on the rock of compromise'.²⁰³⁴ One can only go to others in compassion, when the surrender to God is first in life. Amy was in contact with Lilius Trotter in Algeria and both shared the same opinion. Mrs Trotter wrote:

2028. *God's Missionary*, 43.

2029. *God's Missionary*, 45–46. The Bible quotation is from 2 Corinthians 4:10.

2030. *God's Missionary*, 46.

2031. Cf. here O. Chambers's quotation: 'The Cross of Jesus Christ is a revelation; our cross is an experience' [Chambers, *The Complete Works*, 1091].

2032. *God's Missionary*, 49.

2033. *Whispers of His Power*, 25 August, 181.

2034. *God's Missionary*, 53.

And so the Spring-time expands, till it passes once more into the shadow of Calvary. For the blessedness of receiving is not all God has for us: a new world lies beyond – a world of giving: a giving first to God in surrender, then to man in sacrifice.²⁰³⁵

For a missionary the crown of God is enough. The crown of being anointed by God and the crown of rejoicing, the crown of converts won by his wonderful, infinite love, when we shall stand in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Jim Elliot's words: 'How many Mara's have been sweetened by a simple, satisfying glimpse of the Tree and the Love which underwent its worst conflict there'. Yes, the Cross is the tree that sweetens the waters. The crux is love. Love is the answer and it carries a burden, without being burdened. Love knows no measure, but warmly glows. 'Love is the answer to all things: love ends all questions. Lord, ever more give us this love.'²⁰³⁶ When speaking or writing about sufferings, adversities, she would say 'the Cross is the attraction. [...]. No dressing of the Cross with flowers in that prison, May 7. 1936'.²⁰³⁷

■ 'Lord, I come'

What kind of person is someone going to the mission field? Terms stated for one to come are, to be sure, to be called of God, to believe Acts 1:8, and to live only for souls to bring them to Christ in order that his Name will be glorified. Once out, the devil's favourite device is to get the missionaries engrossed in other things.

Anything but soul-winning, he says. *Anything* but aggressive fight. And unless the Hand of the Lord is strong upon us we shall give in, and swim with the stream. [...] If He calls, then fear not, obey.²⁰³⁸

'God needs those who are ready to lay down their very lives to lead others into true soldiership and a true following of the Crucified.'²⁰³⁹ Once Amy was writing about what a child had said to her:

Last night I thought I was going to Heaven, and I was so glad to go. But I was suddenly sorry. I thought all the angels would look at me, and there would be tears in their eyes, because I had loved our Lord Jesus so long, and I had not brought one to Him.

Then Amy continued:

So long. [...] Would the angels look at us 'with tears' if we went Home to-night? [...] What is it that keeps so many so many from coming? Is it fear that ties the feet? Need there be any fear in a coming unto Jesus? 'Lord, if it be Thou bid me to come unto Thee on the water'. And He said, Come, and he walked on the water to go to Jesus.²⁰⁴⁰

Amy urges that, when there is something that holds us back to go to the mission field, then the Lord will 'find us there where He means us to be'.²⁰⁴¹

2035. In Trotter, *Parables of the Cross* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott and Algiers Mission Band, 1947), 17.

2036. *God's Missionary*, 58.

2037. In the margin of Matthew 10:28, 'And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul' (in Stevens & de Witt Burton, *A Harmony of the Gospels*).

2038. *From the Fight*, 61–62.

2039. *Candles in the Dark*, 11.

2040. *Overweights of Joy*, 296.

2041. *Overweights of Joy*, 296.

Oh, let us be in earnest! Life is not a play. There are playful moments in it but taken as a whole it is an awful thing – this one brief life. Do not let us play away such an opportunity. Master, if it be Thou, bid me to come unto Thee upon the water..... Lord, I come.²⁰⁴²

Amy had not been prepared in any formal way for mission work, neither in Japan nor in India. Are not all God's men ordinary men made extraordinary by the matter he has given them? She moved in the 'faith-missions' circles, where formal training was not considered necessary, it being naively assumed that as long as the missionary's habits of prayer, Bible reading and noticing the experiences of the day were in good order, first-hand experience would supply the rest. Nothing, however, is guaranteed, and the bill for the actual damage may be unacceptably high. For the outgoing 19th century the discussion whether a women could serve in the mission lay several decades in the past. Already in 1824 the China pioneer Robert Morrison had written:

The missionary community should consist of persons of both sexes, possessing different qualifications and places and duties in it. To assist the pagan females to understand the doctrines of the Gospel, Christian females are essential. [...] Pious young women to acquire the pagan language and teach girls and grown women would be very useful.²⁰⁴³

Wisely, Amy began with the study of Tamil,²⁰⁴⁴ and this study saved her from being merely an enthusiast and made her into a missionary. Learning Tamil is like 'rolling the great stone uphill'.²⁰⁴⁵ It requires tough mental discipline to gain a working knowledge of the world's second most difficult language. Amy had to learn the 246 characters with their pronunciation, which include 18 consonants and 216 consonant-vowel combinations. The first examination was always a hurdle to surmount before being able to talk with the women and to acquire practical knowledge of the vernacular. Her experience was that at the very moment she could not find the exact words. Were it not the words, then 'caste comes at once and make a distance between us and those to whom we would fain be as sisters'.²⁰⁴⁶ One of the snares of a young missionary is the temptation to put other things first than to tackle the inevitably difficult task of regular language study. In not mastering the language many a missionary has suffered his whole career from this great handicap of insufficient knowledge.

In later years, her grasp of the vernacular was said to have been of the highest order. There is no record of her ever having shown any further interest in classical Tamil; however, she mastered the language to be able to converse with the people, and we even have indications that she knew something of the classic literature. In one of her books, *From the Fight*, the headings of all the chapters have fragments of Tamil poets of more than a thousand years ago, with sometimes the remark, 'free translation'.²⁰⁴⁷ In quoting²⁰⁴⁸ one of her colleagues:

Nothing has taken such a lasting hold of the mind of the Tamil people as the terse writings of their Moral Poets. And it is impossible to understand their thought and character without some knowledge of their stanzas.

2042. *Overweights of Joy*, 300.

2043. In Broomhall, *Robert Morrison*, 156.

2044. KCMMB, report of the Ladies Committee, March 1898, 'The Ladies Committee thankfully report that the examination of [...] and of Miss Wilson Carmichael have been successfully passed'.

2045. D. Thrower, *No Looking Back* (London: Grace Publications Trust, 1986), 27.

2046. *Overweights of Joy*, 38: 'Oh for words to tell it as it deserves to be told. How we longed to stay with these women, to become Fort women to them, and tell them all about the love of Jesus over and over, till we could be sure they understood.'

2047. *From the Fight*, 6, 17, 28, 39, 51.

2048. *From the Fight*, 55.

She agrees with the necessity of having insight into language knowledge. Her interest was with the people, and all she tried was to be able to communicate with them without many hindrances. 'To be native all round is the goal of my ambition.'²⁰⁴⁹ She strongly emphasised the necessity of knowing the language and, not really an academic language scholar herself, she had a good working knowledge of Tamil and knew the little nuances referring to the different words to describe something.²⁰⁵⁰ About the Tamil people she says:

Their thoughts run on lines quite unfamiliar to Westerns, and the missionary, if she would be equipped for her work, must know something at least of the world of thought expressed in poem and proverb and proverbial allusion, which to the women she wants to win is a very part of themselves. [...] But this knowledge is not acquired in a year, or in five. One writes humbly, Not as though I had already attained.²⁰⁵¹

In her language study Thomas Walker coached her. In him, she not only found a good Tamil teacher, but also a spiritual leader. Knowing the country and its people was important to Amy:

The East is the home of spiritualism and hypnotism. The secrets connected with mental suggestion and sub-consciousness are open secrets here. However, this wonderful old land, with its wonderful old ways, lies all round us, most of us live in it without knowing much about it. It hides itself from us. Even its language has its hidden talk, an ingenious combination of vocals and consonants worked into the colloquial. India is a cabinet of drawers, and secret drawers. We only know enough to know that we do not know.²⁰⁵²

She was far from lifting up the successes of missionaries and did not like missionary biographies in which a new worker trumpets almost at once that his work is very blessed. To master a difficult tongue is not child's play. She could feel her way into the struggles of Thomas Walker²⁰⁵³ to master the language. Often missionaries go out with rosy ideas and on the mission field they show him a Sunday service, where it seems everything is like this. But he will – quoting Thomas Walker:

[C]arry away coloured ideas of missionary work. He ought to take a second tour, to see what is left undone. That would give the other side. [...] But is it quite a mistake to think that the Christian Church has made a very great impression on heathendom yet. [...] Satan still reigns in our midst.²⁰⁵⁴

■ The very cream of life

One day, while writing, Amy saw two pictures.²⁰⁵⁵ One was of an English fireside in a country house. Curled up in a roomy armchair by the fire was a girl with a kitten asleep on her lap. She was reading a missionary book. Did she see herself in the sitting room in Broughton Grange?²⁰⁵⁶ The other picture was this: a white carved cupola in the centre of a piece of water enclosed by white walls. People are sitting on the walls and pressing close about them in their thousands. Amy saw herself among all these people,

2049. *From Sunrise Land*, 118.

2050. So in *The Widow of the Jewels*, 18.

2051. *From the Fight*, 52.

2052. *Overweights of Joy*, 233.

2053. Cf. *This One Thing*, p. 18 etc.

2054. *This One Thing*, 21–22.

2055. *Lotus Buds*, 336.

2056. We know of a picture, taken in 1892, where Amy is in the garden of Broughton Grange with a kitten on her lap. Picture in *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 52.

distributing Gospels. That was for her real missionary life. ‘How far out of its selfish track does it move the life into ways of sacrifice? [...] Did not Calvary cost?’:

Away with the cold, calculating love that talks to itself about cost! God give us a pure passion of love that knows nothing of hesitation and grudging, and measuring, nothing of compromise! [...] Is there not provision for the impossible? [...] To be filled with the Spirit means readiness for Him to take us out of our present sphere and put us anywhere away from our own choice into His choice for us.

Here, Amy quoted words spoken from a quiet women’s meeting at the recently held Keswick Convention.²⁰⁵⁷ It overwhelmed her while writing these things. She longed for Christ to be exalted in India and the Lord to be worshipped in the beauty of holiness. It was her passion, ‘just one thing I do!’²⁰⁵⁸ Missionary work is ‘not the emotion of the moment, but the passion of a lifetime’.²⁰⁵⁹ A question which always arises for a missionary before going ‘in this cross bearing life’²⁰⁶⁰ is: ‘Am I in God’s plan and path?’ Amy argued to be sure that God himself sent them to that particular field and at that particular time. ‘Believe me, the foreign field is already full enough of prophets that have run, and He did not send them.’²⁰⁶¹

After she had been active in mission work for a year, Amy was overwhelmed by the idea of being worthy to be called a missionary. Therefore, she was less anxious about success than about being faithful, and she committed her way to the Lord alone.²⁰⁶² During her whole life, she had felt safe in the firm belief in the guiding providence of God and any hindrances in God’s work might be found in us!²⁰⁶³ On 13 June 1894 she wrote home:

Oh is it not a magnificent thing to be privileged thus in any small measure, to spread the glorious tidings of our Blessed Lord! Praise Him, ye missionaries! Ours is the very cream of life – and yours too, dear home ones, who give and help give for surely God’s good measure, pressed down and shaken together and running over, must be yours. Mission work was to be done, looking for, and earnestly desiring the Coming, all hastening that Bridal Day.

She was often down-hearted by the idea that at home so many Christians were living ‘with cold reserve’. The following lines are so appropriate concerning the missionary community in Bangalore, where one day the well-known song ‘Onward Christian Soldiers’ was put rather differently by her:

Onward Christian soldiers,
Sitting on the mats!
Nice and warm and cosy
Like little pussycats.
Onward, Christian soldiers,
Oh, how brave are we!
Don’t we do our fighting
Very comfortably?

2057. *Lotus Buds*, 335–336.

2058. *Lotus Buds*, 339.

2059. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 91.

2060. *Overweights of Joy*, 58.

2061. *Overweights of Joy*, 58.

2062. Cf. the prayer of James Stewart on Friday 12 July 1861 on his way to Africa: ‘O God, give Thou the wisdom – the guidance I need. Thou hast led so far, lead me the rest of the way, and let such work be done as shall be to the praise of Thy name and Thy grace, and such as shall make known also Thy purposes of grace and mercy to men on earth’ (in Wells, *Stewart of Lovedale*, 39).

2063. *Overweights of Joy*, Chapter XVIII, 132–145.

In a letter from a young lady who was considering life as a missionary, Amy was asked, 'What is a missionary life like?' Amy wrote back, simply, 'Missionary life is simply a chance to die'. 'We *must* suffer; but He suffered and will comfort':

A missionary on fire to see souls saved does see souls saved. But it is no less true that often the call is to enter deep into the fellowship of His sufferings.²⁰⁶⁴

'Who am I to do this work? Am I qualified?' Amy learned the great lesson by knowing, by experiencing and by suffering the two words: I the poor sinner and thou my Lord, eternal, merciful Saviour. What Christ had given her, that was worthy of love. To say it in another way: you can only do mission work when you can give thanks. Giving thanks is the weakness of a child and for modern men in this 21st century it does not seem decent to be weak and to thank, let alone to thank the Lord. Amy knew her Lord and she did her work in India in the way others before her had done mission work. She nourished herself next to her Bible with the writings of many before her, who had just focused everything upon Christ's love. The work in India overwhelmed her, but she never lost that constraining love of Christ which led her to put the eternal welfare of the people she met and the children first, always, everywhere, on him.

India is, according to Amy, a country where the secular does not appeal. The everyday work done in Dohnavur taught her a new and difficult lesson, 'the sacredness of the commonplace':

Day by day we learn to rub out a little more of the clear chalked line that someone has ruled on life's blackboard: the Secular and the Spiritual may not be divided now. [...] The enlightening of a dark soul or the lightening of a kitchen fire, it matters not which it is, if only we are obedient to the heavenly vision, and work with a pure intention to the glory of our God.²⁰⁶⁵

Even of her it can be said: 'also this one was with Jesus of Nazareth'. Life and work spent totally for the Lord. The prophet Ezekiel emphasised this, when he wrote that God said this to the people of his day, 'The nations will *know* that I am the Lord [...] when I show myself holy through you before their eyes' (Ezk 20:41–42). The life of the believer is the most effective factor in all gospel witness. Looking back on nearly six decades of mission work, the experience and activities of those years stirred her heart to thank God for them all. 'Lord [...] all that we have accomplished you have done for us' (Is 26:12). A missionary has 'to be found *faithful*'. 'Praise God, it does not say "successful". In obedience go! and the heart's desire has to keep up with God and His plans', and that means availability, adaptability. 'The besetting thing of Evangelistic work is slackness.'²⁰⁶⁶

Often the difficulty in a climate where nature is reluctant to read or to pray is to maintain and to remain in communion with God. A lethargy in the cultivation of personal communion with God, in times of being 'down', the missionary should do well to see to his own foundations. 'Love is our great object, love to Christ, producing love for perishing souls.'²⁰⁶⁷

■ Mission method

Dohnavur was a mission project on its own. Amy wanted that and wanted to keep it like that. She avoided the contact with other mission organisations. To candidates willing to serve in Dohnavur Amy

2064. *Overweights of Joy*, 185.

2065. *Lotus Buds*, 139–140.

2066. *Overweights of Joy*, 60.

2067. Thomas Walker in *This One Thing*, 23.

carefully explained what the Fellowship really was and the way they operated day to day. She told the candidates: workers here in Dohnavur should have a lot of empathy:

The spring of the heart to heart that we call affinity, the knitting no hand can ever afterward unravel – these experiences have been granted to us all through our work together, and we thank God for it.²⁰⁶⁸

Not all mothers bear children. Although not physically, Amy 'bore' hundreds of children for the Lord. She loved children and children loved her. How to tell them about Jesus?:

And this was [*once in Japan*] what I said to Him, won't you say it too? 'Lord Jesus, please help me to follow so closely to Thee, that wherever I go even the little children may feel *Jesus is coming, Jesus is coming*.'²⁰⁶⁹

She and her fellow workers often went around evangelising in the villages which surrounded Dohnavur. This work she called 'pilgrim work', and often she went on foot or by bullock cart; on 22 May 1922, they prayed for a car, 'so that we could reach the towns all round about'.²⁰⁷⁰ Wherever she possibly could, she tried to get into the houses and talk to the women alone 'This is by far the best way to get at them; here, as elsewhere, it is soul to soul dealing which tells.'²⁰⁷¹ She wholly distrusted mass movements, but focused on 'individual conversions to Christ'.²⁰⁷²

People need the great salvation so much, and knew of so little. But what frustrated her was that people in the West were not interested at all in what was really going on in the mission field. It should not be too complicated for them. They were easily in for nice stories, stories of success, but when reality was exposed, many of the so-called interested withdrew:

In some places it seems as if this same 'interest' were treated as a sort of decorative afterthought to the otherwise quite complete church life. An absence of news (good news) from the front, and there is a perceptible cooling off; an honest story of defeat is told, and discouraging results. And yet we all profess to be soldiers, with a soldier's courage in tackling the difficult. To the onlooker, at least, it must sometimes seem that we are not very burning earnest about our soldiership. And if we call ourselves soldiers, and sing, and pray, and talk on these lines, and yet are not burning earnest, is it not possible that the thing we all agree to dislike is resident among us.²⁰⁷³

Amy fully depended on the Holy Ghost. 'When the Holy Spirit has done the work of preparing the heart, very little pressing is needed.' She was afraid of offering strange fire – 'substituting human persuasion for Holy Ghost Power'. 'May He keep us from such deadly dangerous sin!'²⁰⁷⁴

In Japan, where she often had to evangelise to people who mostly heard the Gospel for the first time, Amy started where the Bible starts:

Please tell just the beginnings, only of God, not yet of Christ. [...] We spoke of the Creator and Preserver, and His power and love; the father – God, who made man, watched over him, loved him all his life long.²⁰⁷⁵

2068. *Lotus Buds*, 218.

2069. *From Sunrise Land*, 99.

2070. In the margin of Luke 10:1 – 14 in Stevens & De Witt Burton, *Harmony Of The Gospels*.

2071. *From the Fight*, 20.

2072. *From the Fight*, 26.

2073. *Overweights of Joy*, 52 – 53.

2074. *From Sunrise Land*, 93.

2075. *From Sunrise Land*, 92.

'But "witness unto Me" must mean more, so we tried to explain the great Love-plan, and told of the dear and present Saviour, Who loved us and gave Himself for us.'²⁰⁷⁶ The preaching of the Cross was essential for Amy. Everything that could soften the message, she kept far from her. The worst for her was:

[T]he spirit of tolerance, which is on the increase even in missionary circles. [...] India has not our historical background. [...] They have not had the fight for their freedom, in the sense at least our forefathers fought; there is no Puritan blood in their veins; and so they are willing to follow the lead of almost anyone.²⁰⁷⁷

Therefore, Amy liked the way the Revs Ragland and Walker worked: *straightforward* and *not compromising*. The Lord himself will prepare such workers. Very outspoken Amy wrote:

God create them; they are not the product of theological colleges. And may God save His Missions in India from wasting His time, and money, and men, on the cultivation of what may evolve into something of no more use to creation than a new genus of jelly fish.²⁰⁷⁸

A church service had to be simple. Ecclesiastical paraphernalia:

[I]s not in accordance with the simplicity of the Gospel. [...] Oh for a return to the simplicity and power of the Gospel of Christ! [...] Oh for a return to the days of the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, to obscurity, and poverty, and suffering, and shame and the utter absence of all earthly glory, and the winning of souls of a different make to the type thought sufficiently spiritual now! Oh for more of the signs of Apostleship – scars, and the cross – the real cross – the reproach of Christ the Crucified, - no mitre here, but there a crown.²⁰⁷⁹

All the work done in Dohnavur had an evangelistic character, fully consecrated by first being separated. At the Keswick Convention in 1895, she had heard A.C. Fox saying: 'Friends, let me speak simply and plainly, you *cannot* live in the world and serve God. If you want to be consecrated, you must be separated'.²⁰⁸⁰ She was always waiting to see the evidence of the fruits of the Spirit. In reading about Donald Fraser, a Scottish Presbyterian, and missionary in Africa when someone said 'I fear the Evangel which denationalises', she wrote in the margin: 'Why making a Presbyterian Church in Africa? The gospel would transform the society and the people themselves are able to organise their own church'.²⁰⁸¹

■ Prayer: 'Something Understood'

For this child prayed; and the Lord has given me my petition which I asked Him. Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there.

These words in 1 Samuel 1:27–28 meant a lot in Amy's life. She too had been 'lent to the Lord'. In her Bible, we see in the margin of this text some crucial dates concerning her decision to go to the mission field, and all the moves she made in the last decade of the 19th century – from Broughton Grange to Dohnavur. We read, "Therefore". Broughton Grange. Jan.13.1892, March 3. 1893, Oct. 11.

2076. *From Sunrise Land*, 93.

2077. *Things As They Are*, 244, 245.

2078. *Things As They Are*, 246.

2079. *Things As They Are*, 247, 248.

2080. C.A. Fox, 'Except a corn of wheat falls into the earth and dies', address delivered at the 1895 Keswick Convention, p. 277 (in Stevenson, *Keswick's Authentic Voice*, 274–280).

2081. In the margin of page 92 of A.R. Fraser, *Donald Fraser of Livingstonia* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934). In the Dohnavur library.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 35: Amy's private prayer room in the bungalow.

1895. August. 1899. Given to Give'. Just before she travelled to Japan, during a YWCA mission in Dundee, 07 February 1893, she wrote 'I am but a little child', but safe in Christ's arms:

My helplessness – I am but a little child. My strength, THE PRINCE. My comfort that lay before. He uses me at all. He will take me in His arms. And He will hold me there all the time, so I will trust and not be afraid. Oct. 1896.²⁰⁸² We believe there is some connection between knowing and caring and praying, and what happens afterwards. Otherwise, we should leave the darkness to cover the things that belong to the dark. [...] So we do the thing from which we shrink with strong recoil; we stand on the edge of the pit, and look down and tell what we have seen, urged by the longing within us that the Christians of England should pray. [...] The story of the children is the story of answered prayer. If any of us were tempted to doubt whether, after all, prayer is a genuine transaction, and answers to prayer no figment of the imagination – but something as real as the tangible things about us – we have only to look at some of our children. It would require more faith to believe that what we call the Answer came by chance or by the action of some unintelligible combination of controlling influences, that to accept the statement in its simplicity – God heard: God answered.²⁰⁸³

2082. In Amy's Bible (1895), in the margin of 1 Samuel 1:27–28 and in 1 Kings 3:7.

2083. *Lotus Buds*, 90 and 91.

In 1870, in a little village along the north Irish coast, a little girl knelt beside her bed to pray. She was only three years old, but her mother had taught her that God answers prayer. Encouraged by such a truth, she prayed that night that God would make her 'brown eyes blue', like the others in the family. Sure as she was, that God would answer, she laid down and slept. In the morning, she woke and rushed to the mirror, only to discover that God had not answered her prayer, for looking back at her were those same brown eyes. In Amy on her knees, we see on a more personal level and it is as if she had first-hand communion with God. She had all the children on her heart and in the first years she knew all their names and brought them, often at night when she could not sleep, to her heavenly Father and interceded for them. Prayer had been Amy's 'core business' from early youth until the end of her life.

Years later, Amy, would find herself in India seeking to penetrate a difficult culture and a terrible secret. Often she would disguise herself, wearing the dress of the day, rubbing coffee powder onto her skin to darken it and mixing with ordinary folk in the markets and the temple. It was on seeing her daring plan and unusual tactics that one of her friends commented: 'It is a very fortunate thing that your eyes are brown and not blue. You would never pass for an Indian woman then!' God never makes mistakes. Elliot gave a vivid account of Amy's understanding of prayer:²⁰⁸⁴

It happened at Hirosi. This was a large Buddhist village where only eight or nine Christians shone 'like stars in the night'. Amy planned to visit the village, but wanted to prepare herself by praying along the lines of whatever God intended to do there. If she could be sure of that, she could pray with faith. Years later, she discovered that Julian of Norwich had held the similar view of prayer: 'I am the Ground of thy beseeching: first it is my will that thou have it: and after, I make thee to will it: and after, I make thee to beseech it and thou beseeches it. How should it then be that you should not have thy beseeching'.

Prayer always had an essential spiritual discipline for Amy. In Dohnavur, once a month, a whole day was devoted to prayer, and it was so arranged that everybody could participate, while the work with the children could still go on. All the work during that month is directed by that one day. Next to Amy's room in the bungalow is still the prayer room where the Dohnavur workers could go in and have a quiet moment to talk with God.

She knew that she and the others in Dohnavur were surrounded by a hostile spirit-atmosphere and that they could not survive the counter attacks of the evil one, without the divine guiding and empowering that comes from intimate fellowship with God. Her letters and books express her consciousness of the weakness of her own faith and the overpowering might of the adversary and the obstacles removed. It is so easy to be distracted while praying and 'often, when we are most in earnest to pray we are tormented by wandering thoughts, and distraction of all sorts':

I have been reading some old books lately and find that exactly the same thing distressed others all along, the line. 'The noise of a file,' as one says, is enough to distract him (how much more the prod of a mosquito). Distractions in prayer appear to be among the permitted trials of life, if so there must be some way of turning them to good. [...] This is a simple way open to all: Don't fuss, don't worry, don't spend time wondering, why that thought came just then or that other interruption was allowed, for that is playing into the enemy's hands. But as soon as you are conscious that you have been drawn away, peacefully come back again. 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul'.²⁰⁸⁵

2084. In *A Chance to Die*, 66.

2085. Amy in a short note for the Prayer Day, 06 November 1936. By the kindness of Rev. Doug Curry, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Liss, who gave me this prayer note, found in his private collection of Dohnavur Fellowship books.

‘What is prayer?’ was a question Amy asked herself. Of all the answers, the most satisfying answer was the vaguest of all: ‘Something Understood’.²⁰⁸⁶ Her experience of life was that when she folded her hands, God opened her hands. It was something so indefinable:

Prayer that deals with the material brings for answer something so sweet and blessed in the sense conveyed of a God very near and very really, attentive to our call that words cannot be found to tell of that great sweetness. But the prayer that pierces through the things of sense, and finds its way into that awful place, the arena where the forces of light and darkness meet and there is the clash of battle – that prayer has terrors in it.

‘There where all hopes “crumble”, there in the place of “confusions”, there shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me.’ Not tomorrow, when the enemy has gone, but ‘now’. She could not explain what prayer was, for ‘not interpreted are the secrets of prayer, not mapped out the windings of this way’, but ‘something understood’. Amy knew the sayings of Mother Julian of Norwich who had said ‘prayer is the true lasting will of the soul united and fastened into the will of our Lord by the sweet inward work of the Holy Ghost’.²⁰⁸⁷

In recording the daily life and work in Dohnavur, the prayer part naturally formed the unrecorded background. ‘The Power behind the work is the interposition of God in answer to prayer.’²⁰⁸⁸ What a woman of prayer Amy was and the others around her, her fellow workers were the ‘prayer warriors’. Her whole life was lived in the spirit of prayer, ‘it is the core of our day’, and she appeared to be always in open communion with Heaven. In *Roots* we read:

In matters that we should be true to one another, be loyal to what is a family – only a little family in the great Household, but still a family, with family love alive in it and acting as a living bond. To those of us who have lived this life for years it is inconceivable, that one to whom this loyalty means nothing should wish to be one of us. It is not at all that we think that ours is the only way of living, but we are sure that it is the way meant for us. We have one clear crystal reason apart from the blessed happiness of this way of life. It is this; prayer is the core of our day. Take prayer out, and the day would collapse, would be pitiless, a straw blown in the wind. But how can we pray – really pray, I mean – with one against whom you have a grudge or whom you have been discussing critically with another? Try it. You will find it cannot be done.

Was this not the secret of her wonderful life, and the wonderful power she had in influencing others? She had learned to place herself every day before God as a vessel to be filled with his Holy Spirit. Amy can teach us today that one can be a strong and vigorous Christian when one holds real and continual personal intercourse with God. Many Christians attend church services and other meetings on a Sunday, but do not spend half an hour alone with God. For Amy it was a practice so essential to her spiritual life. Amy’s room or the House of Prayer has been a birthplace of many a soul. She always pleaded for earnest prayer, otherwise:

[O]ur very prayers will fall as fall the withered leaves, when the wind that stirred them falls, yea more so, for the withered leaves have a work to do, but the prayers which are stirred up by some passing breeze of emotion do nothing, nothing for eternity. [...] Lord save us from hypocrisy and shame! ‘Shrivel the falsehood’ from us if we say we love Thee but obey Thee not.²⁰⁸⁹

2086. From G. Herbert, ‘Church-bells beyond the stars heard, the soul’s blood, the land of spices, *something understood*’. See *Tables in the Wilderness*, 148–149.

2087. Quotation in Huffmann Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible*, 252.

2088. *Lotus Buds*, 305. Cf. Dr Zwemer at a conference in Zürich ‘how that the velocity and power of anything that comes down, gains in a ratio of high proportion with the height from which its drops: Even from an aeroplane, a pencil falling will take on the force of a bullet. What might not our prayer power be if it comes down from the throne of the Priest?’ (Huffmann Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible*, 251).

2089. *Things As They Are*, 298.

In Dohnavur the children were taught the ways of prayer:

We learned that the kind of intercession that is like a musical cord, every note in harmony with each other, and all seeking to be tuned perfectly to the keynote (the will of the great Intercessor) is something worth guarding at any cost. [...] We ask to be led by the Holy Spirit from point to point, each prayer leading on from the preceding prayer till the particular subject laid on our hearts has been dealt with, and we have the assurance that the Lord will complete all.²⁰⁹⁰

Once a month one day of settled prayer was a great help for the Fellowship. True prayer according to Amy required strength, and for that, quietness and being free from daily business were necessary. She knew that every Tuesday and Friday nights, tom-toms were heard calling worshippers all over south India for demon worship. 'For all such conditions we found just one antidote – the peace of God.'²⁰⁹¹

A corollary related to Amy's understanding of spiritual empowerment is prayer. The importance of prayer can be found in the majority, if not all, of her publications, because it was for her the way of getting into perfect communion with God and knowing his will. Temple children, exposed to imminent danger, locked up behind high, massive walls and huge, heavy doors, how can we reach them and get them out? Or how to get a magistrate who is not bribed? Any appeal to the law is in vain,²⁰⁹² what can be done? A power beyond their own guided their footsteps and opened doors, which seemed to be closed forever and his hand was seen. Amy wrote of a child for whom was prayed in India and England:

Not to the mere easy prayer which costs little and does less, but to that waiting upon God which does not rest till it knows it has obtained access, knows that it has the petition that it desires of Him This sort of prayers costs. But to us down in the thick of the battle, it was strength to think of that prayer. [...] We have known what it is to toil for the salvation of some little life.²⁰⁹³

Only divine interposition could save the children. She learned how important it was to know how to pray. Prayer is the cornerstone of the DF, for the attacks are many:

There is nothing in our DF life that is more persistently attacked than our Prayer-meetings because there is nothing that matters so much. So I know you all will forgive this note.²⁰⁹⁴ There is the restful prayer of committal to which the immediate answer is peace. We could not live without this sort of prayer; we should be crushed and overborne, and give up broken-hearted if it were not for that peace.²⁰⁹⁵

With the above note, she also wrote about the disappearing of quietness during the meetings. 'There is a fussy noise of the turning over of pages.' She went on and wrote then about the opening of a book

2090. *Gold Cord*, 76–78.

2091. Here Amy refers to the habit of the sisters of the Oxford Mission in Calcutta who set apart times for quiet and prayer. Daily the sisters are confronted with a heathen world, and work in an atmosphere, whether they are conscious of it or not. They lived in an environment full of deadly evil influences; this, when it is combined with hard work in a very enervating climate, tends greatly to wear them out, and makes it necessary for them to be in direct and habitual contact with Him who is the Source of Life. See * in *Gold Cord*, 78–79.

2092. An Indian barrister wrote to Amy one day: 'Is it not a sad thing that a Christian Government is unable to legislate to save the children of Temple women? I am sorry my opinion has made you sad. Giving my opinion as a lawyer, I could not take an optimistic view of the matter. *The law as it stands at present is against reform in matters of this kind.* Even should a good Christian judge take a strong view of the matter, the High Court will stick to the very letter of the law' (in *Lotus Buds*, 327).

2093. *Lotus Buds*, 308–309.

2094. In 'My sontha all', letter to the DF, 11 January 1944, p. 1 (in the Dohnavur library).

2095. *Lotus Buds*, 332.

and maintaining quietness in the meetings.²⁰⁹⁶ For opening a book, ‘one way is disturbing. The other is not’. Is it not that we want ‘to serve without distraction’? Several songs were written with many repetitions. To ‘avoid ruts do not make a lot of repetitions’. Also ‘some find kneeling tiring (David *sat* before the Lord). Let each be free to be simple and do whatever helps most to draw near to Him’. Finally she pleaded ‘to pray more about our Prayer-time and to pray for those who lead’. In mission work there is ‘a golden thread of thought’:

The God who works for him that waits for Him is continually preparing the way for a larger answer to our prayer than we had imagined, and influences are being fashioned (and who can define a spiritual influence?) that will effect what we have asked. [...] Even now, as we pray like that, our Father is moving in ways that we know not, and fires are being kindled that shall thaw their coldness. Prayer in the Name of His Beloved Son cannot lose its way in the void. It must find the ear of God. For prayer is not emotion, it is a traffic between earth and heaven, a commerce of love. [...] We think in terms of time: God thinks in terms of eternity.²⁰⁹⁷

Amy was convinced that God never shuts the door for prayer. In 1941 she wrote to Godfrey:

The gates of access into the Father’s presence are open continually. There is no need to push – perhaps ‘trying to pray’ is sometimes a sort of pushing. This is how it came to me – If the gates are open, there is nothing to do but go in. It sounds too simple to tell, but it helped me very much.²⁰⁹⁸

Our prayers not so much alter the things as alter the man who prays, and that man alters things. In our prayers we ask what we will, not what we like. She experienced the gift of healing; however, she showed that the power to heal belonged to God. She herself suffered a great deal in the last 20 years of her life, yet she was not healed. For her it was enough that the Lord reigned in His sovereignty. Neither did she want people to exaggerate the significance of miracles, or they would turn to God because of miracles and then reject Him while beset by trouble. In this, she always prayed ‘Control my prayers’.²⁰⁹⁹ This meant the bringing of her will into active sympathy with the will of God. She did not change the mind of God but she was changed by God. Early records show that every decision in the Fellowship, regarding new staff, every forward advance, every purchase of new land, was cleared by a prayerful go-ahead from her.

Daily the Fellowship had its half-hour prayer meeting and for Amy this was ‘the innermost heart of its being’, for it was primarily a fellowship with God and only secondarily a company of men and women in fellowship with one another. Was not the devil always alert to make disturbance and sow his bad seed into the lives of young children?

To use that half hour in prayer efficiently she gave some advice. We do not need to explain to our Father things that are known to him. We do not need to press him, as if we had to deal with an unwilling God. We do not need to suggest to him what to do, for he himself knows what to do.

In the first few years after the accident she was sometimes carried up to the Forest House. Once she wrote to Godfrey while she was in the forest with some others that she had a wonderful prayer meeting with them:

2096. In ‘My sontha all’, letter to the DF, 11 January 1944, p. 1–3 (in the Dohnavur library).

2097. *Ploughed Under*, 150–151.

2098. Here Amy is referring to Isaiah 60:11: ‘Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night’ (KJV).

2099. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 91.

I think we shall go on, waiting on Him together for a few minutes every day till we go down (from the Forest). If we prepare the wood, the fire will fall and kindle it. It was wonderful to be in the prayer meeting after the two long years, and so good to feel the living throb of the other five. The hour passed like five minutes.

There were three main reasons that Amy emphasised prayer as it was related to spiritual empowerment: the need for leadership, the need for revival and the reality of spiritual warfare. The continual search for connexion with her Father in prayer and believing him on his Word were the greatest and fundamental lines of her life.

From Japan and India her letters and books are full of stories of answered prayers, prayers for the rescue work of the children, prayers for funding all the needs of the Fellowship. Never asking for money but laying down the burdens before God. Amy's accounts of Gospel advance in south India document for us the way God uses intercessory prayer to further his purposes. During one of their itinerary journeys:

[T]he band believed God wanted them to ask specifically for one convert on a given day. On one such day, they were on their way back to the tent without having seen a convert. Something the bandy-man said made Amy ask him when he would come to Jesus. 'Tonight', was his answer. He came into the tent, 'we prayed and he prayed too, and we think the Good Shepherd found him'. A letter from England told them that people there had asked specifically on that date for a convert. What a cynic would call a coincidence Amy called a clear answer, and more than an answer – a sign of the Love of the Lord'.²¹⁰⁰

In the first years of the Fellowship, when everybody was very busy caring for the babies and little ones, and the questions of education and the future of the children began to come into Amy's mind, it was prayer that settled in those moments all her questions. A circle of friends stood with her, in India as well as in England:

In the work of which these chapters have told [*in Lotus Buds*] there has been the wonderful comfort of sympathy and help from fellow-missionaries of our own and sister missions; and, as all who have read, understand, nothing could have been done without the loyal co-operation of our Indian fellow-workers whose tenderness and patience can never be described. [...] The future is full of problems. Even now in these Nursery days questions are asked that are more easily asked than answered. We should be afraid if we looked too far ahead, so we do not look. We spend our strength on the day's work, the nearest 'next thing' to our hands. But we would be blind and heedless if we made no provision for the future. We want to gather and lay up in store against that difficult time (should it ever come) a band of friends for the children, who will stand by them in prayer.²¹⁰¹

■ Dependence and urgency

In mission work, 'what was done, was *all of God*'.²¹⁰² Being convinced of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Amy urged for prayer, 'Do you ever pray, as you pray for these, *that the Spirit would create in them* [*those who listen to her*] *what is not there now – true soul-thirst after God?*'²¹⁰³ Amy looked in a different way at mission organisations. We are so well manned and well organised. Every department is doing its own business, but 'there is no consciousness of need'.²¹⁰⁴ In Amy's time Asia as a whole was, as she called it,

2100. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 122–123.

2101. *Lotus Buds*, 296 and 297.

2102. *From Sunrise Land*, 41.

2103. *From the Fight*, 10.

2104. *Overweights of Joy*, 38.

‘practically an unconquered fort’. ‘How much are we prepared to sacrifice to win that fort?’²¹⁰⁵ We have only one thing to do:

‘This one thing I do. I press’. Let us press on all together in the missionary enterprise, past the dull fog of discouragement, and through it, out into the clear air where we can see The Gleam.²¹⁰⁶

Amy was talking about the 100 million people in India at the time she was in Dohnavur. These people had never heard of Jesus Christ, and ‘who as things are now have not the remotest chance to hear about Him. [...] It crushes down upon us. [...] It would break our hearts’.²¹⁰⁷ She believed ‘God is at work in India. Surely India’s future will be better than her past. Howbeit this day be not Christ’s, the morrow shall be His’.²¹⁰⁸

One evening, after having travelled the whole afternoon and night, stopping at midnight to dine, sitting in the dark and overlooking the plain, she thought: ‘The people pass across the plain so quickly. Oh, are we half in earnest to reach them before they pass’.²¹⁰⁹ ‘Are we ready to combat?’ was her question:

Consider: let us view ourselves in the light of that most awful Sacrifice. Do we believe in Calvary? [...] How does this belief affect the spending of our one possession – life? Are we playing it away? [...] Too loose in our hold upon eternal verities to feel with real intensity? Too cool to burn? We hear her passionate prayer for those who have no knowledge of Christ, the Saviour. God open our eyes, and touch our hearts, and break us down with the thought of the Love that redeemed us, and a sight of souls as He sees them, and of ourselves as we are, and not as people suppose we are, lest we sail in some pleasure boat of our own devising over the gliding waters that glide to the river of death.²¹¹⁰

■ A corn of wheat

The encounter in 1885 at the Victorian fountain in Belfast once influenced the whole course of Amy’s life. It was on a hot September day in 1918 that Amy’s thoughts went back 33 years and it was as if she experienced again what had happened then and what had left her unable to return to the ordinary.²¹¹¹ At the fountain in Belfast she had learned the glorious, unmistakable privilege of being crucified with Christ. That event had given her the light to look at the things of this world and to have for herself the reason for her actions. All her ambitions, religious or otherwise, were identified with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The world, the religious world with its fascination and its power, when it came all before her, found her dead to it. Crucified with Christ, gone through that issue, discerning that her ‘old man’, the disposition of sin, is buried with him, she now stood clear for Christ and Christ only. A daily living experience, in walking and conversation, stamped with the otherworldliness of a life hidden with Christ in God. Amy learned from God for her own spiritual life, and for her fellow workers, that she was in India, walking over the Tinnevely plains to be broken for the sake of Jesus Christ. She had questions as: ‘So do we have the

2105. *Overweights of Joy*, 52.

2106. *Overweights of Joy*, 66. ‘Follow the Gleam’, in Alfred Lord Tennyson, *The Complete Works* (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd. 1904), 867.

2107. *Overweights of Joy*, 75.

2108. *Overweights of Joy*, 77.

2109. *Overweights of Joy*, 240.

2110. *Overweights of Joy*, 294.

2111. *Gold Cord*, 1.

iron of Christ's Cross in us?' 'Are we prepared to give all that is in us so that would die for Jesus Christ's sake?' Otherwise, we are too easily knuckled under to the idea that we have to do so much and achieve so little as if the things of God are in our hands. 'Do we ask enough of ourselves?' These were the questions, which often came into Amy's mind. She answered with words of Brenton Thoburn Badley:

Lord, when I'm weary with toiling,
And burdensome seem Thy commands,
If my load lead to complaining,
Lord, show me Thy hands-
Thy nail-printed hands. Thy cross-torn hands-
My Saviour, show me Thy hands.

Christ, if ever my footsteps should falter,
And I be prepared for retreat.
If desert and thorn cause lamenting,
Lord, show me Thy feet-
Thy bleeding feet, Thy nail-scarred feet-
Lord Jesus, show me Thy feet.
O God, dare I show Thee my hands and my feet?²¹¹²

The Lord demands all. 'It is all or nothing.'²¹¹³ Amy laid for God all the powers of body and mind on the altar and consciously gave up all to God as a living sacrifice.²¹¹⁴ She has not seen what the future brought the Fellowship, but in faith she claimed the promised harvest from the buried seed. The Fellowship was God's, and he was – and still is – able to work out his plans for her in spite of the devilish attacks. 'Deny Self, Save Men', this message to Dr Whitfield Guinness was given in 1911 by a hospital assistant to take with him when going on furlough, to pass it on to his friends in England. 'If they are willing, for Christ's sake, to deny self, God will use them to save many.' 'Be prepared and know that the confession of Jesus brings persecution.' Missionaries sacrificed themselves for Jesus and their devotion to him 'is the one great spring', 'For My sake'.²¹¹⁵

In the spirit of Ragland, Amy sees her work in Dohnavur in the metaphor of the dying seed. 'We're all Christ's dear servants only made willing to be as corn of wheat to fall into the ground and die, I should be content and thankful.'²¹¹⁶ 'It is true that our Lord and redeemer calls us to a crucified life; but He calls to a joy too, and it comes by way of the Cross.'²¹¹⁷ And in the margin of Isaiah 22:1 she gives us this thought:

If God leads us in deep places and shows us deep things, there may be joy – But there will be pain – There is such a thing as the Burden of the Valley of Vision.²¹¹⁸

2112. *Widow of the Jewels*, 92.

2113. *Candles in the Dark*, 26.

2114. Cf. Paul in Romans 12:1: 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service' [KJV]. This idea is used in 1845 in Phoebe Palmer's *The Way of Holiness*. Palmer's view of total consecration to God and trust that he would sanctify what had been consecrated had a huge impact in the 19th century holiness movement and had many adherents in the Keswick movement. Amy was deeply immersed in this Keswick view.

2115. See O. Chambers on discipleship, in *The Complete Works*, 17.

2116. *Ragland*, 15.

2117. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 87.

2118. In Amy's Bible [1895] in the margin of Isaiah 22:1.

Much of Amy's spirituality is fuelled from Keswick teaching of the late 19th and early 20th century. She expresses in words a deeper experience in the Lord Jesus Christ or victorious life principle. The filling of her life with the Holy Spirit, in the emptying of self and confessing all known sin, she every time reapplied for the blood of Christ. She did not go beyond the boundary of Scripture. The blood of Christ was for her the foundational truth of the forgiveness of sin provided by Christ. In her life, she travelled the 'Calvary road'.

Concerning Amy's view on mission work, we can say that she had the same idea Ragland had. She certainly agreed with Ragland's remark that 'without watchfulness on the missionary's part he will seldom come to close quarters with the great enemy in the souls of his people'.²¹¹⁹ Ragland liked to see the missionary right among the people 'while his feelings are fresh, before he has lost his first missionary aspirations, and begun to prefer European society and work, and to look wistfully towards home'. Ragland:

Of all qualifications for mission work, and every other, charity is the most excellent. Of all methods of attaining to a position of usefulness and honour, the only safe and sure one is to fit ourselves for it by purging our hearts from vainglory, worldliness and selfishness. Of all plans of ensuring success, the most certain is Christ's own – becoming a corn of wheat, falling into the ground and dying.²¹²⁰

This death-life makes all the difference in whether the Lord is over all aspects of our lives or whether we are in control of our 'self-life'. What I have seen of the life and work of Amy is that she made the facts of the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross factors in her life. And her hope? It was anchored in the promise of his coming!

Amy never suffered from a boneless, nerveless, jellyfish condition of soul and her convictions were not negotiable, though she demonstrated a pleasant demeanour and a teachable spirit. Her godly character was displayed not only in what she wrote, but in how she lived and guided the Dohnavur family. She sacrificed herself wholly to India and the Dohnavur children. The great lesson she learned was, 'that to rule means to serve'!²¹²¹ And Dohnavur and all that was going on there, 'I felt it was worth everything to our God the chance to make something very different'.²¹²²

In what way did she express herself about Hinduism and other religions? She fully believed that Christ Jesus is the only Saviour. For a Hindu 'life is a bubble on the water; enjoy it while you may'. Someone was singing one of the 'wildest, weirdest wail of a song all about idolatry', and Amy could follow what was going on, 'for I knew the poem well'. In her talks with Hindu scholars, she had no desire to attack their social system, or to defend hers. 'I only wanted to witness to a living, loving, personal Saviour. And I longed for more power and glow to show that love in its breadth, length, depth, height'.²¹²³ She knew that the hidden sin and the outward expressions of Hindu belief were the outcome of a relationship set up between man and the devil whereby man became the ruler over everything, his own God. Amy wanted to follow the only one Master of men, and that was Jesus Christ. The devil was for her the real antagonist of the living God.

2119. *Ragland*, 15.

2120. *Ragland*, 15–16.

2121. *From the Forest*, 112.

2122. *From the Forest*, 113.

2123. *Overweights of Joy*, 80.

Amy's longing was that the people in India should know Jesus Christ, but behind this desire was the passion for sanctification. God saved and mission work for disciplining the people who had come to Christ.

In an effort to respect India's Hindu culture, members of the DF wore Indian dress²¹²⁴ and the children got Indian names. Amy herself dressed in Indian clothes and could respect Hindu scholars, for even among them were many who did not agree with the Devadasi system. She saw a lot of nobility and wisdom in Hindu thought:

Anything like an intolerant attitude towards it can only repel those whom we would win. God spoke to men in the old days. His light enlightened them. But the echoes have become confused, the light blurred. They have their old books full of wisdom, but 'dare you die on them'? Oh, there is only one book, which feeds, only one Book upon which we dare die! Lord, to whom shall this nation go? Lord, to whom shall we go, or they? Thou hast the words of eternal life.²¹²⁵

Amy's heart burned with compassion when she saw the multitudes of India, these crowds with 'the sense of tremendous forces at work among these trivialities'; these crowds of people, absorbed in the interests of the moment – and 'eternity so near'.

She saw 'the burden which the prophet did see'.²¹²⁶ Many times Amy found much courteous attention when the team gathered educated people to listen to the gospel:

But deep down, far out of sight of the speaker, is the ancient life of the ancient land. And the heart breaks into the old, old cry, 'Oh that Thou would rend the heavens, that Thou would come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence. Most righteous God, O God of Love, so let it be'.²¹²⁷

She asked herself if she was too narrow-minded or intolerant and not able to see good things outside her own understanding and views. She knew the Hindu system:

We are not ignorant of the lofty and the noble contained in the ancient Hindu books; we are not of those who cannot recognize any truth or any beauty unless it is labelled with our label. We know God has not left Himself without witnesses anywhere. But we know – for the Spirit of Truth Himself has inspired the description – how desolate is the condition of those who are without Christ. We dare not wear down the force of such a description till the words mean practically nothing. We form no hard, presumptuous creed as to how the God of all the earth will deal with these masses of mankind who have missed the knowledge of Him here; we know he will do right. But we know, with a knowledge which is burnt into us, how very many of the units live who compose the masses. We know what they are missing today, through not knowing our blessed Saviour as a personal, living Friend; and we know what it means to the thoughtful mind to face an unknown tomorrow.

Amy not only looked at Hinduism in need of the Gospel. She quotes Bishop Moule, who replied when asked 'What are the great non-Christian religions?' with 'Hinduism, Muhammedanism, Buddhism – *unspiritual Christianity*'.²¹²⁸ She approached all with the utmost sympathy, and yet we 'cannot lower the standard and offer them Christ without His Cross. Nor can we dress that Cross in flowers, and hide the thorny Crown'.²¹²⁹

2124. *Lotus Buds*, 47.

2125. *Overweights of Joy*, 84.

2126. *Lotus Buds*, 49.

2127. *Ploughed Under*, 120.

2128. In *This One Thing*, 131.

2129. *From the Fight*, 41.

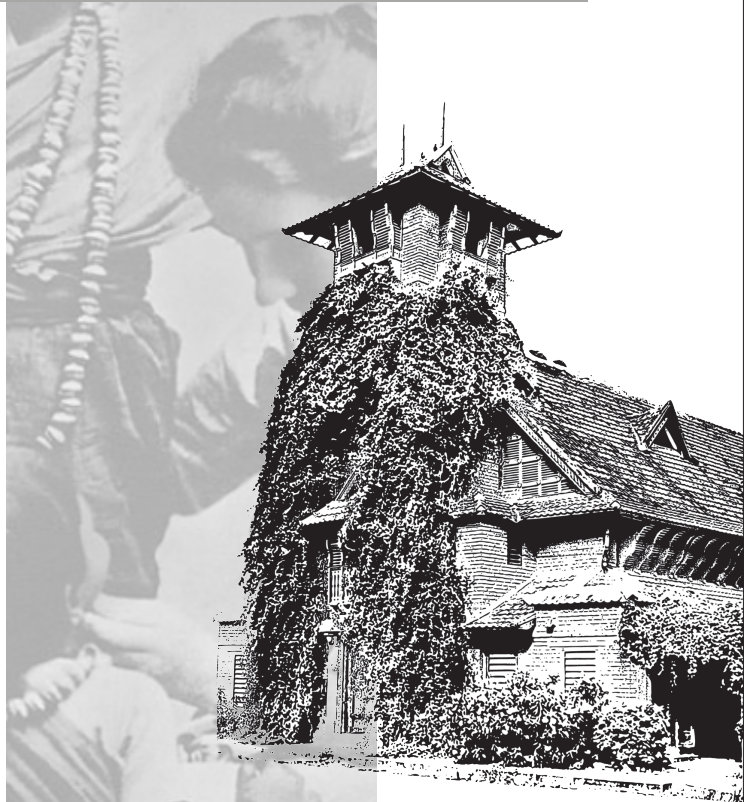
From Millisle to Madras came a weak young woman to carry out the task she believed God had assigned to her. After fifty-six years there she departed this life as a frail old lady, but she left behind her a strong and lasting memorial in the hearts of all those whom she rescued from danger and introduced to the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Kathleen White, *Amy Carmichael. The Angel Outside the Temple* (Hants, UK: Marchall Pickering, 1986).

**Vor Deinen Thron tret' ich hiemit
[Herewith I come before Thy throne]**

The last choral Johann Sebastian Bach composed before his death in 1750.

Amy had read Reginald Lane Pool, *Johann Sebastian Bach*
(London: S. Low, 1884). The hymn is on page 117.



Sunset

■ A reminder of ‘pain far greater than mine’

As the 1940s wore on, Amy, confined to Dohnavur because of her ailments, saw blessings behind the dark cloud, and was in perfect rest in the will of God. Her time was well spent in writing books, which were of lasting interest and benefit to the souls of thousands. In the silent labours of love and wisdom, prose and poetry flowed from her pen and have been an immeasurable blessing to encourage the heart of the suffering Christian and for those longing to dedicate themselves to the Lord.

The war did not pass unnoticed by the DF, because three British men left Dohnavur to join the forces. The hospital was forced to continue in full operation, also with the German nurse Erna Struwe, who was allowed to stay and continued to assist the medical staff instead of being interned elsewhere.

For a long time a clock, which could be seen everywhere, was on Amy’s wish-list. It would make life orderly, but above all, ‘we wanted a clock whose hourly Call to a moment’s Remembrance, Recognition, Adoration’. Also a Quiet Room for the men workers, and two storerooms were needed. Already before the clock was bought, construction of the building started in 1941 (Figure 36). ‘The four needs were piled one on top of another, two storerooms, the Annachies’ Quiet Room, the clock.’ The Quiet Room gave the building its name – a Tamil name meaning Upper Room of Peace. It was dedicated on a windy, sunshiny morning after the rain. The hour struck for the first time as the children in their hundreds stood about in silence. It was 9 o’clock, the hour when they remember the ill, the wounded, the suffering. When the clock was heard, the workmen in the field, the sick in the hospital, the nurses on duty, the villagers in their houses:

[W]ill slip into the habit of ‘keeping the bell’. The constantly recurring reminder of Unseen Things is a vital part of our DF life. This will underline that [...] ‘God, whom I serve with the worship of my spirit, do Thou turn me all into love, and all my love into obedience, and let my obedience be without interruption’ – This is the word of the Upper Room of Peace, the last room built in the second year of War.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 36: The Clock Tower.

Every hour there would be a moment of stillness, and she quoted Brother Lawrence, who called these moments ‘little internal adorations.’ It is opening a window to let peace flow in, still more, like shutting a door to keep the noise out.²¹³⁰

A pact between Germany, Italy and Japan caused great fear in Asia. The American naval fleet had been nearly completely destroyed in the Pacific Ocean. China felt the Japanese aggression, and the British were pushed out of India’s neighbour, Burma (Myanmar). The threat of a Japanese invasion in 1942 was a serious one, after they had bombed Madras, so they took precautions and an evacuation plan was worked out. Everyone in the Fellowship under the age of 35, at that moment more than 300, would go to the Grey Jungle. The invasion of the Japanese did not happen, but fear could not be banished from the thoughts of many in Dohnavur. They followed the news via wireless and papers they could get were read thoroughly. In March 1940, Amy received a book titled *Hitler Speaks*,²¹³¹ and having read it Amy wrote, ‘This view of treaties left me speechless’. Also, ‘Please read and pass on. Do not keep it if you do not have time to read it. It is the key to much that is happening now’ and ‘after reading this book turn to such words as in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and 24’. About Hitler she writes: ‘That man is not normal [...] The primitive world has invaded the West.’ ‘His life was a feverish dream. He will be called the great culprit. He has achieved

2130. Quotations in Amy’s description of the ‘Upper Room Of Peace 1941’, printed paper, in the Dohnavur library.

2131. H. Rausching, *Hitler Speaks* (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd, 1939).

nothing, except destruction.²¹³² For her he was ‘a mad dog’, and the ‘devil incarnate’. In the north of India a famine struck Calcutta and surroundings. Thousands died, and when the Japanese bombed Calcutta on 05 December 1943, the catastrophe was complete. Some German Sisters of Friedenshort in Dohnavur did not agree with her opinion about Hitler and thought him ‘perfect’. They could stay but were not allowed to give their opinion about the war and had to be quiet and keep a low profile in those years. The family knew what was happening in the world around them at that time through the broadcasts of the BBC and regularly a newsletter called ‘The Essence of Politics’ was available. In the middle of this shaky time, Amy updated Dohnavur’s history by publishing *Though The Mountains Shake*. In the midst of all tension, Amy encouraged the Fellowship members to be of good courage and to be of good cheer:

Wars and rumours of wars are everywhere now, and we know that dark days are coming on the earth; but through all the thousand clamours that even now we cannot help hearing, these calm words come like the sound of bells through storm: ‘We wait for Thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple’ (Psalm 48, 8 Prayerbook Version).²¹³³

In spite of the rising of food prices, in World War I as well as in World War II, all the necessary food was provided and even money to buy building materials. However, there was concern for some of the Dohnavur boys now serving in the forces and others in the Indian army and navy. Amy agonised about countries overrun by armies, like Poland and several others in the west of Europe. The children were also informed and together they prayed for children in danger and those living in the conflict zones. The more she thought of the sufferings in those war days, the more she longed for Dohnavur to bring comfort to the Lord. Dohnavur should be the place where he could have a rest:

I want Him to find here the cooling of His weariness [*‘I will cool your weariness’ is the literal translation of Matthew 11:28*]. As He passed beyond the reach of what we mean by weariness, and yet He is as He always was. The grief and suffering of the world touch Him, even There. So I want Him to find comfort here.²¹³⁴

As has been said before, Amy liked nature, but we can say her love for animals, which also suffered in wartime, went too far. Elliot writes about her agony, her uncontrollable sobbing about London’s maimed dogs! In 1939 in a letter to John Risk, an officer of the British navy who was a member now of Dohnavur’s team, she wrote about the suffering of the people in Poland. ‘A thousand killed in one city, many while at prayer, many ill and wounded, and little helpless children and those beautiful Polish horses and dogs and pigeons.’

Amy lived life to the full in India. Since her arrival she had not even once left the country. The bungalow in Dohnavur would be her dwelling place until she was called home. Amy has set an inspiring example to missionary pioneers. For her God was a father and every land had a right to become a fatherland. She even took Indian citizenship. During all the Dohnavur years she saw many goings and comings of other missionaries: some went on furlough, others after having served for several years returned home. She stayed. We can wonder why she took the Tamil saying ‘children bind their mothers’ feet’ literally. This expression she often mentions in her books. She did not talk much about this issue but sometimes we see a glimpse of her considerations. There was a time when some people were waiting for the moment that Amy would leave the country on furlough, so that they could snatch a child from the Fellowship. This was also the case with Star’s parents, who held the opinion that a child itself must decide to be a Christian:

But if once they had her in her own hands she would not be this kind of Christian, but the harmless child. And no more understanding the bonds that bound my heart and tied my feet than the parents understood the

2132. In Chapter 18, p. 254 and 287. Interesting in what Amy wrote in the margin of page 254: ‘Is there heredity in this. The Jews intermingled with the worshippers of Baal – he is the grandson of a Jew.’

2133. In *Thou Givest... They Gather*, 88.

2134. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 304.

thoughts of God for their child, my dear home-people wrote expectantly. They are all in the land of everlasting brightness; they know now why I could not return, And I think that they understand.²¹³⁵

In December 1947 she passed a milestone – her 80th year. She had now been half a century in India; the years after the Second World War were full of concern about to whom she would hand over the leadership of the DF. She lived so near to God, whom she had trusted from the start of her pilgrimage.

For herself and ‘her’ precious children, she knew, ‘we are in God’s keeping’. All was safe and sealed and the best in front! What could death do to her, to that which is eternal? In her own words: ‘What is death but a door?’ It was the sign that her warfare was accomplished:

Oh, what they do miss who do not know that love is eternal. But death is not the end, it is only another beginning, and that which makes life lovable and glorious cannot die, for Love is eternal.²¹³⁶

She had peace with the way the Lord was going with her. Reading Christ’s words, ‘I give you peace, *Not as the world gives do I give to you*’, she wrote in the margin ‘May 1948’ and the explication: ‘Christ’s bequest of peace is effectual, and actually bestows a permanent possession’.²¹³⁷ Since her peace was well grounded not in circumstance but in the Lord, she could be free from dismay. Peace independent of circumstance. In her life she had learned acceptance, and that word opened – as she wrote:

[D]oors into rooms of infinite peace, and the heart that accepts asks nothing, for it is at rest, and the pilgrim of love does not need a map or chart: ‘I know my road, it leads to His heart’.²¹³⁸

She had dedicated her whole life to serve the Lord. Next to the words of Luke 2:49, ‘And He said to them, “How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father’s house”?’ she wrote in the margin at the end of 1926: ‘Whole life in a sentence’. Here other translations have: ‘In the things of My Father’, and Amy wrote here: ‘The Thing of a Day in His day’.²¹³⁹ Of all the years she had been in Dohnavur she could say now:

As we look back on past years, they are full of memories of great sorrows and great joys also. If I were asked to give the sum of the years in a sentence I would write this: I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. Never, never did He not hear. Never was He far away. [...] If there have been sorrows, you will see how marvellous His loving kindness was. If there have been joys, it will be the same. If the time held just one steady round of service, it will still be the same. Every day, every hour will seem to you then as if these words were written across it: I love the Lord because He hath heard.²¹⁴⁰

On her sickbed she liked to read Morgan’s *The Acts of the Apostles*²¹⁴¹. She got this book in 1947. Amy wrote on the first page: ‘Full of Light’ followed by a song of Madame Guyon who was in a French prison from 1695 to 1705:

A little bird am I
Shut from the fields of air;
And in my cage I sit and sing

2135. *Ploughed Under*, 102–103.

2136. *Ponnamal*, 118.

2137. In Temple, *Readings in St. John’s Gospel*, 2nd series, chapters XIII–XXI. Amy’s writing on page 248. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

2138. *Gold Cord*, 312.

2139. In Stevens & De Witt Burton, *A Harmony of the Gospels*, 29.

2140. In *Whispers of His Power*, 22 April, 89–90.

2141. C. Morgan, *The Acts of the Apostles* (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1924).

To Him Who placed me there;
 Well pleased a prisoner to be
 Because, my God, it pleases Thee.
 Nought have I else to do:
 I sing the whole day long;
 And He Whom most I love to please,
 Doth listen to my song:
 He caught and bound my wandering wing,
 But still He bends to hear one sing.

After 1945, Dohnavur experienced several changes, which had a tremendous impact. The much-loved Murray couple left Dohnavur. Murray's wife Oda could not bear it to send the two sons Hanmer and Michael all by themselves to England for further education. On 07 April 1945, she wrote in her diary 'Feeling it impossible to sacrifice H. and M., rather leave DF. Asked for special word. 1 Samuel 1 and 2 given'. Amy saw Oda's anxieties and her tired body, 'a tired (ill) body, an overstrained mind are not responsible for feelings. [...] The real Oda has twice shone through the mists the cruel enemy has flung around her'.²¹⁴²

Oda felt she could not send the boys off and continue her work in Dohnavur. She also had to go and make a home for the boys. The three left and settled in Dorset, where Oda became a teacher in a girls' school. The boys settled but Oda, born and raised in the Netherlands, found living in England far from easy and dearly missed Murray. Murray, however, could not decide what to do. Were there not two loyalties: Oda and Dohnavur? Murray, as he wrote afterwards, 'was blind and wrong. She was right and bitter. We were drifting apart'. His mother Evelyn stood behind Oda and wrote to Rev. Aldis, whom Oda had asked to intervene. Evelyn saw that:

Miss. C. took possession of Murray and dominated him, although he seems quite unconscious of this fact. And to Murray she wrote: years ago you sought my council [...] but those days passed, and another woman [*she meant Amy*] took that place, though you may not have realized it. The Lord has given me the victory, so it has not separated us, thank God. You know already the sorrows my dear daughter-in-law is passing through on account of my son's view of the will of God for him preventing him returning to England to be with her and to make a home for their boys, which is breaking her. I have sought again and again to point out the duty of a husband and father in God's word.

Rev. Aldis sent Murray a stiff letter and finally Murray gave in and decided to go. In this conflict of two loyalties, he chose his family, giving him peace in heart that the Lord would provide for Dohnavur and the hospital. Amy tried to be brave and wrote:

Murray dearest, are you breaking your heart because you think we won't be with you if you have to do what you never meant to do? Don't feel like that. Whatever you must do, we shall be with you in eternal love. Do you remember the golden days of 1928 when you became sonthum – days of heaven on earth. Nothing can take away those days away from us.

And to Oda went a letter in March 1947:

Oda beloved, you know without words to tell you, how much I rejoice in your brother's safety. [*Oda's brother, stationed with the Dutch navy, was safe after the Japanese invasion.*] Much love, darling – Your Amma.²¹⁴³

If one was happy for Murray's coming back to England, it was Norman Grubb, the author of the foreword in *Follow My Leader*. In 1947, 03 April, he wrote 'I am specially looking forward to seeing Murray again'.²¹⁴⁴

2142. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 155.

2143. In Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 158 and 159.

2144. Grubb, in Winter, ed., *My Dear C.U.M.B.*, 79.

Murray went back to England in February 1948 and settled in Lymington, Barton on Sea, in Hampshire, where he joined his old friend Harold Ball in his medical practice. Murray did not get the measure of things. When he was doing his work, he often forgot he was not working in a Christian hospital and sometimes talked with the patients about Christ, letting other patients wait for a long time. He and Oda were involved in evangelistic work in the neighbourhood. They had warm contact with the InterVarsity Fellowship and with the Christian Medical Fellowship. He and Oda were always popular in the student world.²¹⁴⁵ Murray was also a diocesan lay reader and preached once a month at Hordle Parish Church, three miles from Lymington. In 1976 his old friend Howard Somervell, who lived in Ambleside, in the Lake District, died and also for Murray the final drew near and on 05 January 1982 Murray went into the presence of his Lord. When asked 'How will you go?', his answer never failed to be 'Gladly'.²¹⁴⁶ Oda went to the Lord on 11 June 1984.

Amy wrote some letters, on 08 May 1947 and on 05 September 1947, to those who were now actively in charge. However, she was still seen as the leader of the Fellowship. Whatever decisions they made, if they were after consultation with the Lord, she agreed. She closed the letter of 05 September with 'To you all, may you be ten thousand times more valorous than ever I was. Amma'. Then follows a P.S.: 'Hitherto... Henceforth... Amen. Alleluia'.²¹⁴⁷

Murray's brother, Godfrey, was now more or less in charge and in January 1949, was formally elected as co-leader. He could now make decisions without consulting Amy. Godfrey was loved and greatly respected by everybody in and outside Dohnavur. He was a great lover of nature – this he shared with Amy – and studied all the flowers, plants and mammals in the forest along the slopes of the mountains near Dohnavur.²¹⁴⁸ God, however, had other plans. On 27 December he wrote 'Forgive only a wee note, I am not very fit'.

More and more his limbs gave in and towards the end of January his lungs were affected and quite suddenly he was seriously ill on 19 February with a coronary thrombosis, and within moments was face to face with his Lord. It is recorded in the Dohnavur logbook: 'Godfrey developed a thrombosis'; 'Godfrey not too well – nor Amma'; and in capital letters: 'GODFREY WENT IN TO SEE THE KING,

2145. Cf. N. Grubb in his letter dated 17 September 1966 to the C.U.M.B.: Murray Webb-Peploe, with Oda, was with us for the largest conference, and his Bible talk on Sunday morning on Isa. 58 was really an outstanding meeting [in Winter, ed., *My Dear C.U.M.B.*, 148].

2146. Cf. Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 186. On 23 February 1982, Norman Grubb writes to C.U.M.B.: 'I only heard this week from a friend in England who saw it in the Telegraph that our loved Murray has joined the other brethren with Jesus. This was special to me because Murray and I have been close since our prep school days at South Lodge Lowestoft! [...] Then we joined in our life days at Trinity, when I was Sec. of the CICCJ and Godfrey Pres., and then I think Murray followed Godfrey. Then came Murray, together with his brother Godfrey, in their years of fruitful co-working with "Amma" (Amy Wilson Carmichael) in Dohnavur. [...] He used to help us in some of our Faith at Work Conferences and had very special gifts in bringing much illumination on passages of scripture. What a love-bond we all have together, and for eternity' [in Winter, ed., *My Dear C.U.M.B.*, 200–201].

2147. The two letters are in the Dohnavur library.

2148. See C.G. Webb-Peploe, 'Field Notes on the Mammals of South Tinnevely, South India', *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* (April 1947).

AT 7.30 P.M'; 'Godfrey laid to rest'.²¹⁴⁹ Amy, after having heard the news of his death, was strong and wrote: 'Nothing is wrong. God had trusted us with a great trust, Godfrey is in heaven'.²¹⁵⁰ And further:

Godfrey was with me last on his Coming Day, December 15th 1948. There was a sense of stillness about him, and of purity like the purity of our tall, white mountain lilies. He had often reminded me of those flowers, so tall, so pure, so fragrant, and on that day it was more so than ever. As he left the room, I remember saying to myself, 'Will you walk across the Border before I see you again?' [...] I used to say to the Lord, 'Lord, if Thou dost give those two brothers to be leaders of the Fellowship it does not matter what happens to me. Let me be broken if only they may be strong and fit'. They both have gone and I am left quite broken, but content, for I know that we are safe in the hands of the mighty and loving One to whom this Fellowship belongs.

Politically the 1930s and the 1940s were years of unrest. Mahatma Ghandi had become the most recognisable symbol of anti-colonial protest. In India, as in many Asian countries, the awakening of Asia's peoples became an irresistible phenomenon, and many sensed the dawn of an era of liberation and fulfilment all over Asia.²¹⁵¹

'Victory over India' was the call in many cities and villages of India when the country was declared independent on 15 August 1947. In the south of India, the transition of power did not cause much turbulence, but when in India new laws and regulations were implemented, the result was many clashes and death all over the country, especially in the north. Blood was streaming in the streets of Calcutta, where many died, butchered by knives and hatchets. Hindus and Muslims were killing each other. The partition into the two states, India for the Hindus and Pakistan for the Muslims, was a price the leaders were prepared to pay, feeling that the greater good was a nation where peace among the majority of the people all over India could be secured. We see as a result that the partition and the violence in the northern Indian provinces confirmed the understanding of India and Indian in largely Hindu cultural terms. Many Muslims were forced to go to Pakistan. Of those who remained, many were killed but also Hindus who had lived for many generations in what now was Pakistan were not safe and fled or were killed.

Since India got independence in 1947, Hinduism has enjoyed a restored prestige. This uprising of Hinduism was partly due to the liberal views of the Bible colleges, and city churches abandoning their prayer meetings. Thousands of Christians remained untaught, un-shepherded, and bewildered by the Church, which did not care for them. Hinduism now hastily tried to win them back.

The year 1950 can be taken as a new turning point.²¹⁵² Some evangelical leaders shifted to a more Biblical theology in the historic Churches and the Holy Spirit was moving. A group of evangelical missionaries, with some Indian brothers, grouped themselves together to form the Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI). However, the Church Union in South India at the same time did not make any significant advance in evangelism.²¹⁵³

2149. In the logbook of the Dohnavur Fellowship, 19 January and 21 January and 19 and 20 February 1949 [in the Dohnavur library]. In a note to the author from Dr J. Woolcock, from 1969 to 1987 physician in Dohnavur, she mentions she had heard Nancy Robbins saying that Godfrey probably died of a pulmonary embolus. This fits with the leg thrombosis recorded in Houghton's book.

2150. See Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 164 and 165: 'And said what we all with deepest thankfulness about Godfrey. God's ways are not ours. We would have thought that Murray and Godfrey were most needed now at Dohnavur, but God has another plan' (N. Grubb in Winter, ed., *My Dear C.U.M.B.*, 30 March 1949, 82).

2151. For information about the struggle for independence in Asia and special in India, see 'At the Stroke of the Midnight Hour: 1930-1948', chapter 19 of Keay, *India*, 484-509.

2152. L. Lyall, *Missionary Opportunity Today. A Brief World Survey* (London: IVF, 1965), 63.

2153. See *TKW* (1964): 143.

In Dohnavur the work went on. Dr Nancy Robbins arrived in 1946 and, together with Murray, restarted not only the work in the hospital, but also evangelistic work after the war. They went to villages around Dohnavur where evangelistic and medical work went hand in hand.²¹⁵⁴ After Godfrey's death, a lot of work was now done by May Powell, with John Risk as a co-leader, but still Amy was seen as the head and, what was more, she was the 'mother' of the family, and nobody could replace her in that position.

After the war, Amy realised that new decisions for the Fellowship were to be expected and that changes would be necessary. All those years the succession in leadership was an issue, which always went with her. On 06 October 1946 she wrote a short letter to those who already did most of her tasks, after she grew weaker and weaker. We give the full letter, for here we see, that what she once wished in 1886 for the Welcome in Belfast is her wish 60 years later, for the DF too. She gives the new leaders the assurance that she would not put up barriers and gave them freedom to make new decisions. In a small letter she wrote:²¹⁵⁵

There is one thing, which I have often said to you individually. I may have written it – I want to make sure you have it. It is this: When decisions have to be made, do not look back and wonder what I would have done. Look up, and light will come to show what our Lord and Master would have done. It may be that decisions, which seem to change the character of the work will now have to be made. But if the same principles which have grounded us from the beginning are held fast there will be no real change. The river may flow in a new channel, but it will be the same river. If you hold fast to the resolve that in all things Christ shall have the pre-eminence, if you keep His will, His glory, His pleasure high above everything then all will be well. Now to Him that is able to establish you, to the only wise God, be glory for ever. Your sontha (own), Amma.

The Fellowship had to think seriously about the education of the older girls, due to new government regulations, which forced schools to have qualified teachers with recognised diplomas in the classrooms. Not all the teachers in Dohnavur had the required qualifications. With great pain in her heart Amy consented for the girls to have their education in boarding schools outside Dohnavur:

We have begun to send some of our boys and girls to outside schools in order that they may get the school leaving certificate that is now necessary for almost any kind of training that had Government recognition. We hope in this way to gain Government-certificated teachers for our own schools so that we may, if possible, continue to run them in the way we believe the Lord had shown us.²¹⁵⁶

Many boys now attended the middle school in Dohnavur town. Amy called them the 'Gideons', and the girls 'Timothys', a word from 2 Timothy 2:3 'Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ'.

At that time, still some letters were handwritten by Amy. She also accomplished her great desire to keep the remembrance of Thomas Walker vivid and for the third time a book about her spiritual leader and friend appeared, *This One Thing*. It would be her last book and already the title gives us an indication of what really lived in Walker's and Amy's hearts. *This One Thing* would also be the last hymn, played from the bells in the House of Prayer, the day when Amy saw her Saviour face to face. The hymn 'In Heavenly Love Abiding', sent to her in 1949 by Bishop Pakenham Walsh, was with her during the last days. She re-read the words:

.....
2154. Since 1930 outreach had already been done; as well as medical work, evangelistic work was done by the Webb-Peploe brothers. See for instance the story of the conversion of Siva's Son, described in Godfrey Webb-Peploe's *Into Eternal Health* [p. 4], the story of a patient who came to the Door of Health in 1932 where Murray Webb-Peploe had a clinic; this patient became a believer of Jesus Christ.

2155. In a small letter from Amy about decisions, dated 06 October 1946. In the Dohnavur library. Also in 'Copy of a Note in Amma's Handwriting About Decisions' (in the Dohnavur library).

2156. In *Dust of Gold*, March 1949.

Green pastures are before me
 Which yet I have not seen,
 Bright skies will soon be o'er me
 Where the dark clouds have been.
 My hope I cannot measure,
 My path of life is free,
 My Saviour has my treasure,
 And He will walk with me.

She had the words of Revelation 2:9–10, 'I know ... Do not be afraid', on a board on the wall in her room with a light over them. Some months before her death she wrote:

I know. The words contain unfathomable comfort for our pain.
 How they can hold such depths, I do not know- I only know that it is so.
 Fear not. The words have power to give the Thing they name,
 for in an hour of utter weariness the soul, aware of One beside her bed is comforted.
 O Lord most dear, I thank Thee, and I worship – Thou are here.

And two of her friends got these words:

When I am in pain or too tired to find words, I look at a picture of the Matterhorn and the lake at its floor, and I let it pray for me, for you. Let the strength of the mountains be theirs, the purity of the snows, the beauty of the blue water, the steadfastness of the rocks, the loveliness of the flowers on the banks and, above all, the joy of the little stream that flows forth to bless others.

Amy would have liked to settle all the things for the Fellowship before she was transformed to glory. She remembered the start of the DF nearly 50 years before and the situation now: what a difference! It was as if she was now in a beehive and many of the daily affairs and decisions in the Fellowship were now taken and done by others. One thing however was running through her mind. 'Sooner or later we must give an account of our stewardship.' She remembered the Italian proverb, 'for the work begun God finds the thread'. It all started with God's love for the lost little ones in south India to whom he had sent his faithful servant and given her the vision to start the Fellowship. Perhaps she saw herself walking in Japan, doing home visitations, with 'God is Love' embroidered on her dress.²¹⁵⁷ Really, a walking example of God's love. For us now we can say, she was a Christ-like missionary following her Master, but she herself, she was still climbing, knowing that the summit was so near. Amy, in times when mountains shook, knew: 'Do the mountains shake that those things which cannot be shaken may remain? One of those things is the certainty of the fulfilment of the promises of God'.²¹⁵⁸

The world after World War II was still shaken and India's independence was not all that smooth. Would someone intrude in the small affairs of this 'bee-hive' in south India's plains? Yet she knew, they were not *their* affairs and the unseen leader in his love would provide for all and for everything.

For a long time, she prayed that the Lord would take her away in silence; meanwhile she had a lot of concerns and thoughts about the leadership of the Fellowship. In private, she brought her petitions to God and with some of the foreign and local staff she talked a lot about this issue. There was no wavering in her confidence of his love or acceptance of his will, which sustained her through the physical sufferings, but her memory was busy. Some nights, due to pain or fear, she practically did not sleep and

2157. *From Sunrise Land*, 35.

2158. *Though the Mountains Shake*, 1 and 2.

experienced what the Bible teaches, viz. that we are strangers and pilgrims here. 'And all the things that happen are meant to emphasize that.'²¹⁵⁹

She had given herself in loving loyalty and in an undivided allegiance to the Lord. Never was she disappointed by the way the Lord had dealt with her. She herself knew the truth, when near the end of her life she wrote to one of the children, that 'His dear child is never, never far away from His loving heart'.²¹⁶⁰ She waited to be with the Lord. For those who love the Lord – and not themselves – everything serves the purpose to ripen for eternity.

Amy had gone to India in 1895. During the whole period of 55 years, she never once left the shores of India. There was no such word as *holiday* in her vocabulary; her mission was to her a *whole-souled passion*, and every hour was devoted to her work for the children. She went out to make India the country of her calling, her very home. She even took Indian citizenship; therefore, furloughs for her would not be a regular right. Those working with her in Dohnavur she never discouraged from going on leave, for health reasons or other circumstances made it essential. For workers to have a time-out she encouraged them to take a break in the forest home or down south to the holiday home Joppa in Kanyakumari at the south coast. She herself felt attached to the land, the people and especially to the children for whom she was the mother. 'A mother doesn't leave her children' was her answer when someone questioned her for not going on leave.²¹⁶¹ In *The Starry Cluster* Amy gives the following answer when the question was raised: 'Why do you not go on furlough regularly and frequently in a usual way?' 'Because India is home to us; unless medically ordered, no one is willing to leave home.' 'Do you mean that you lost affection for your own people?' 'No; they become dearer as the years pass. But another love is given to us, and it holds us fast.'²¹⁶²

It was not a sacrifice for her to lose her English identity and she let herself be bound in the bundle of life with her Indian brothers and sisters.²¹⁶³ She knew that it was good to have a break from time to time. In preparing *Ragland*, she quoted his words:

Our Master does not give us two things to be done at the same moment; and He only expects what He gives time, talents, and strength for. This thought was most comforting to me, and was the means of keeping me quiet when I had much to think about, and wonderfully helped me in getting through work.²¹⁶⁴

Amy had once read in an Australian magazine: 'She hath neither rusted out, nor burned out. She is burning still'. Then she wrote the following words, which show her passion and the reason for her continuous work:

I prayed that it might be true of each one of us. We want most earnestly not to rust out, we would gladly be burned out, but till that day comes, the Lord keep us 'burning still'. [...] It is not the place where we are, or the work that we do or cannot do, that matters, it is something else. It is the fire within that burns and shines, whatever be our circumstances.²¹⁶⁵

2159. *Candles in the Dark*, 70–71.

2160. *Candles in the Dark*, 108.

2161. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

2162. In *The Starry Cluster*, 9.

2163. Cf. *Overweights of Joy*, 72: 'But the more India becomes home, the more the longing burns within one that this land should be purified, swept clean from north to south as by a wave of fire; for if ever a people were created to be a crown of glory and a royal diadem, surely the people of India were. But to the one who writes, it seems true.'

2164. *Ragland*, 35.

2165. In *Edges of His Ways*, 17 December, 182–183.

Faithfulness to her calling was for her faithfulness to her conscience. Her faith in God, always strong, though not effusive, had been strengthened by her experiences of the life in this forgotten place in the Tinnevelly plain, known to God. Here with the other staff members and all the children, she always felt heaven nearby and for her God, the children, holiness and heaven were the things worth living for. Nothing had been done for worldly fame, honour or name. The vision she got, since the first girl sought refuge in her arms and of her further life, had not been a mocking mirage. She did not see death until she had seen the realisation of her boldest dreams. From her sickbed, her eyes often went to a poster on the wall with an image of a large cross. That sign only kept her climbing, to be God's 'athlete' in her bed. Was not the cross for her a constant reminder 'of pain far greater than mine'? Elliot records that in one of her last letters she dictated these words: 'I am very happy and content. Green pastures are before me, and my Saviour has my treasure – the DF'.²¹⁶⁶ She longed to see him and to be with him, whom she had loved so long. 'And not alone, oh, not alone, shall we see Him as He is! There will be the little children, too.'²¹⁶⁷

It was enough: Jesus crowned her with glory and honour. Standing in the presence of her Lord and Saviour, she received 'the crown of converts won for Him'.²¹⁶⁸ God's unseen appointed Shining Ones carried her on her so greatly desired journey. It was enough, in her death as in life, she uplifted the crucified Saviour, worshipped him all life long, loved him as he should be loved. The last hours were lit by his presence. Her life song to uplift her Saviour she continued with the angels and those saved by his precious blood:

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To receive power and riches and wisdom
And strength and honour and glory and blessing.²¹⁶⁹

The words of Whitfield Guinness echo what during her life was her heart's desire:

I long to hear the chorus of all voices,
With sweet, harmonious swell,
Uplift the Name at which my heart rejoices, Immanuel!

The angels their melodious thunder bringing,
Its sacred meaning tell,
And all the host of blood-washed harpers singing, Immanuel!

The God of glory Who in love transcendent
Has stooped with man to dwell;
The crucified, the risen, the now resplendent. Immanuel!

The Name Whose meaning evermore remains
A truth unspeakable;
Which praised of all, above all praises reigns, Immanuel!

Amy's life went on to a tranquil sunset, her affairs settled. Her health grew poorer as her expectations grew richer. Her physical condition had worsened after she had slipped and fell in her bedroom on 23 June 1948. She was seriously injured. Her right wrist was broken and her right hip badly damaged. For about 10 days after the fall, her life hung in the balance. Slowly the agonising uncontrollable pain had gone. She had returned – as the newsletter at that time wrote:

2166. In *A Chance to Die*, 331.

2167. *Lotus Buds*, 302.

2168. *God's Missionary*, 52.

2169. Revelation 5:12.

[F]rom the threshold of Heaven to the drabness of battle. [...] Those of us, who have been privileged to see something of her during these difficult weeks, have seen the power of our triumphant Lord victorious in her, day by day and hour by hour.

The following letter Amy dictated for the Dohnavur family:

Opals are formed in the depths of the earth, by pressure and intense heat. I feel that all the pain of these days is permitted, in order that these illustrations may not be mere words, but may be lived, and my message to you is: Do not be perplexed and troubled that the pain is not taken away immediately. God is working out some good purpose.²¹⁷⁰

Finally, the 'warrior' had to stop her earthly battle; heaven was calling her. When she could bear it, her dear loved ones entered the room for a final farewell. Many prayed day and night for her during the last days she was with them. The last hours were made light by Christ's presence. Three days before the end came she went into a coma and died peacefully in her sleep. She died in the way she had prayed for so long. The New Year 1951 had just begun when it went around the world: 'Amma, glorified on January 18th, got her Eternal reward'. Now in the Land of Welcome with her Master whom she loved and had served faithfully for more than five and a half decades, without one day off, in India.

It was enough: received in the Celestial City, she saw Jesus crowned with glory and honour. Standing in the presence of her Lord and Saviour, she received 'the crown of converts won for Him'.²¹⁷¹ In her death as in life, she had uplifted the crucified Saviour, worshipped him all lifelong and loved him as he has to be loved. She expressed the essence of her lifework in these words about love. Asking, 'Lord, what is love?' she got the answer:

Love is that which inspired My life, and led Me to My Cross, and held Me on My Cross. Love is that which will make it thy joy to lay down thy life for thy brethren. Lord, evermore give me this love. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after love, for they shall be filled.²¹⁷²

Many years ago, she had underlined the words of one of England's martyrs, 'that her death might be more glorious to the name of God, comfortable to His people, and also most uncomfortable to the enemies of God'. 'As for death', the martyr said, 'I do not greatly heed it; when I behold the amiable countenance of Christ, my dear Saviour, the face of death doth not greatly trouble me'.²¹⁷³

Women have always played a crucial part in the spread of the Gospel through overseas missions.²¹⁷⁴ May we all live in full consecration as Amy did, and whether we 'fall asleep in Jesus', or remain until the Lord's return, may we be faithful! As a pioneer missionary in south India she pointed out for us the areas, the possibilities, suitable for immediate evangelisation. When we have ceased from our noisy controversies, there will be silence enough to hear the voice of him who sends and commands: 'Go Ye'. Amy heard and obeyed. She followed unto the breaking of the bread and unto the drinking of the cup of the passion and did the work in Dohnavur:

2170. The specifications about Amy's accident in 1948 and her message are in 'Note about Amma', a special letter to the Dohnavur family, edited by Dr Nancy Robbins, August 1948. The letter is in the library of Rev. Doug Curry in Liss.

2171. *God's Missionary*, 52.

2172. *Id.*, 82.

2173. Words of Miss Lewis, in A.C. Fox, *Book of Martyrs. A History of the Lives, Sufferings, and Deaths of the Early Christians and Protestant Martyrs*, ed. W. Byron Forbush (Grand Rapids: Zondervan (Clarion Classics), 1967 [1926]), 838 (in the Dohnavur library).

2174. For an example of women's contribution to mission, their faithfulness and compassion, see Griffiths' *Not Less Than Everything*: 'We meet ordinary women of extraordinary guts, faith and tenacity' (in the foreword, page 9).

But at this cost, that thou must first be burnt.
 Burnt by red embers from a secret fire,
 Scorched by fierce heats and withering winds that sweep
 Through all thy being, carrying thee afar
 From old delights
 Not otherwise, and by no lighter touch,
 Are fire-words wrought.²¹⁷⁵

Hear and obey, for Amy knew:

[T]he time for choice is passing, and the chance to choose comes only once. I have often sat on the rocks by our mountain river and known that never once for one moment was I looking at the water of a moment before. It was passing, always passing, its several drops never for one instant held in suspension, never separable, never to be recovered. The several minutes, hours, days that make up the sum of life are like the drops that make up the sum of the river. They are flowing, flowing, flowing, and not one can be recalled. Soon that measured mile of water we call the term of human life will have passed. How shall we wish that we had chosen when the last drop has been received into the waiting sea?²¹⁷⁶

Throughout her life all the little single fragments of her frail body and strong mind that she could offer were laid in her Master's hands. He had blessed it, broken it, and multiplied it for the feeding and saving of thousands in south India. Newell's words were in her heart:

I heard His call, 'Come, follow!' – that was all! My gold grew dim: My soul went after Him. I rose and followed – that was all: Who would not follow, if they heard Him call! God in His goodness gave us from the first those who responded at once to the confidence we offered them. In India the ideal of a consecrated life is a life with no reserves – which seeks for nothing, understands nothing, cares for nothing but to be poured forth upon the sacrifice and service. [...] Who, to whom the ideal is indeed 'The Gleam,' that draws and ever draws the soul to passionate allegiance.²¹⁷⁷

In his likeness

O Love Divine, if we can see
 In our beloved so dear a grace,
 When Love unveils, what will it be
 To see Thee face to face?²¹⁷⁸

Again, for a short moment we zoom in on her last days on earth. She got her reward: to see and to be with him so dearly loved by her. 'Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.'²¹⁷⁹ Now all the old idiosyncrasies, all the 'things as they are' she had seen, and which she had refused to live with, all the sins, all the failures in character and temper, were now gone forever. Glorious moment, for now she was like him. Crosby's hymn²¹⁸⁰ so well fits here for this moment:

Some day the silver cord will break,

2175. In *Windows*, 237.

2176. *Windows*, 238–239.

2177. *Lotus Buds*, 218.

2178. *Gold by Moonlight*, 50.

2179. Revelation 3:10.

2180. Fanny J. Crosby (1820–1915): 'Some day the silver cord will break' (1891).

And I no more as now shall sing;
 But, O the joy when I shall wake
 Within the presence of the King!
 And I shall see Him face to face,
 And tell the story, saved by grace:
 And I shall see Him face to face,
 And tell the story, saved by grace.²¹⁸¹

‘He knows where to find his willing hearts. He will not refuse to his dearest the joy that is bathed in the dews of Getsemane’, she once wrote.²¹⁸² At the end, writing of any kind became impossible; her last letter, undated, was written in pencil in large, sprawling letters, which straggled across the page: ‘Precious child. If so dear to me, what to Him? Amma’.²¹⁸³

The last days were made light by his presence. And then Amy had to lay down her pen. Her hands with which she had carried many a stone for the many buildings in Dohnavur, hands that had drawn so many pictures to explain the beauty of God’s nature to the children, hands that were like a pencil in God’s hand, to write the name of Christ Jesus on so many hearts. Innumerable men and women, to this day, have been challenged to deeper devotional life and mission action by Amy’s gifted pen.

Once she had underlined the words in *Lyra Sacra*²¹⁸⁴: ‘Heaven must be won, not dreamed’. She had fought the good fight and now for her war was over.

‘7.15 a.m. Amma went in to see THE KING’, was the entry in Dohnavur’s logbook.²¹⁸⁵ Now her life journey was over, her warfare accomplished. Having fought the good fight, Amy, this lovely, Christ-like missionary, patiently, with the sense of his presence so near, crossed the ‘last defile’ and slipped quietly home on 18 January 1951, after about 65 years of unbroken evangelistic missionary work in Belfast, Manchester, Japan, Ceylon and India. Early morning her Saviour said:

‘Let us go over to the other side’.
 T was but a step for His victorious feet
 From their day’s walk into the golden street.

God in his wisdom and love removed his servant from the scene of her untiring labours. Amy, this Christ-like lady, who had folded her arms around those who sought refuge; she, who had so often had children on her lap who felt safe in her arms, she now felt God’s arms around her. In a hallowed and unhindered communion and abiding in Christ, she sings:

Both Thine arms are clasped around me,
 And my head is on Thy breast,
 For my weary soul has found Thee
 Such a perfect, perfect rest
 Dearest Saviour,
 Now I know that I am blest.²¹⁸⁶

2181. Fanny J. Crosby (1820–1915): ‘Some day the silver cord will break’ (1891).

2182. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 186.

2183. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 125.

2184. In H.C. Beeching (ed.), *Lyra Sacra. A Book of Religious Verse* (London: Methuen & Co., 1903), 264. The book is in the Dohnavur library.

2185. The logbook of the Dohnavur Fellowship, 18 January 1951 (in the Dohnavur library).

2186. A Moody song. See also in J. Hudson Taylor, *Union and Communion*, ‘Thoughts on the Song of Solomon’, page 69.

Now she would have ‘all eternity to celebrate the victories’²¹⁸⁷ and in heaven she would see what she once wrote: ‘And not alone, oh, not alone, shall we see Him as He is! There will be the little children too’.²¹⁸⁸ She could now touch the words of Psalm 16:11 for which she had longed all her life, ‘Close to Thee forever – that is Heaven’.²¹⁸⁹ To see the Lord will be heaven.

Nesaruthina said to me, ‘Amma died with an angelic face’.²¹⁹⁰ She died ‘clean’,²¹⁹¹ whether a death to self, to the world and to life itself. ‘One thing I have desired’, her deep longing, and God granted Amy Carmichael’s desire. Her desire dawned to full realisation on 18 January 1951.

An awe went over the compound in Dohnavur after having heard the news. For the whole day from the tower of the House of Prayer the joy-bells rang and played Amma’s most favourite song:

One thing have I desired, my God, of Thee,
That will I seek – Thine house be home to me.

I would not breathe an alien, other air
I would be with Thee, O Thou fairest Fair

For I would see the beauty of my Lord,
And hear Him speak, Who is my heart’s Adored

O Love of loves, and can such wonder dwell
In Thy great Name of names, Immanuel?

Thou with Thy child, Thy child at home with Thee -
O Lord my God, I love, I worship Thee.²¹⁹²

Amy lived to a veritable Biblical age. Death was the end of the first volume, and the beginning of another volume which has no end, the contents of which are beyond description, to see her Saviour and the marks of his wounds. She had wondered what it would be:

What an awakening, one who has walked with Him in the twilight must have, when suddenly she awakes in His likeness and the light is shining round her – all shadowy ways forgotten.²¹⁹³

The long journey from Millisle to Dohnavur had ended and now she did not see the grief of so many children and the emptiness of a life without Christ, but heaven, the eternal home, and the Saviour face to face. A few days before her death she said farewell to Alison, who for health reasons had to go back to Australia: ‘Alison, we won’t meet again in this world. When you hear I have gone, jump for joy!’ When entering heaven Amy may have heard the song – ‘Jesus Loves Me, This I Know’ – the children sang in Harrogate the day she gave her life to Jesus. Now greeted by many little ones when she entered the gates of splendour. The song summed up her life, message and ministry:

Jesus loves me, he who died Heaven’s gates to open wide; He will wash away my sin, Let this little child come in. Yes, Jesus loves me... the Bible tells me so.

2187. *Things As They Are*, 158.

2188. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 302.

2189. *Thou Givest... They Gather*, 192.

2190. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

2191. Thus Amy described the death of Raj in *Raj, Brigand Chief* (Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 228).

2192. In *Dohnavur Songs*, 140; *Ploughed Under*, 83; *Toward Jerusalem*, 126. For the ‘joy-bells’ see *Gold Cord*, 85.

2193. *Candles in the Dark*, 68.

Even today in Dohnavur the Easter service is at the break of dawn. The Fellowship gathers, when it is still dark, with lights and move forward to God's Garden and walk around the place singing songs of Easter that those sleeping in the graves would rise. The choice of being together in God's Garden is very appropriate, as Amy's life was fragrant with grace and pointed to the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amy would have rejoiced to be in such company, because she shared their secret of triumph over death.

As Amy had once arranged during the funeral of Ponnamal,²¹⁹⁴ so it was during her own last earthly journey. 'Funeral: the word where the holy dead are concerned should be a singing word'; these words²¹⁹⁵ refer to Ponnamal's burial, but it can be said also of Amy's funeral where songs of triumph were sung.

First she was carried to the Dohnavur church so that the people who so loved her could see her face once more. Bishop Selwyn, an old friend of Amy's in India, led the service, with others taking part. So many attended the service, Christians and Hindus, who with their presence thanked her for so much love given to them. The boys and the men lined up as a kind of bodyguard and at Amy's own request, the older servants, with Per,²¹⁹⁶ were her bearers; meanwhile Tamil songs were sung, and love and tears were from Tamil hearts. In the church 1200 to 1500 cards were distributed with verses telling of eternal life and the way of salvation. The chimes in the tower rang out the tune of Alford's 'Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand':

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Ten thousand times ten thousand | What rush of alleluias |
| In sparkling raiment bright, | Fills all the earth and sky! |
| The armies of the ransomed saints | What ringing of a thousand harps |
| Throng up the steps of light: | Bespeaks the triumph nigh! |
| 'Tis finished, all is finished, | O day, for which creation |
| Their fight with death and sin: | And all its tribes were made! |
| Fling open wide the golden gates, | O joy, for all its former woes |
| And let the victors in. | A thousand fold repaid! |
| O then what ruptured greetings | Bring near Thy great salvation, |
| On Canaan's happy shore; | Thou Lamb for sinners slain; |
| What knitting severed friendships up | Fill up the roll of Thine elect, |
| Where partings are no more! | Then take Thy power and reign: |
| Then eyes with joy shall sparkle, | Appear, Desire of nations, |
| That brimmed with tears of late; | Thine exiles long for home; |
| Orphans no longer fatherless, | Show in the heavens Thy promised sign; |
| Nor widows desolate. | Thou Prince and Saviour, come. ²¹⁹⁷ |

Amy was brought to the House of Prayer where the Fellowship held their own service in which the Lord was glorified. John Risk read Matthew 25:21; 2 Timothy 4:6-8 and Philippians 1:19-21, and after thanksgiving and prayer, all moved slowly to God's Garden, singing all the time *Alleluia! The strife is o'er, the battle done*²¹⁹⁸ and the children waving ferns as a sign of victory. Meanwhile the joy bells rang. It was

2194. See *Ponnamal*, Chapter XVII, 116-118.

2195. In *Ponnamal*, 116.

2196. Per was the intermediary between Dohnavur and the two fugitives, Raj and Chotu. Amy highly loved him for his zeal to teach the people of the love of the Lord Jesus. He was 'a man dedicated to a crusade, ready to bend every power of mind and body to a high ambition, and to sacrifice all the softer things of life' (Hopkins, *Raj the Dacoit*, 159).

2197. Rev. Henry Alford (1810-1871). In *Golden Bells*, hymn no.558, London: Scripture Union, n.d., 185.

2198. Composed by Giovanni P. Da Palestrina, 1591, under the title *Finita iam sunt praeli*. Text from 1695 translated by Francis Pott (1832-1909), in *Golden Bells*, hymn 165, London: Scripture Union, n.d., 58.

Amy's wish, as they rang when in the *Pilgrim's Progress* the pilgrims left their mortal garments behind in the river. So for her, too, the joy bells rang when she was met by the Shining Ones and went up through the regions of air.²¹⁹⁹ The girls dressed in white and yellow, the Dohnavur festival colours, and the little ones in blue, which stands for love, a big procession moved toward God's Garden while songs of triumph were sung. A joy that Amma was with Christ and joy too, for once they should meet her again. Grief was there, but no gloom, for her body was sown as a seed to await its resurrection. Now the whole Fellowship gathered there and under a tamarisk tree Amy was put in her last resting place here on earth, while Devabakti read 1 Corinthians 15:50–58. All the graves in God's Garden are equal, with no headstones to mark the graves; the only identification is a brick at the burial spot.²²⁰⁰ Even so Amy's grave, but a little later a humble bird bath was placed beside it. The word written on it says everything, *Amma* (Figure 37).

As a woman she had lived close to earth; as a Christian, close to heaven. The long journey was over. A pioneer until the end. Her death was not an epilogue to a life fully lived, but the prologue to a still more abundant life. The far views of the Indian mountains are replaced by the still grander and more glorious prospects of 'the land that is very far off in the nearer presence of 'the King in His beauty'.

From all over the world many gave their recollections of her. From Chicago Norman Grubb wrote: 'We think with joy of the old warrior, Amma, Miss Carmichael, at last with the Lord, and pray for Dohnavur'.²²⁰¹ In the opening meeting of the 1951 Keswick Convention tribute was paid to Miss Amy Carmichael, who 'recently had been called into the fuller life of heaven' and 'who had been closely associated with the Convention'. Amy's poem 'From prayer that asks that I may be' is printed in full on the first page of the 1951 yearbook.²²⁰² Her first biographer, Rev. A.T. Houghton, presided the Missionary Meeting of the 1953 Keswick Convention and referred to Amy 'who rendered valuable service' and who 'established in India the great work among the children at Dohnavur'.²²⁰³ Mr John Risk, missionary in Dohnavur, commented:

A home was in existence where nearly 900 children were being cared for. [...] The Vision Beautiful had to be translated into action, and the devil would fight every inch of the way with all the weapons at his disposal.

Mr Risk concluded with a poem of Amy's, 'March on in strength, my soul. The sky is red'.²²⁰⁴

In her youth, Amy had first heard the question of the *Shorter Catechism* 'What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?' In her long life she had rested in the answer:

The soul of the believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.

In many annals of missionary enterprise, Amy's name will be mentioned as a missionary pioneer par excellence! We think of the blessedness and privilege of this life, which began in Millisle with sacrificing a doll²²⁰⁵ and ended in India by giving her love for India's children.

2199. Cf. *Fragments That Remain*, 144.

2200. The pattern of God's Garden in Dohnavur was according the plan of the earliest Quaker burial grounds which had no markers. Cf. Birkel, *Silence and Witness*, 111.

2201. In Winter, ed., *My Dear C.U.M.B.*, 89.

2202. *TKW* (1951): 4 and 1.

2203. *TKE* (1953): 137.

2204. *TKW* (1953): 140–141.

2205. Cf. Amy's own words: 'Training of the right kind of missionary begins in the nursery'.

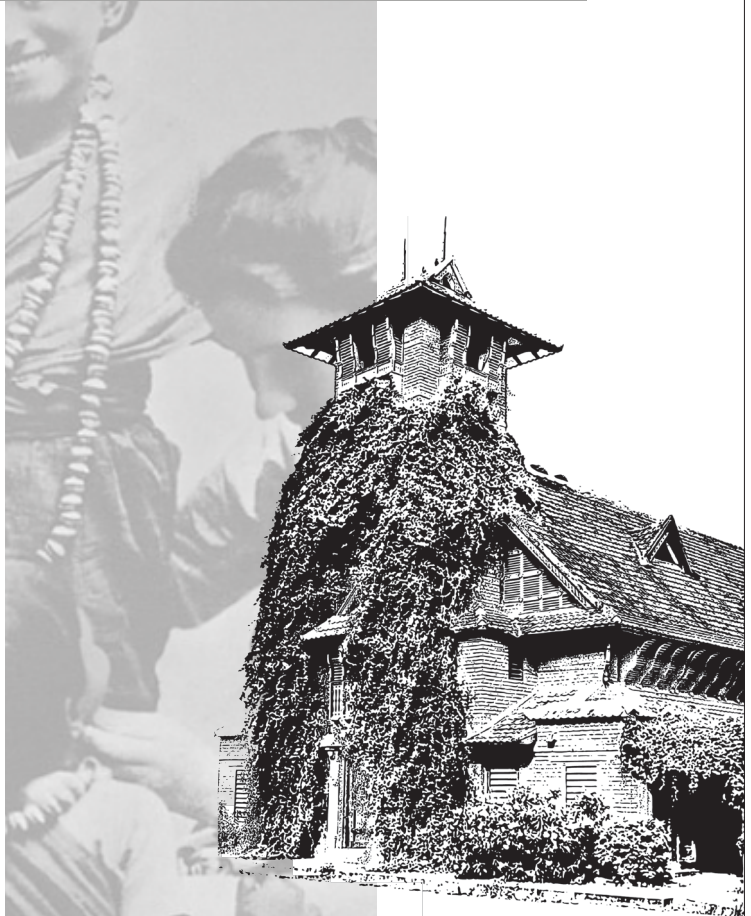


Source: © J. (Hans) Kommers.

FIGURE 37: Amy's last resting place in 'God's Garden'.

I heard His call, 'Come, follow!'- that was all!
My gold grew dim:
My soul went after Him.
I rose and followed - that was all:
would not follow, if they heard Him call!
W.R. Newell

O Jesus the Crucified I will follow Thee in Thy path.
Inspire me for the next step, whether it leads down
into the shadow or up into the light. Surely in what
place my Lord the King shall be, whether in death
or life, even there also will Thy servant be.
Trotter, Parables of the Cross, 36.



After Amma

■ The extent of her influence

‘The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.’ This expression emphasises that women have a strong influence on events through their children.²²⁰⁶ Catherine Carmichael’s spirituality and education at home in Millisle can be seen in her daughter’s work in Dohnavur. Were not all the lessons learned in Millisle, Belfast, Manchester, Broughton Grange and Japan, fuelled by David and Catherine Carmichael’s prayers for their daughter and Catherine’s understanding, her support in the many letters written and her stay in Dohnavur in 1906? These platforms for the future were built on solid Biblical ground. Amy, stamped and sealed by God, remained lifelong true to his call.

All great work requires patience and time. Amy’s work, seen in the Dohnavur institutions, had an even greater invisible dimension. She saw direct results, but her influence was much wider and the outcome of her long-term vision does not go unnoticed in present-day south India. Amy could wait upon the Lord and rest in his will and was not ruled by statistics. Love does not work on statistics and calculation. In her evangelicalism, she emphasised preaching for the salvation of individual men and women, but presented Christianity by means of not only devotional books and prayer, as something touching the soul only, but in practical ways: she contributed schooling, medical care and agricultural skills, for the salvation of man, body and soul. Souls were saved but she saw in the Dohnavur boys and girls, after they had left Dohnavur, missionary-minded persons with a warm heart for those in need, forming stable Christian families and trustworthy workers in medicine, schools and government all over India. Amy, as the initiator, only had one wish for herself: that God might be glorified through her. The following words referring to Jeanne-Françoise Frémoyot, describe Amy’s experience – in the margin she wrote the words: ‘March 3, 1893, a clearly marked and time-worn route’ and ‘March 6, 1901’.²²⁰⁷

2206. See the *Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary & Thesaurus* [Cambridge: CUP].

2207. Both dates mark an important event in Amy’s life. The call to missionary work in Japan and the coming of the first child to Dohnavur.

She was a traveller who, starting on her journey with a clearly-marked and time-worn route before her, found herself checked by the Touch that is not human [...] attracted to the piece of a surrender to obedience.²²⁰⁸

This little place in the south Indian plains, where for more than 100 years God has done such a great work, what influence does it have in God's world-wide mission work? And in what way does the study of the life's work of Amy Carmichael contribute to further understanding and development of missionary concepts and outreach? Who knows about Dohnavur today? Is this type of mission work not too old-fashioned, and is it relevant for our 21st century? Her attractive and commanding personality will cause her to be remembered as a missionary of great importance. She was unremitting in her zeal, but amidst all the day-to-day work she kept to her guiding principle of the 'one thing necessary'. She was not easily inclined to any modernity, but a quiet and practical piety, combined with humility, charity and unselfishness, had the foremost place. Having set her hand to the plough she never seemed to look back, with steady perseverance moving forward, led by God's Spirit:

Thoughts came about the big missions and their so much greater stories. It seemed like turning a straw into a pillar or making a song over pulling up spinach, as we say here, to write Windows at all. Ought we to do it? 'Our Fellowship is such a little thing', I said to M.M.,²²⁰⁹ who chanced just then to come into the room. 'But it isn't our little thing: it's His little thing', she answered. So the book goes on to tell what it may of the kindness of God to one of His little things.²²¹⁰

'His little thing.' We are dealing with the method by which God does work and will accomplish his ends. His very methods in fulfilling the ultimate goal by sending his servants into the world seem unfortunate and too simple in our eyes. We like to use and to expect the blessings and the praise from men and women well known, much-praised convention speakers, people of reputation, and from numbers, organisation, budgets, methods, plans, prestige, et cetera. But God's emphatic word to us is 'not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit'.²²¹¹ We can only understand the whole of the Dohnavur Fellowship when we see God's Spirit at work in that desert-like area more than 100 years ago. How he used humble women and men with no standing, an ordinary missionary with ordinary local people with no social advantages, chosen by him, to heal deep wounds in the spiritual and social realm.

Is not the DF today a monument of His faithfulness? Is not giving glory and honour to him and for us a saving token to save us from foolish and sinful pride? It is all God's work in the way which has been described, by the gentle working of his Spirit, by the quiet but disturbing influence of his Word, using the feeble testimony of a missionary from Ireland and faithful Indian women. God crowns his own work, not our merits.

History is God's history, and contemporary believers are all standing on the shoulders of those who served God in their time. They left a testimony behind and these beacons of faith will guide and inspire us to go deeper with God. Amy did her work in subjection to God and was used by God who himself took the surprising initiative, and Amy, in his hands, had the vision, was able to work out the planning and the strategy. Lesslie Newbigin (1909–1998) is surely right when he comments that 'a whole history of the "expansion of Christianity" could be written with very few missionary names in it'.²²¹² In the history of mission work in the first half of the 20th century, the name of Amy Carmichael will be like a

2208. In Sanders, *Sainte Chantal*, 1 and 5.

2209. Mary Mills.

2210. *Windows*, 113.

2211. Zechariah 4:6.

2212. In *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, vol. 6/4, October 1982, 150.

star. Some people are like comets, just appearing for a moment; stars last, do not make noise, are not very much in the public eye, but just twinkle in God's firmament for his glory.

The subject of this book is an outstanding figure in the first half of the 20th-century mission era. Despite many after her serving in the mission, it will be difficult to find one remotely comparable appearing on the horizon. It is the aim of the author that our generation will be connected to our heritage of faith. Young Christians need spiritual role models and the encounter with Amy, her life and her ultimate adoration to Jesus Christ alone, gives them a road map for their spiritual journey. Special focus has been laid on the life of faith and Amy's mission drive to give this generation the inspiration to trust God for the impossible in life and mission service.

A single-minded woman with firm theological and vocational convictions, which gave birth to a strong commitment, was made a role model for missions today. Some consider her 'an antiquarian' because she was very reluctant to change her missiological stance to adopt any other views. Today some of the issues she regarded as important are dated or not so relevant anymore, but in her lifelong service, she never abandoned her biblical principles. The readers will have noticed that this book merges the evangelical and charismatic streams to show that to transform life's greatest challenges the love of and the hope in Jesus Christ is the only power to heal this world and have men reconciled with God. Through her books and poems Amy has influenced and encouraged innumerable men and women. A favourite poem in the radiant life of Adelaide Locher, captured in her biography, was Amy Carmichael's 'From a subtle love of softening things'.²²¹³ In her missionary training she was inspired by Amy's books and poems, even then when she entered the valley, 'and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death'.

Now that her span of life was over, Dohnavur seemed empty without Amy. The influence of her ministry of love still lingers all around the Dohnavur premises. The whole secret of her fruitful life – and she never made a secret of it! – came from her love and the joy of the indwelling Christ, which can be seen outwardly in her love for the Indian children. In every inch, Amy was a woman with a character and her individuality was very marked. No one could mistake her for another missionary woman. Her individuality was not marred by posing, affection or that egotism which is the disease of individuality. Physically weak in her teens and 20s, she was an energy incarnate, and her activities were surprisingly numerous and unique. Few women missionaries had a career as she had. In her were united the foresight of a Christian worker, believing in the sovereignty of God, the enterprise of a pioneer, and the common sense of a businessman ready for action. Along with these endowments, she had many ordinary qualities to an average degree, and they were all well developed, for an experience like this could not fail to pull out all the stops in her being.

I discovered, and this I value, her strenuous and courageous championship of the Christian faith, together with her – for her time! – modern outlook and her (reluctant) readiness to adopt new things which are real and true in present-day thought and life. What attracts me to her is this blend of conservative and assimilative elements and a mind by nature conservative. Her mind was not a house with the blinds drawn down; all the windows were open – open to 'Jerusalem' and open for the real things on earth. She was far from narrow-minded, as can be seen in Dohnavur where she introduced many new things like electricity, a microscope, a swimming pool, a car, etcetera. She combined elements of her strong character with a life close to the Word of God, in great humility. She was attuned to the Word of God so that her amazed heart recorded his voice. She was not in for new doctrinal teachings but loyal to the Bible and meanwhile open to listen to other people and interested in other subjects, like

2213. Cf. C. Canfield, *The Radiant Valley* (London: CIM, 1954 [1951]), 42. The poem is in *Gold Card*, X and in *Towards Jerusalem*, 104. See too C.L. Canfield, *See the Glory* (Solid Christian Books, 2015 [1956]).

the life of birds and dogs and mountaineering. What was important to Thomas Walker was also important for her:

Solemnised myself, but oh for the solemnising Spirit to work in every heart! Not happy about things here. Worldliness is eating up the leading families. Not much response; people seem very dead as a whole.

Also Walker's watchword fits her: 'with God for men; with men for God'.²²¹⁴

We also note a noble simplicity and unity in her life. When it joined the ocean, the stream had the same colour as at its source. There is no puzzling complexity of thought and action. She kept in the path of duty, never mind the consequences. This simplicity and unity were secured by the permanence of her convictions and enthusiasm. Often elderly people naturally grow weary of details and lose the keenness of their sympathies. Not so Amy; though crippled, she was herself a lifelong steadiness and undecaying zeal. She had passed through many testing and dark places, but never surrendered her faith, always living in the desire to do the will of God. In the lives of others she was looking for real conversion, broken hearts and a 'Nineveh repentance'.²²¹⁵ The longer she was in India the more she understood that the real work was in the heart and not in excited feelings. Her definite purpose was the mission and it was for this that she had come to India, and that she had given all her energy. She disliked to talk about others and rather kept silent. From time to time she had secrets with God.

'What of the girl by the fire side?' 'What if she misses her chance?'²²¹⁶ She had heard the call from heaven, which had changed unto a song, and she had obeyed. The Lord had guided her through all the loneliness, through all the disillusion when her dreams of fair romance slipped away from her, and the usual and the commonplace were all about her. Then and forever that song of the Lord would sing through the quiet places of her soul, and she would be sure – with the sureness that was just pure peace – that she was where the Master meant her to be.²²¹⁷ In the world of mission, Amy had a unique position in the way she managed to maintain a consistent stand:

- She had a long-term vision. Her work was not superficial. She went to the bottom of the problem, and sought and found, to some extent, a way to really help the children in need. She was the pivot upon which all turned. In a certain way, her control was autocratic, but she found it difficult to delegate and share authority. It can be shown that not everything was centred around her, for after her death the work continued. Criticism of her character did not often reach her, and when she heard it, it did not really disturb her. It gave her pain, but she did not change the course and the standard once set.
- She had a strong grasp of detail. The track set was followed to the end and the work done in unwearied patience. In the first years of the work, she knew the details of every child and when the number of children grew she wanted to be informed about all of them. Once they were away from the compound, students had to report to her their daily doings.
- Fidelity to the Word of God characterised her whole life. She liked to ponder it, and to expound it for the benefit of the others. Her extensive reading kept her in touch with present-day events and the wise sayings of divines, who lived ages ago, guided her in her decisions.
- She was a woman of prayer. One could disagree about her methods of decisions, but no one could deny that her motives were pure and that her desires centred on spiritual results and on the well-

2214. In *Walker of Tinnevely*, 344.

2215. A Walker expression. In *Walker of Tinnevely*, 372–373.

2216. This refers to Amy's thoughts in Broughton Grange when she was sitting next to the fireside and thought about God calling her to the mission field. Cf. *Lotus Buds*, XXXVI, 335–341.

2217. Cf. *Lotus Buds*, 340.

being of the children. From God and his Word came her wisdom. No decision in Dohnavur was taken before a prayer meeting had been held, and only after all had agreed did things go on.

- Being a woman with a strong personality and a magnificent presence, she went her own way in the height of Western mission work and influence in the East and in a field in which men and women of fundamentally different opinions and practices operated.
- Her use of time was intense. The rescue work in Dohnavur was a *kairos* moment in India's mission history and national history.

The legacy left by her serves for us as a model of inner resolve and deep faith for our generation. She paid the price of exile, as the ultimate consequence of the two words that accompanied her everywhere: 'Yes Lord':

We cannot flow both deep and wide.
 Only God can do that.
 We have only a limited number of days to live,
 And only a limited quantity of energy to spend.
 So the important thing is to spend ourselves
 As entirely possible
 Upon whatever is our special calling.

To say she had her limitations is only to say that she was an ordinary woman, and lower than the angels. She was a missionary not of a conventional type, but to say that she was too much wedded to her own views, too neglectful of the views of others, and too reluctant, is to say what has probably been truly said concerning every man or woman who has done work like hers in the mission field. Usually missionaries know what they want, know who has sent them and are driven in a way they cannot escape. To obey and to be trustful, the power of holding on and holding out, is to look only to him who has sent and to follow where he is going. There is no other option, and therefore their views do not always correspond with fellow workers. Amy was far from claiming that she was free from defects in this matter.

It cannot be denied that this policy might be seem to some to be autocratic or even dictatorial. Tasks like these have demanded such qualities and dispatch as we expect in a general on a battlefield. What may be said is that her compelling influence usually gained what she had in mind. What was done was done after exceptional consideration and prayer and in all Dohnavur work, Amy was free from self-seeking and unworthy motives. She advocated only for what she believed to be the best for the DF and the children under her care. Differences of opinion never lessened the admiration of many, all over the world, for her. This fact is a supreme proof of the genuineness, real compassion and love of this woman, and it is also highly creditable to those who could not always think along the same lines as her. Their generosity in esteeming her services was like her own in estimating theirs. She was ready to do the humblest of tasks; her individuality did not lapse into egotism or singularity. To power of vision, she added an extraordinary practical capacity, which enabled her to see the true dimensions of common things; firmly grasping the real while swayed by the ideal. She lived both in the present and in the future. She preserved a fine balance of fearlessness and prudence, and had an instinct for great things alongside wonderful patience in the meanest details. A real pioneer who had nothing of the spirit of an adventurer or self-seeker. The words 'I' or 'my' seldom intruded in her conversation and writings. Her private letters reveal an exceptionally keen consciousness of defects and failings. Her unfeigned selflessness is rare.

Tenderness of heart in her rose to genius and was not chilled by years of disappointments. Her sympathies overflowed and went down beneath men to the animal world. A man or beast in misery was for her a sacred thing. She could not pass a beggar unheeded. However busy – she was always in a

whirlpool of work – she had endless patience with sufferers. She, a woman in a Mammon-worshipping age and community, desired not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

From all the fields of secular ambition she deliberately turned to one of the obscurest corners of Christ's harvest field. She did an uncommon thing 'in this conservative corner of South India'.²²¹⁸ True, 'God's best is reserved for those who live apart from common things'.²²¹⁹ Some people write and study mission history, but Amy Carmichael made it. She often thought about the Fellowship's future but in vain do we look for a concept she had in mind for the Fellowship of the future. The Fellowship was based on strict principles, but in what way this standard should hold in the future, she must have laid in the hands of the Holy Spirit. She believed God that the next generation would find its own best ways of doing the things, unhampered by trying to keep to the conditions of the founder of the Fellowship. We can say that the start of the Santhosha Vidhyalaya Secondary²²²⁰ School, on the Fellowship's compound, is a blessed gift of God to the Fellowship. Is not it according to the measure of blind obedience to God?

Now, more than half a century after her death, the DF can be measured by the pattern laid down 100 years ago, in intercession, in caring, in Christian education, in sacrifice and hospitality; in one phrase: in bringing the love of Christ to India. Those who have been educated at the Santhosha Vidhyalaya Secondary School will be the torchbearers all over India. Now again boys and girls will go out and this combination has a tremendous challenge; even though the boys' work was stopped in Dohnavur in the 1980s, the young boys' lives did not drift past the Fellowship. The boys have priceless chances of growing into strong Indian manhood, of standing firm in their respective future work and of being able to form strong Christian families. Beyond all denominational boundaries the Gospel will reach the farthest outposts of the country in a way Amy would have liked: in the pattern of the New Testament and in giving the present-day India the Gospel in the language the people can understand, in the germ of the spiritual language so typical of Dohnavur. Amy's work does follow her.

■ Appreciations: 'Amy my beloved friend'

Dohnavur was visited by many friends and 'just passing' visitors. In what way did they see and value this Irish woman with so much of India in her? Outwardly, her Victorian upbringing gave the impression of her being reserved, even severe, the product of an English public school and a rather strict Presbyterian upbringing, but inwardly her heart was full of love and gratitude. She had the ability to cross both cultural and social barriers and to relate equally to both Indian government officials and country people.

We cannot avoid the many opinions circulating about Amy. In our 21st century the spell of reverence towards the missionary era and its leading 'giants' is broken in many ways. Criticism mostly comes from those who have comfortable, tailor-made careers, who have not seen 'deep'. Getting to know Amy Carmichael is only possible if one recklessly forsakes all to follow the Lord.

Many trailblazers are forgotten and Amy Carmichael is one of them. There is a circle of mission-minded people who keep her legacy vivid, but in broader mission circles she is just someone from the past. Yet she has been known, and missionaries and mission organisations damage themselves by putting her aside or not lending their ear to her. She had her mistakes, fears, blind spots, and idiosyncrasies, but we see her as God's unique gift. God used her as his instrument. She was someone whose life was transformed by him and with her fierce convictions she transformed the lives of many others. She did not ask for veneration and admiration, nor for

2218. *Ploughed Under*, 131.

2219. *Ploughed Under*, 133.

2220. Santhosha means joy. Vidhyalaya, a place of education.

nice words in favour of her from the Church or the world; she did not allow anybody to make a parade for her, nor was she open for applause and cheers. She possessed an independence, which places her on the same line with John the Baptist: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken by the wind?'²²²¹ She was just a shining light, a candle giving light and diminishing while shining. In God's appointed time, she was there where the Lord wanted her to be. In a daily sacrifice and denial of self, wedded to the Cross, she glorified in the Cross. What you see? A woman after God's own heart.

Already during her life she was a legend in evangelical circles, from New Zealand to Canada, from England to the USA. Many held views of their own about her, and to the present day she is paid attention to by one or another publication; to one she is sympathetic and laudatory, to another she is just an old-fashioned Victorian missionary with an exceedingly high standard, or there is plain-spoken negativity. Special attention is given to her character in relation to her work, in the way her life formed her theology and missionary method.²²²² With the biographical elements in the forefront, especially in the way her character relates to her ministry, the outcome is also that doctrinal and denominational issues that often divide Christians now tend to recede into the background.²²²³

People who have lived or worked closely with Amy did not find it easy to name any faults of hers; they could not even think about her in terms of any mistakes made by her. It shows grace if we can see her and judge her work in the light of the Gospel. For herself she knew that for God she only could live under the cover of Christ's blood. Did she not say of a Christian: 'Christ is all and I am nothing'? She was not a sinless person, but she believed God, and without any reserve I put her in the list of Hebrews 11:

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of. [...] And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.²²²⁴

Over the many years of Amy's missionary career she made a lot of contacts. Many unknown to us today, but also several well-known others related to mission work. It is known that she appreciated Bishop Moule's books and he was asked by Amy in 1917 to write the foreword of *Ponnamal*, in which he defines her work as 'the most pathetic and noble rescue-work in the world'.²²²⁵

She was in contact with Rosalind Goforth from China who, on behalf of Madame Chang Kai-Shek, gave her the book *China in Peace and War*.²²²⁶ In the dedication Rosalind wrote 'From the author, who, for many years was known and loved you from afar', and closed with Nahum 1:7: 'The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble'. Amy herself wrote in this book: 'The great worth of this book is that

2221. Matthew 11:7; Luke 7:24.

2222. Cf. 'Theology of character' in J. Wm. McClendon, *Biography as Theology: How Life Stories Can Remake Today's Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1974).

2223. An example of this can be found in Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*. Having described the lives of many missionaries, in which he weaved together mission strategy with character, he writes in his epilogue: 'The great Dane, Larsen, the beloved Charlie Andrews, and the saintly Miss Carmichael were similar in only one respect – they all were Christ like. Larsen was a rational modernist, Andrews was heterodox, and Amy Carmichael was frankly fundamentalist. Yet I cannot find any difference between liberals and conservatives in their consecration or in the spiritual results of their work' (pp. 311–312). Also Tucker, 'Biography as Missiology', 429–430.

2224. See Hebrews 11:32–39.

2225. In the foreword of *Ponnamal*, V.

2226. Madame Chang Kai-Shek (May-Ling Soong Chiang), *China in Peace and War* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1940). The book is in the Dohnavur library.

hardness is taken for granted as part of soldiership', and she underlined the words of Madame Chang Kai-Shek in this book:

Is it possible that modern trained Chinese Christians lack the stuff of which missionaries are made? Are we in the position of accepting all the benefits of the Christian faith without caring to accept the responsibilities and hardships? At the very heart of our faith is hardship, endurance, suffering – a cross. Without them there cannot be any Christian faith.

These words could have been written by Amy. Another missionary to China, Joy Guinness, gave her a book in 1949 with the words: 'To Amma with love and deep gratitude for all your sharing in the making of this book'. For Christmas 1941, Geraldine and Howard Taylor presented Amy one of the books from their own library, *The Success of Christian Missions*, 'with heartiest good wishes'.²²²⁷ She read the whole book.

Amy herself always prayed to be guided by the Holy Spirit and was eager to know the path of righteousness, to walk there for others but also for herself.

Humanly speaking we can say that, especially in the beginning, the time she arrived in the mission field, she was too quick in her judgement about others. She learned, as later on she could say to new recruits: 'There are days when I hope I shall be gone before you come. I can not bear to be a horrid disappointment to you'.²²²⁸

Sometimes it took a while to admit or to apologise when a decision proved to be not good. For us, now nearly more than 70 years after her death, the memories of those who have known her are fading. Her books tell everything, and her bold and honest writing tells a lot about her own inner feelings and struggles. She, who spoke so often about love and joy as a work of the Lord in the lives of his children, was the one who, until the end of her life and even further – as one new worker in the Fellowship noticed – 'wanted joy, triumph, tambourines, even after her burial'. One remembered a young missionary,²²²⁹ after having met Amy for the first time, who when she came out of her room, had said after a while, 'I have seen the Lord Jesus'.

But all this does not alter the fact that some thank God for this missionary, and her valuable legacy, while others see in her only a controversial and outdated missionary. Various different labels are put on her. When we read and hear of childhood memories of Amy from those who as a baby or little child came to Dohnavur, all remember her love for them and without exception, the remembrance of her is one of full blessing.²²³⁰

Amy in her work was one with the women with whom she worked at Dohnavur. One of the first ones she fully trusted and with whom she shared her deepest feelings was Ponnamal. It was she who, in short, gives us a very nice comment of what she saw in Amy. Since 1904, in the search for children to save them, Amy had shared with Ponnamal all her fears and anxieties about the whole project and how she brought everything to the Lord. The local people watched the missionary! In Amy, Ponnamal saw a

2227. R. Young, *The Success of Christian Missions* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1890). In the Dohnavur library.

2228. In Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 289.

2229. See Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 291. On the same page: 'A Canadian woman psychiatrist went to visit, expecting to garner an interesting case study of a neurotic old lady. Five minutes with Amma convinced the doctor she had picked the wrong lady.' And 'an Indian pastor who criticised the work of the Fellowship because the children were brought up like "hot house plants", felt sincerely ashamed of his prejudice once he had met Amma. "My doubts vanished. Instinctively I felt that here was a person just beside me who has realised God. I have never seen such a beautiful face".'

2230. See *Dust of Gold*, no. 246, 14.

missionary full of the love of God and for God. 'I see God with you'²²³¹ she once uttered and she, too, believed that the work for the children was of God.

The Keswick missionary Dr Inwood²²³² spent two days in Dohnavur. He gives the following impression:

The two days spent here have no parallel in my experience. Everything in this work has the touch of God so naturally upon it that I lived in one unbroken act of wonder and worship and adoration [...] The visit was to me a sacrament, a new contact with the Spirit of the Master that enriched my own spirit for all coming time.²²³³

Lilias Trotter from Algiers and Amy corresponded regularly, until Lilias died in 1928. From Algeria this 'comrade from North Africa', as Amy called her, sent Amy her newest book *The Glory of the Impossible*.²²³⁴ One of her other books, *Parables of the Cross*, Lilias dedicated to Amy:

While Lilias and Amy never met, they were kindred spirits, coming from similar backgrounds in Britain and having both been deeply influenced by the Keswick Conferences. Each woman possessed that rare combination of pioneer and poet, developing ministries in their respective countries while writing devotional literature of depth and grace. They would through the years, keep informed of each other's work through their published writings and personal correspondence. Inspired by the example of this woman fourteen years her junior, Lilias later would encourage the children in Algeria to support the children at Dohnavur with their prayers and offerings, as she herself did.²²³⁵

Contributions to the Algiers Mission Band's quarterly magazine *El Couffa* show that news from the mission front, such as Amy Carmichael's work in India, were reported. On her deathbed, Lilias Trotter dictated two final letters, one for Amy in India, 'with whom she had kept an active correspondence'.²²³⁶

'Amy, my beloved friend. From Mildred.' These words are in *The Cloud of the Unknowing*, a book Amy got as a present from Mildred Cable. We do not know if Amy was happy with the book, for we read under the title Amy's own words: 'Take the wheat, leave the chaff'. Mildred was one of the well-known CIM Trio. In 1928 the Trio, Evangeline and Francesca French and Mildred Cable, travelled through India.²²³⁷ As well as their visit to the Women's Medical College at Ludhiana²²³⁸ they went far to the south to meet Amy and saw what was going on in Dohnavur. As they entered the compound, it was to them, that they were taken 'out of this century of vulgar exaggeration into the quiet austerities of an earlier age'. They watched the children playing 'with joyous abandon, sheltered from this gross and evil world'. In talks with Amy they heard of the tremendous conflict which surged around every inmate of this house:

It would be easy on a brief visit to Dohnavur to gain the impression of a garden of paradise where exquisite children play with joyous abandon, sheltered from this gross and evil world, but on the footing of comradeship

2231. *Ponnamal*, 40.

2232. Those sent by the Keswick Mission Council to visit various mission fields, were called 'missioners'.

2233. *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 194.

2234. See *Lotus Buds*, 126.

2235. In Huffman Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible*, 151.

2236. In Huffman Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible*, 244 and 324.

2237. Cf. the biography by W.J. Platt, *Three Women, Mildred Cable, Francesca French, Evangeline French* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1964).

2238. It is the largest city north of New Delhi in the state of Punjab. In 1833 American Presbyterian Missionaries established in Ludhiana a Christian Medical College and Hospital.

in spiritual campaigns, Amy Carmichael admitted us to the knowledge of the tremendous conflict which surges around every inmate of this house. 'These beautiful children have been snatched one by one from the very jaws of hell [...] and each one within these gates means one victim less for the life of shame which is involved in the betrothal to the gods'.²²³⁹

In 1946 they visited India again, but were not able then to travel to Dohnavur, This journey, recorded in *Journey with a Purpose*, had really given them to see the purpose of their travels, namely that 'India has had a new place in our prayers ever since'.²²⁴⁰

Murray Webb-Peploe took Hugh Evan Hopkins back with him to Dohnavur after a furlough in England. He served with Godfrey and John Risk in the boys' compound. From the very beginning, Hugh sensed the high level of spiritual intensity throughout the whole Fellowship. In a unique way, he described his first impression of Dohnavur and Amy:

You sometimes felt guilty about laughing, even. The atmosphere was rather like that of a convent. The first morning after my arrival I came down for chota (early breakfast) at 5.30 a.m. Godfrey and John were both sitting there, so solemn that I couldn't resist clowning a bit: I put some egg-shell in my mouth and spat it out vigorously. I am not sure how amused Godfrey was, but things did relax a bit after that. It was marvellous to see it all coming to life – the Fellowship that I had heard and read and prayed so much about. One had to realize that under God there was only one boss and that was Amma. She wouldn't proceed with any course of action until everyone had agreed, but who dared oppose her? We were awed – perhaps excessively so – by her wisdom and experience. She was a remarkable woman, alarming to a raw recruit, with a sort of aura around her. You sensed at once that she walked very closely to God. Quite apart from her spirituality she was a highly gifted person – she was very widely read and had an amazing knowledge of Tamil and of Indian ways. Mercifully she had a sense of humour, which saved the day many a time. When I first met her she was not completely bedridden but was sitting up in a chair, already in the famous room from which she hardly ever emerged.²²⁴¹

For Stanley Jones (1884–1973) Amy was 'a true saint of South India'²²⁴²; for Elisabeth Elliot (1926–2015) Amy was her 'first spiritual mother'²²⁴³ and Sherwood Eddy (1871–1963) sees her as the 'most Christlike character I have ever met' and a 'frank fundamentalist';²²⁴⁴ however, he had also his reservations and did not agree with all her spiritual ideas. Later he said that 'her life was the most fragrant, the most joyfully sacrificial, that I ever knew', he goes on:

This does not mean, of course, that her work was the most fruitful, or that I agreed completely with her theology; indeed, some of her convictions were for me quite impossible.²²⁴⁵

And here another opinion about Amy: 'One of the most selfless, giving persons of the twentieth century – an example of faith unconcerned about self'.²²⁴⁶ In the eyes of Ruth Tucker she was a 'celebrity', especially through her writings. Celebrities in missions were often in the right place at the right time, according to Tucker. Which would mean for Amy that she was right when she believed Dohnavur to be the place God

2239. In French, Cable and French, *A Desert Journal*, 24.

2240. M. Cable & F. French, *Journey with a Purpose* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1950), 9.

2241. See Makower, *Follow My Leader*, 126–127.

2242. Stanley Jones, *In Christ*, 207.

2243. See her *A Chance to Die*, IX.

2244. Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 124.

2245. Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 124–125.

2246. P.L. King, 'Amy Carmichael', in *Moving Mountains* (Tonbridge, Kent: Sovereign World Ltd., 2004), 171.

wanted her to be and the time was right because India still stood under British rule, which gave Amy a lot more opportunities to decide about the affairs in Dohnavur than after 1947 when India got its independence.

Stephen Neill's judgement cannot be positive, due to his stormy relationship, which ended when Amy ordered him to leave. In his eyes, she was a 'dictator' who had plunged him into darkness.²²⁴⁷

Jayawardena, who takes a 'feminist perspective', sees Amy as a 'controversial missionary', who 'spoke like an old style-missionary' and her 'attitudes to Hinduism also caused problems' because she did not feel like many other missionaries 'to project a more liberal Christianity', condemning the Hindus as 'heathen'.²²⁴⁸ She questions Amy's way of working with the women, calling them 'sisters', because many women were upset about the way she behaved and sometimes reacted very angrily and ridiculed the Christian and Western social practice.²²⁴⁹ Warren Wiersbe, in his *Great Christians You Should Know*, called her a 'Missionary Unpredictable'. Many churches and mission societies today may well struggle with Amy's unorthodox ways.

A range of opinions, and Amy would be the first to admit that she had her mistakes, but she did where she was called for: she reached the lost and dying with the love of God; she made her life count and left a legacy that is still with us.

Visitors to Dohnavur began to recognise Amy's uniqueness and the wonderful thing God was doing there. Dr Inwood, a Keswick Convention speaker from 1898 to 1927, said:

The two days spent there have no parallel in my experience. Everything in this work has the touch of God so naturally upon it that I lived in one unbroken act of wonder, worship and adoration.

In the first decade of the 20th century a stained glass window was unveiled in Belfast along with three murals in the Stankill area depicting the three eras of Amy's life – Millisle, Belfast and India. The Ulster History Council erected a blue plaque (Figure 38) on the front of the old schoolhouse – now Millisle Baptist Church – in November 2006 and another at the Welcome Evangelical Church in 2007.

Today, reading her books, I envision her working in Dohnavur and I see a strong personality, when young with her stubborn character, mellowing with age, a woman of deep personal faith who loved Christ with all her heart. I see a woman versed in the Bible who took God at his Word, a woman who believed in the power of prayer and with the courage of her convictions never budging from her basic principles. I see a woman with a loving concern for those who were in endangered situations; a woman who saw the pain of this world in the light of the Cross.

To the end of her life she was a missionary heart and soul. A heart she had for the glory of God and a heart of mercy for children, which together in need made her a Christ-like missionary. Amy's life reminds me that God has proven himself sufficient for those who have gone before us in the outreach to the nations with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Used by the Lord not because she was so kind or flawless or better trained or less apt to selfishness, but because she considered him worthy of her life and responded to the call in precious obedience.

■ The end of an era

Through the Spirit we get fathers and mothers and with them we become one in the Spirit. Therefore, in our spirituality, and thinking of missions, in our mission work we are dealing with those who were

2247. In Neill's autobiography, *God's Apprenticeship*. The author does not mention Dohnavur and Amy Carmichael.

2248. Jayawardena, *The White Women's Other Burden*, 261, 14, 94 and 95.

2249. Jayawardena, *The White Women's Other Burden*, 265–266.



Source: © J. [Hans] Kommers.

FIGURE 38: Plaque erected on the Millisle Baptist Church.

before us and walked their way with the Lord in the mission of Christ's Church all over the world. The Spirit who led those before us goes from them to us, so that we come together with them and we ask them what they have to say to us so that we hear his voice via them. Inspiration does not come without having had a good talk. In this talk the dwarves stand on the shoulders of the giants, and in this dialogue the separation of generations is abolished. In this way Amy has been our interlocutor. She had to pass on something to us. In mission history God gave us people on whom we can pull ourselves up when we want to win the future.

Today most people have no knowledge of missionaries and missions from the past, and therefore they are unable to cope with the future. With access to the past, knowing what others did and why, one will discover that it is not old-fashioned, or a kind of exotic history, but that they, too, aimed at the future. What connects and separates us from Amy is not the time she did her mission work, and her mission view, but it is her connection with Christ. Her passionate love for him and her lifelong devotion

to his work in Dohnavur stand before us as a unique example of devotion to his work. We have to learn not to avoid the study of mission history and to learn from the fathers of mission to which our generation so easily bid farewell. Our generation has to learn from those before us. In our global world, the world is becoming smaller, but the 'I' of men is becoming bigger, and, inherent to that, men are living more and more on their own. It is now that we have to learn again, that the Gospel is a power. And when we meditate upon the extraordinary working of it we will trust the reality of the Gospel more. Today God will do his mighty work among those we are going to work.

When Amy passed away, she left a gap not only among her own people, but throughout the whole of the missionary world, which would be hard, if not impossible, to fill. No eulogy is required about the toil expended. If it be true that 'it is not the turnpike, but the trackless wild, with the peak in the distance and the star overhead to steer by, that are making the climbers', Amy was an eminent instance of this class.

Viewing Amy's work and writings in the context of her time, my intentions have been to convey its subject's stature without lapsing into either hagiography or denigration. The material is dated, but many of her insights and arguments are still profoundly relevant in our day. Honestly said, the survey has been done in sympathy with her.

Where necessary critical notes had to be made, but Amy's complete surrender to God, fully dependent on the way he led her, expecting full provision from her Master, and her deep love to bring those lost to Christ, working only for his glory, give missionaries in our generation something to focus upon. Amy was one of the thousands who in their youth responded to the call to the mission field. In the years gone by when a student was converted at Cambridge it was axiomatic that they would be expected soon to offer themselves for the mission field.

When students in the universities in our countries are found in Christ Jesus today, is it axiomatic that they should offer themselves for the mission field? We need again to face the costliness of obedience like that of the Cambridge Seven in the 1880s. Never get away from Jesus and his Cross. Isobel Kuhn wrote of three young CIM workers whom she took to a new station: 'This day I have planted three corns of wheat to die, that they may bring forth much fruit'.

An era ended, but the work is still going on; times have changed, but the facts will not have altered, and our generation has to have in mind: 'Consider Him that endured'. God lasts, Christ lasts; his blood retains its efficacy, and the Spirit retains his power, so be sure that the blessing in its essentials will last. The tentacles of imperial English establishment, which never were far from the missionaries in India, were loosened after the independence of India in 1947. The pendulum swung to the other side. The unclouded confidence that the Western way of thinking and commerce together with the British 'way of life', which was seen everywhere, now does not go hand in hand in the work of evangelism. The proud and the wealthy of the West, confident of their superiority after the two world wars, have turned their great treasures and rich talents, not to the attainment of world peace but to a frightful carnival of hatred, destruction and death. For Western Christianity this swing of the pendulum meant much heart searching and agonising reappraisal. For the people responsible for the work of missionary societies and of foreign mission committees of various churches, it meant the devising of new policies for their foreign fields.

After World War II the number of Protestant missionaries began to fall markedly and the funds available to maintain those who remained were subject to severe restrictions. This period has been called 'the end of the missionary', a period of disentanglement. I was born in the year India got its independence, and having been in the mission field in Europe and Africa, I have come to believe that the gracious purposes of God shall be fulfilled and that his worldwide work is safe in his hands. He will guide

his messengers in the last days through the dangerous rocks of adversity until he comes. We go forward in anticipation of tomorrow.

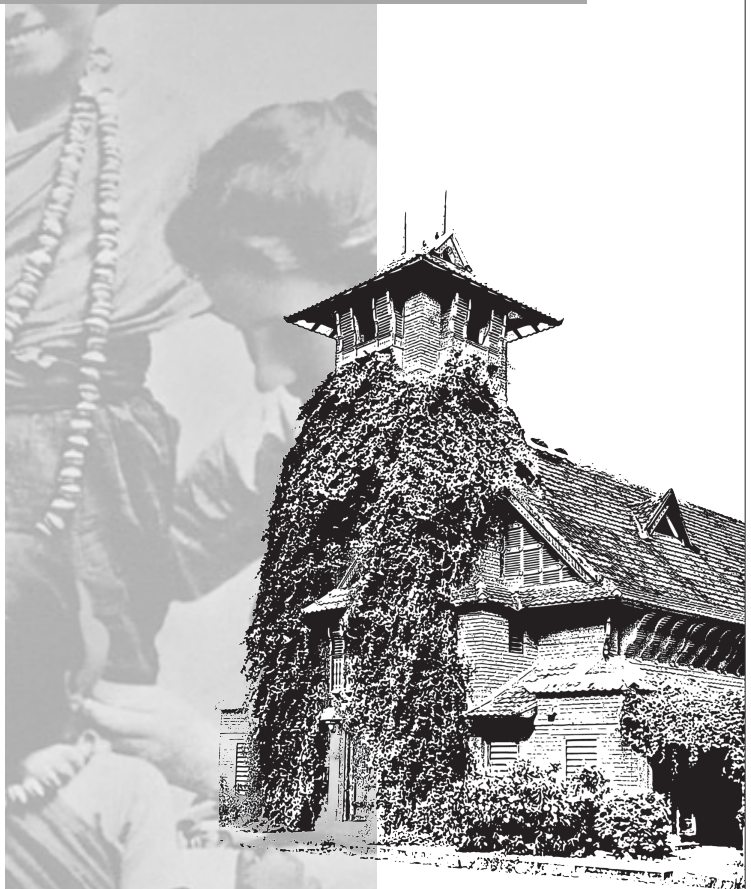
The work done in the first part of the 20th century, the impressive institutions, also in Dohnavur, can be seen as bags for the seed to be sown over the fields, for the 'bread of the world', for the breaking and sharing of Christ's body in a fellowship of which Christ is the head. The modern story of Amy's Dohnavur Fellowship, after her home-going is faithfully described by Nancy Robbins.²²⁵⁰ From the Santhosha Vidhyalaya Secondary School, yearly hundreds are scattered all over India to act as servants of Christ, proclaiming triumphant joy in Christ Jesus. For the Dohnavur Fellowship the overall content of their joy is the song: 'Lord God of doors we cannot pass, We go where Thou art leading on.'²²⁵¹

2250. *Not Forgetting to Sing*, 1967.

2251. In Robbins, *Not Forgetting to Sing*, 179.

If you know the satisfaction of performing such a duty, as well as the gratitude to God which the missionary must always feel, in being chosen for so noble, so sacred calling, you would have no hesitation in embracing it. For my own part, I have never ceased to rejoice that God has appointed me to such an office. People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? [...] It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege. [...] I never made a sacrifice. Of this we ought not to talk, when we remember the great sacrifice which He made who left His Father's throne on high to give **Himself for us.**

David Livingstone at Cambridge University, 04 December 1857.



Global thinking – heart searching

■ Changed perspectives

The world's population in 2017 is estimated to be 7.5 billion, of which about one-third is Christian and two-thirds is outside the saving Word of God, of which the majority is largely not evangelised.²²⁵² To know these numbers we all understand that missionaries cannot retire. Their task in several parts of the world may be different from a hundred years ago, the primary call is the same: 'Go ye'.

The lethargic resignation concerning the problems of mission at present time should alarm us. The crisis missions face today is obviously related to wider developments. Firstly, there is the fact of the erosion of the home base. In the Western churches is a growing consumerism and less continuous consecration on real Biblical issues. The modern missionary movement began and flourished in the Victorian era, the period of colonial expansion when the British could sing of its influence spreading 'wider still and wider'. In such an atmosphere, it appeared self-evident that Providence had created an opportunity for worldwide evangelism and missionaries were sent to the far reaches of the empire on which 'the sun never set'.

Today the older sending churches have been in desperate decline for several years and, in many cases, are preoccupied with a struggle for life itself! In evangelical circles, the impression Spurgeon had of his time can be said of our days: 'Possibly, much of the flimsy piety of the present day arises from the ease with which men attain to peace and joy in these evangelistic days'.²²⁵³ Many a church life is spent by controversy, or very soon people are impressed by pragmatic arguments, and by alleged success. Is it not that today's Gospel preaching is deprived of true authority and expressiveness?

2252. According to United Nations, World Population Prospects, the 2015 Revision. In a global religious landscape it is estimated that 32% is Christian, 23% Muslim, 15% Hindu, 7% Buddhist, 0,2% Jewish. C, 11–14f. L. Lyall, *Missionary Opportunity Today*, 11–14.

2253. In C.H. Spurgeon, *C.H. Spurgeon Autobiography*, vol. I (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1962).

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The missionary and evangelic movements of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century were based on the authority of the Scriptures. Due to strong Biblical orientation, missionaries took seriously what the Bible said about men's lostness and the need for redemption. Several Christians living in the West are now questioning the commitment to 'overseas missions'. Since World War II many sending churches have become more liberal in their theology, resulting in social activism. The reason that the great missionary movements of the 19th century were able to make a lasting impact on the world was that internally they were strong. They knew what they believed and they were determined to proclaim it to the world.²²⁵⁴ In missionary work in the second part of the 20th century accents shifted and God was not anymore in the centre. Rose Dowset in the 2006 OMF's International Council warned us of the end results of a Godless mission. Through liberal influences in missionary circles, the accent on contextualisation with God decentred became anthropology and the ecclesiology with God decentred became sociology.²²⁵⁵ As a reaction to the liberal thinking of the World Council of Churches the American evangelist Billy Graham took a bold stand against the increasing erosion of the meaning of salvation and missions. In 1974 he invited many evangelical leaders to a Congress of World Evangelization at Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne, Switzerland. The catchphrase for this conference was 'Let the Earth Hear His Voice'. The Lausanne Congress was necessary, according to Graham, because the saving knowledge of Christ, real conversion and a holy life for God, were replaced by dialogue and Christian activities by the World Missions Conference in 1972 in Bangkok.²²⁵⁶ Graham thought that missionary thinking is pervaded by a belief that views humanity as basically good and morally unaffected by the Fall, and others think that mission is seen as a 'task rather than a gift'.²²⁵⁷ In the second part of the 20th century the waning of the era of evangelical agencies and missionary societies is seen. Western Christians nowadays are rich in information and have the luxury of travelling around the world, but they are rather poor in commitment and relationship building. Today the validity of religious pluralism is a real fact, and therefore a prophetic stance against postmodern relativism is absolute necessary. 'The hopes of Edinburgh 1910 stand as a challenge to us in mission today.'²²⁵⁸

Amy's death in the middle of the 20th century marked the demarcation of the Biblical evangelistic enterprise when the kingdom theology gained more and more influence. Mission work in the first half of the 20th century was grounded on what we might characterise as a 'theology of obedience'. The centrality of Christ and the necessity of witnessing and proclaiming his name with faith and conviction was a central theme.

In the second place, we see the closure of many of the traditional fields of missionary activity. This increases the tendency to feel that the age of missions is coming to an end. China and many other Asian countries, in the Middle East and in northern Africa, are banning the activities of mission societies and missionaries are refused visas. Missionaries have been seen as agents of former colonial rulers. Missions undeniably have historical links with colonialism, and this historical fact is not beneficial for present-day enterprise in the former colonies. Pius Wakatama spoke for many African Christian leaders when he said in Zimbabwe in 1976:

2254. Quotation from J.D. Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975), 24, in H. Nüesch, *Ruth & Billy Graham, The Legacy of a Couple* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014), 203.

2255. In *East Asia's Billions*, no. 3 (July–September 2007) (Singapore: OMF-International), 22.

2256. See Nüesch, *Ruth & Billy Graham*, 235.

2257. Newbigin in the foreword of H.J.B. Allen, *Roland Allen, Pioneer, Priest, and Prophet* (Grand Rapid: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975).

2258. In S. Bevans, 'Issues in Missions Today: Challenges for Reflection at Edinburgh 2010', *International Review of Missions* 99[1] (2010): 3.

The mission must see itself as a temporary scaffolding, which will one day have to be taken down. This must not remain at the theoretical level but must be actually seen in the actions of missions. Too many missionaries say it is their intention to ‘work themselves out of the job’ while at the same time doing all they can to protect those jobs from being taken over by nationals.²²⁵⁹

Those who see that it is the priority of the Church to preach the Gospel, and not to give all the attention to a sociopolitical involvement as it is nowadays, have often to row against a strong oppositional side. Often missionaries of the past are accused of the fact that they destroyed the cultures of the people who were evangelised. Amy certainly did not belong to this group. Nowadays it is said that enculturation is today’s challenge. This path however leads to syncretism. And yet there *is* real dynamics for worldwide mission. The remark of Isobel Kuhn is also true for our generation: ‘I believe that in each generation God has called enough men and women to evangelise all the yet unreached tribes of the earth’.²²⁶⁰

In perception, the 21st century has completely changed compared to the first half of the former century in which Amy Carmichael lived. Then it took several weeks to travel from Britain to the coastal cities in Asia; today we board an early morning flight from Amsterdam to Bangkok or Chengdu, arriving 12 hours later in a completely different world. Our world has become a global village and we are talking about global thinking, global economy, and we are threatened by global warming. Waves of Asians now live in English cities; Los Angeles is home to 700 000 Koreans;²²⁶¹ thousands of Chinese are working in African countries and Western CEOs meet their Eastern counterparts in Shanghai and Singapore. Missionaries from the Philippines and Korea work in Kenya, and Nigerian missionaries come to France. Today missionaries from these continents bring the Gospel back to those who originally provided it.²²⁶²

In what way are we able and is it possible to implement the core issue that shaped the heart of Amy’s vision of mission? How do we articulate and evangelise the Gospel in a world that has changed dramatically from the world we inherited? At least this is the challenge of tracing the identity and continuity of historic Christianity across the centuries. It is also the comprehension of the history of Christian mission and the modern world in its intellectual and spiritual ambiguities.

Yet, there is no turning back the clock and it is not enough to parrot the faith of the past. However, in speaking up for faith and missions in the language of our contemporaries, we may never surrender ‘the old, old story of Jesus and His love’, which can only save men and women in this present world from eternal death. By the sight of Calvary, we know how the Lord feels about even one lost soul. After the 1960s, secularism became a catchword to explain the decline of most of the established churches. From the centre of daily life, the church moved to the margin of society. Proclamation of the Gospel and the explanation of the Cross became more and more difficult in fast-moving times towards the digital society. What was the validity of the Christian message? A kind of ‘fatigue’ came over many Christians. They know the ‘good old tidings’, but in what way has it any relevance with daily life? The presence of vibrant and powerful churches in Asia and Africa changed the mission field. The missionary situation in the world changed by entering the second part of the 20th century. Doors closed, others opened and still unprecedented eagerness to hear the Gospel was seen, but the situation changed. That time China had closed its doors, Burma too, and India, which gave preferential treatment to Commonwealth missionaries, now put them on the same

2259. In P. Wakatama, *Independence for the Third World Church* (Westmont, IL: IVP, 1976), 109.

2260. In I. Kuhn, *Nests Above the Abyss* (London: CIM, 1949), 224.

2261. D. Lane, *One World – Two Minds, Eastern and Western Outlooks in a Changing World* (Littleton: OMF, 2005) 4.

2262. Cf. the work of Joshua Sendawula, who came from Uganda to the Netherlands in 1987 and formed a new organisation, Gospel from Africa to Europe (GATE), in the Netherlands, a missionary society of Africans living in the Netherlands, with the aim to evangelise their fellow countrymen. Nowadays it is called Gift from Africa to Europe. In K. Bediako, & M. Jansen (eds.), *A New Day Dawning, African Christians Living the Gospel* (Zoetermeer, 2004), 190.

footing as all others. ‘We live in a nightmare world.’²²⁶³ Our world is deeply marred by sin, preoccupied with sex and global realignment. Severely fragmented, we daily experience that the gods of this age have blinded those who do not believe the light of the Gospel or the glory of Christ.²²⁶⁴ Amy’s life was a life of sacrifice, but nowadays the general feeling is voiced by David Bowie who sang ‘surprise yourself, don’t sacrifice yourself.’²²⁶⁵ In India child prostitution has been illegal for several decades, but still children there and all over the world continue to be targeted by evil people forcing innocent children into an evil life. Lyall’s shocking observations in 1965 have since then proved worse. Our present world is in a sphere of persistent apathy, ungodliness and immorality, with a diminishing Church, which lacks missionary zeal and sees missionary education as an optional extra.²²⁶⁶ Worldwide, the sex trade and paedophilia flourish; still hundreds of thousands of children below the age of 14 are known to be involved in prostitution in India. Not only there, for it is a worldwide evil. To this very day, Christians have to live in the midst of the extreme lustfulness of a surrounding sex-crazed post-Christian pagan society.

The evil one has penetrated in politics and in the world of the media and obtained a foothold in the thinking of the people. God’s beneficial rules, which protect people’s lives, are rejected, and men and women in every country and every culture are discovering through bitter experiences the wages of sin. Churches do not escape worldly thinking and do not even see now – blinded! – that the saving message of the Cross can only turn the tide. When even in churches the belief is waning that without faith in Christ Jesus men face future judgement beyond death, the passion to preach Christ crucified is waning, too. But the Church cannot live in indifference to the crying need of the world.²²⁶⁷ In our present world, where Satan’s strongholds tower up triumphantly, God responds. He gave his son, but we, where is our answer?

In India the great towering Hindu temples still stand as they stood before – as it seems – unchallenged for centuries. The urgency of the need is patently true. Mission organisations that recognise their indebtedness to preach the Gospel to those who have never heard are now confronted by the encouraging fact that Christians in many countries, formerly objecting to mission work, now want to participate in this work and so bring the Gospel to their own people and to glorify God. This is the right emphasis. Of course, the task is urgent, but neither the urgency nor even the loss of the lost represents the ultimate motive for mission. We live in a world in which God is robbed of his glory. Mission work as well as missionaries always have been the playground for the ‘Enemy’, who would not have his stronghold broken. This is what makes evangelism urgent. Giving God his rightful place, declaring the beauty of his character, proclaiming his saving goodness, demonstrating his transforming grace in holiness life, acknowledging his lordship and bringing men and women to the obedience of Christ. To each of us the impetus is there to follow along the line Amy drew with deep consecration, yielding ourselves, our all, to him without reserve. Amy never gave up and with a burning zeal sought to save men. The essence of Christian faith has survived across the cries of church history. Our task of mission today requires dynamic, practical Biblical theology to preach the message of human regeneration, which includes relationships to people and things. Preach and teach the Gospel as a God-sent man or woman, as a sinner in need of a Saviour. The Gospel needs to be preached, free from its Western wrappings so that

2263. Lyall, *A World to Win*, 7.

2264. Cf. 2 Corinthians 4:4.

2265. Cf. Metro Lyrics, Tintoretto Music. The song is track 7 on the album *Tin Machine*.

2266. Lyall, *Missionary Opportunity Today*, 12.

2267. ‘She [*the Church*] obeys or she rebels’; and Ph. Brooks says, ‘The Church must evangelise or fossilise’ (Lyall, *A World to Win*, 12).

it might answer the anxieties and fears of believers who live in the cultural framework of their present countries. The Dutch missiologist J.H. Bavinck (1895–1964) said:

God takes us, and those to whom we speak, very seriously, and as his ministers we ought to do the same. Abstract, disembodied, history-less sinners do not exist; only very concrete sinners exist. whose sinful life is determined and characterized by all sorts of cultural and historical factors; by poverty, hunger, superstition, traditions, chronic illnesses, tribal morality, and thousands of other things. I must bring the Gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ to the whole man, in his concrete existence in his everyday environment. It is obviously a great error on my part if I do not take a person's culture and history seriously.²²⁶⁸

The Church in its mission in this 21st century has to reach out to the poor and the weak, and fight against the dehumanisation of children. Satan's doings today are the same as in Amy's days. He still poisons minds and hearts of people. Mission work today is as urgent as 150 years ago. It has been observed that today the Christian missionary effort:

[S]hould be characterized by serving from a situation of weakness and vulnerability. [...] Freeing itself from the shackles of power allows the Church to rewrite its identity, enter the margins and serve in weakness and humility. Then evil structures will be crumbled instead of maintained. [...] The new white man's burden, i.e. the Christian white man's, is: (1) To recognize the nature and appearance of evil power structures, (2) To disconnect from the powers of this world and (3) To claim and fully exploit the freedom this disconnection gives.²²⁶⁹

I have not read or heard if Amy knew J.H. Bavinck but she already practised what he taught. Both were for the furtherance of the glory of God that it would be heard and be visible in all their written and practical work. This was learned from close contact with Christ. Out of his glorification of the Father sprang life-giving life. Paradoxically it was life through death. Effectiveness in the ministry is always marked by a cross. 'So then death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.' If we all realise this and catch a glimpse of what this might mean for our modern world, our loaves and fishes would be multiplied! Let us not lose sight in missiology of the broad horizons of the Biblical promises. A missionary with a Christ-like character will have a heart for the glory of God and will show mercy to all still unknown to the Gospel. The glory of God matters to us! We could use more kernels like Amy, buried in this world's soil, dying that others might live eternally.

On the other hand the Lord wants to teach his church not to relax, not to give way and not to lend ears to those 'whose minds the god of this age has blinded' (2 Cor 4:4). Christ is the Lord of the open and the closed doors (cf. Rv 3:7), He knows his time and he gives the marching orders, and we? Our eyes are upon our Master, he takes the lead, and we shall follow! We have not even reached the primary goal of missions in our time, and it has to be done now in close cooperation with the churches in those countries. The fact that the foreignness and the often dominating character of Western missionaries gave negative thoughts is not an argument to disobey the command of Christ. We believe the word in the Apostolic Creed: 'I believe the fellowship of the saints'. Missionaries from Asian, Western, African and American countries will carry out together the great commission, walking hand in hand, sharing the same burdens and looking forward and upward. In this, the long-term missionary is a God-given work of invaluable significance.

In the secular world there is a general response to the challenge of high endeavour. Dr Paul Rees at the 1967 Keswick Convention, who led the prayer for the world, prayed: 'Help us to enter

2268. In his *Introduction to the Science of Mission* (Philadelphia, 1960), 81.

2269. Cf. M.A.W. Kommers, 'Shedding the Shackles of Power' [Master's diss., University of Gloucestershire, 2015], pp. 13–15.

into the heartbreak of our Saviour over the heartbreak of the world'. Spiritual apathy, together with the consequent prayerlessness in our days is often connected to God's discipline of his people.

The 21st century is in need of missionaries who are fully devoted to God. At the 2010 Keswick Convention, Jeremy McQuoid told the audience that having read the biographies of some giants of the Christian faith – he mentioned George Whitefield, John Wesley, Jim Elliot, great Puritans from the past, but also women like Amy Carmichael – he has been struck by one fact, viz.:

These men and women had devotional lives'. [...] These men and women were also powerfully active, but their activity for God was fuelled by this deep devotional life. They walked through the dying world breathing the air of eternity.²²⁷⁰

Jonathan Goforth, CIM missionary to China, who experienced several revivals in Manchuria, Shansi, and in Korea from 1906 to 1910, was very disappointed by the outcome of the Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. 'Would a new era in missions dawn?' he first thought. 'Would home churches be empowered by the Holy Spirit?' Then he continued:

Alas! It was only a dream. Never have I experienced such keen pain and disappointment as I did that day. Of the many who addressed that great missionary gathering, not more than three emphasized God the Holy Spirit as the one essential factor in world evangelization. Listening to the addresses that day, one could not but conclude that the giving of the Gospel to lost mankind was largely a matter of better organisation, better equipment, more men and women.

Goforth's conclusion was that 'the dethronement of the idol of ecclesiastical self-sufficiency was apparently too great a price to pay'.²²⁷¹ At that time Oswald Chambers signalled the same tendency to change priorities in mission work:

The first purpose of missionary enterprise is evangelistic, and the evangel is that of personal sanctification. [...] The first aim of missionary enterprise is the spiritual evangelisation of the people. [...] Today people are trying to better Jesus Christ's programme, and are saying that they must first look after men's bodies, heal them and teach them. [...] Missionary enterprise on the line of education, and healing, and social amelioration is magnificent, but it is secondary, and the danger is to give it the first place. [...] The testimony of missionaries over and over again is to the effect that when once evangelistic work is put in the second place, it is the devil who gets his way, not God.²²⁷²

Now 100 years later things have not gone better. Mission work is benefitting from the latest technological developments, but fast computer-steered programmes, video-call conferences, text messages, administrative and technical personnel cannot replace the work of men and women bringing the Gospel where they live. The focus upon the *one thing necessary* has shifted to so many things that are important and that have to be done, and meanwhile the real thing is not heard. We have to realise that

2270. J. McQuoid, 'Christ-Centred Renewal' in 2010 Keswick Convention Book, 177–178. 'Great Puritans from the past like John Owen, women like Amy Carmichael – these men and women had deep devotional lives. The righteousness that characterises true children of God is impossible without disciplined devotional lives. These men and women were in the habit of journalizing; of reading the Scriptures almost insatiably, and writing down what God was teaching them, putting it into their own words, until they owned it, and then mulling over the Word of God' (p. 177).

2271. J. Goforth, *By My Spirit* (Minneapolis, MN, INC, 1964), 137–138. Cf. also Chambers' remark: 'The great need for Christians today is occasional fasting from intellectual and religious and social activities in order to give ourselves wholly to the realisation of some purpose of God' in O. Chambers, *Still Higher For His Highest* (Fort Washington: CLC, 1970), 123.

2272. In Chambers, 'So Send I You' in *Complete Works*, 118, 119, 120 and 121.

we live in this 21st century with new challenges and new opportunities the Lord gives us,²²⁷³ but his ultimate goal when he said 'go ye into the world' has not changed. We have to take seriously Goforth's plea for a 'dethroning' of our many mission hobbies, which darken the main cause of the Gospel to save a lost world.

The India of Amy has changed radically and we have seen a number of the old values and certainties fall away – which is why the historic missionary way of working of Amy Carmichael was so reassuring. She cared for the future of her children and about contemporary issues and struggled to make sense of them in the light of Scripture. Nowadays various doors are closed for mission work in many countries. Closed by whom for what purpose? Closed by governments to prevent God coming in? Who can? We need to realise, knowing Paul, that those who know the Lord cannot be prevented and cannot be demoralised by forces seen and unseen because they are all created things ('nor any other created thing', Rm 8:39). Coming from India, Mr Ben Wati said at the missionary meeting of the 1964 Keswick Convention that there were about five million Christians in India²²⁷⁴ and he went on to say that the church union of 1947 in India had not made any significant advance in evangelism.²²⁷⁵ What is needed, is not mere preaching, but the witness of true Christian lives.

■ A new day dawning

The past is gone. In the long process of making the Indian churches self-governing after India got independence in 1947, the days of White British Christian paternalism were fast disappearing. Many changes marked the end of an eventful mission enterprise era. The way of life and thinking in the first decades of the 21st century is completely different from the life 100 years ago. We are aware that the happy period when the missionary could move freely without let or hindrance, is over. Yet, we deceive ourselves if we think the past is utterly gone. Is not the past ever present with us? The old pioneers are tucked away in their graves – the grass may wither and the flower fade and fall to the ground, but as the petals fall they become the nourishment for new growth – the Gospel seed sown by them into the hearts of many brings forth fruit.

Our present is the harvest of the past. In today's mission work something sentimental has gone with the past, there is even vastly greater potentiality in the present. This book mainly recalled experiences from the past, and when we reflect on the past, we often wonder that life has unfolded in the way it unfolded before our eyes. In today's mission circles, there is the inclination to focus more upon the activities of the church in other countries and in other cultures with the result that theological reflection in mission thinking is shifted to the second rate. And as one has noted that 'in some British ministry initiatives the subject of mission in the Church has not only been ignored but sometimes actively avoided'.²²⁷⁶ Missionary work cannot be done without reflecting on the Bible.

2273. Cf. nowadays the promising work of Dr Martin Visser with 'Globalrize'. This organisation is for spreading the Gospel via the Internet.

2274. In demographic studies it is difficult to give a good estimation on the total of Christians living in India. In 1964 a total of five million is mentioned; in *TKW* of 1954 the number is eight to ten million Christians. The data of the 2011 census in India are 79,8% Hindus, 14,2% Muslims, 2,3% Christians [<http://www.firstpost.com/category/india>].

2275. *TKW* (1964), 143.

2276. See C. Wigram, 'Make sure biblical reflection infuses all you say and do', *East Asia's Billions* (July–September 2007): 22. See, also in the same, the contribution of Rose Dowsett, in which she warns us of the end results of Godless mission.

Is it possible in this high-tech era to use the mission concepts and policies of several decades before? To use Edward Dayton's words: 'mission politics designed for a steamship era seem strangely anachronistic in a jet age'.²²⁷⁷ The tactic used by mission societies and missionaries might have been not correct in today's opinion, but most of them had sincere intentions, in obedience to God, to evangelise those who had not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ. Nineteenth century mission enterprise has often been described as a Christian way of imperialism and missionaries grown up in Victorian and post-Victorian time were often seen as hypocrites and being after personal welfare. Nowadays these anti-colonial passions belong to history. However, it is time to do justice to the missionaries of the Victorian and Edwardian era! Constrained by the love of Christ they went with sincere intentions, mostly done as 'crucified' people and receiving many wounds in this battle. It was they who accepted discomfort, loneliness, disease and the danger of violence. Families were confronted with the death of their children, and many young women gave their precious lives during pregnancy or in childbirth; others were killed during riots and persecutions. They went through all of this just for the sake of the Gospel. By them the Cross was planted from Greenland to Cape Town, from Indian settlements in America to the Aborigines in Australia and to the tiniest islands in far-away oceans. In short: all over the world!

The second part of the 19th century and the first part of the 20th – when there were 'giants in the land' – the expansive sweep of mission enterprise in many parts of the world uncovered the deep dark deeds of Satan and this has to be the real concern today in our 21st century world and materialistic generation. Motives might differ a little bit, but ultimately it was the exceptional love for God that made them to go and save their fellow men from sin and death and proclaim full salvation in Jesus Christ. The results of their work were often unlike the dreams with which they had set out, but these men and women, and Amy Carmichael was one of them, did more than any group in all preceding history.

It is this that made – and makes today – others dream. Come down, Holy Spirit, revive your work, your church, and young men and women will be seized by the love of Christ to go and tell the Good News to the millions who daily die without Christ. It is for us now to go! 'Mission field' will not be recognised as the vocabulary of the past. We only have touched the fringe of heathenism in Asia and of the big cities with their millions of inhabitants in all parts of the world. Amy Carmichael and many others have set ideas in operation, which are wide and comprehensive schemes, which may alter the destinies of millions of people. About the romance of the 'mission field' and the 'mission station', we can do without. But we cannot do without the spirit, the burning flame which fired men and women of those times. The Church should not look like an 'exhausted volcano',²²⁷⁸ and let no cloak of silence settle between the Church and the millions who have not yet heard the Good News. It was at the Keswick Convention in 2010 that the warning words of the chairman sounded: 'Our Christianity can easily become institutionalized or routine, lacking the spiritual vibrancy and devotion that we know as the essence of living faith'.²²⁷⁹

Take up this charge, before the doors may close. Believers today must 'catch up on the past' or forfeit the blessings God entrusted to previous generations. In its frantic search for 'something new' mission organisations today are fast in cutting loose from their historic moorings and abandoning their rich

2277. In *World Vision* (1970). Quotation in Lyall, *A World to Win*, 61.

2278. The expression is of Oswald Chambers (in *The Complete Works*, 83).

2279. A. Hull (ed.), *Christ-centred Renewal*, [Keswick: Authentic, 2010], VII. One of the speakers, Peter Maiden said: 'It is a tragedy that two thousand years after Jesus issued His command, more than 40 per cent of the world's people are still saying, "Come,"' [p. 196].

spiritual resources for weak human substitutes. Writing these lines I saw what Rosalind Goforth's had written about lost opportunities and the way she dealt with it:

I shall pass through this world but once.
 Any good, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness
 I can show to any human being, let me do it NOW -
 for I shall not pass this way again.²²⁸⁰

Seeing the need, Amy stretched out two hands to help. Her life was an offering of love. The work done counts and Amy did not like the praise she received. Reluctantly she accepted the medal awarded to her by the government. God calls us to concentrate upon the present. The foundation of the future is in the present, and in Dohnavur they will follow the signs, knowing that life's whole path for everyone is mapped before God and he can draw back the veil when he wants us to see where next.

Amy gives us inspiration and her work and writings are a wake-up call to those who think about God's plan in their life and if they have a future in cross-cultural ministry. And the goal? The children saved by God's mighty hand from a life worse than death will grow up to love him above all else, and to count it life's highest joy to bring others unto him. These innumerable, saved children are Amy's real monument. What emerges at the end of this book is the account of one woman's journey of faith, of her walking, through disappointments and discouragements, in Jesus' footsteps. A story of God's ways, in which we see, through the things seen, into the things unseen, the whole amphitheatre, which reveals his glory and grace continued to filter through. Among all who love the Lord, as long as they will go out in this world to tell the precious name of Christ Jesus, is the name of this Irish woman, Amy Beatrice Carmichael. She was, without question, a shining God-given servant of the outgoing 19th and first half of the 20th century. She started her life work nearly in the middle of nowhere, as in a desert where she met many adversities and not being comprehended by many about her real motives; in this 'desert' she was like a tree planted by the rivers or waters, her life rooted deep in God. What when the storms break out and a flash of lightning suddenly cracks across our 'porcelain world'? This question put forward by Amy's friend, Edith Buxton, 50 years ago comes anew to us today. Where are they who impersonate the apostolic abandon?²²⁸¹ Going to places, countries where 'the mist hangs about the mountain'. Men and women who want no mists, must be content with the plains, but they want the mountains! It will be but a little while, and the mists will evaporate, the mountain will stand out in all its grandeur. He will take away the burdens, for, in acceptance, they will become the pillow upon which in service they can lay their head.

We followed her from Millisle to Dohnavur, to what? To a discipleship fearless, costly, wholehearted, willing to die, to be a 'corn of wheat'. To a missionary activity, which cannot rest contentedly until the Gospel has reached and is preached to every creature. To a missionary passion out of the rut of established method, adaptable, mobile, fixed in faith yet sufficiently flexible in its presentation in the first decades of the 21st century by new means. To a charity which flows over the lesser reefs of liturgical, denominational, or interpretational differences, ready to unite 'all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity'. From the *Scraps*, in which she raised her voice as a novice in mission affairs, and after the words of weight of the veteran nearly 70 years later it is as if God's voice today to us is: 'Have you considered My servant Amy Carmichael, an upright missionary, one who fears God and shuns evil?'²²⁸²

2280. In R. Goforth, *Climbing*, 29.

2281. E.J. Sharpe 'wonders whether there are anywhere still to be found such all-or-nothing missionaries', in 'The Legacy of Amy Carmichael'.

2282. Expression according to Job 1:8.

We thank God for the beauty of this Cross-crowned life, who lived in living community with God and in the full stream of the power of the Holy Ghost. A life, which did not bother about itself; it was altogether devoted to God's interests in others. What makes her so great in our eyes is not what she achieved, but what she strove for and believed. The whole trend of this life is to make us admire and worship God. Let this remembrance be left: Amy Carmichael was true to God, her confidence fixed on Jesus despite the ever-changing world around her.

Amy's unique and arresting way of bearing testimony of her life's message and deeds is a plain pointer to the fact that in every generation there are consistent witnesses of the Lord, of which some belong to his spearhead troops, the corps of pioneers. As a real missionary role model of stature, Amy was one of them. She heard the call to which she responded with a peculiar dedication. She would not agree, even would not allow us to see her as a great missionary. Sharing Christ's sufferings, she shared his saving ministry. Side by side with him she fulfilled the deepest principle of the Cross, the law of harvest – that only the corn of wheat, which falls into the ground and dies brings forth much fruit. Having a heavenly vision and a divine imperative, she counted all things loss for Christ. She broke her alabaster box of precious ointment and with it humbly anointed the feet of the Lord in the slums of Belfast and Manchester, and from Matsue in Japan to Ceylon and to south India, and transfigured lives have risen for half a century. We marvel at the miraculous ways in which the Lord used her to pierce the shadows of the Hinduistic landscape of south India with his love.

There are still young and older people who live by the promise of God, with a vision and great expectation of what God is doing and who are praying to be involved in his work worldwide. The last words of David Livingstone in his address at Cambridge University in 1857 were: 'do you carry out the work which I have begun. I LEAVE IT WITH YOU!' Volleys of cheers followed this address.²²⁸³ Many people were inspired by his words and went out into the mission field. Who follows? Who will reckon, likewise Moses, that the reproach of Christ is greater riches than the treasures in Egypt? Who for others of the unevangelised millions of the world will say: 'Here am I, Lord, send me'? *Let the challenge be accepted* became a slogan of the AIM in 1908 to accomplish the very purpose for which this mission organisation was founded. By the hundreds new workers spread all over Africa to preach the Gospel. They were asking God for men and women whom they urgently needed for this immense task:

To reach new fields and to strengthen those already occupied, we need strong men. Every man here feels the need of better men than we are; men of greater ability and better training, men of strong devotion and unselfishness, who will not hesitate to pour out the last drop of blood, the last ounce of strength, the last cent of money for their work; men who believe in the thing they came to do, in the people they came to help and in God with whom they work; men with patience enough to bear with resistance until it is displaced with helpfulness, men who ask for no reward but the satisfaction of work well done.²²⁸⁴

It is remarked that nowadays the church of India – and many of Amy's children belonged to it – has produced its share of influential servants and preachers of the Gospel who make a real impact within and beyond the subcontinent. They represent their country in many international conferences and teach in American and British universities. They equip leaders and impact opinion makers worldwide.²²⁸⁵

2283. See Chamblis, *The Life and Labours of David Livingstone*, 314.

2284. G. Stauffacher, *Faster Beats the Drum* (Pearl River, NY: AIM, 1978), 72.

2285. See M. Poccock, G. van Rheenen & D. McConnel, *The Changing Face of World Missions*, 4th edn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008) 140.

Since 1900, women have played a crucial part in the spread of the Gospel through overseas missions.²²⁸⁶ In many annals of missionary enterprise, Amy's name will be mentioned as a missionary pioneer par excellence. Those who were in leadership in Dohnavur after Amy had passed away, heartily endorsed her mission views having the same enterprising spirit and jealousy for the work of the Gospel in India. We hear from this book the clarion call to our generation to see the signs of the times, to learn from the lessons of the past and be attentive to the indications of the future; to listen to the call still going on, 'Go Ye!' As missionaries looking forward and claiming this world for Christ, we who live on the verge of Christ's return have to keep our hands at the plough, not looking back, but forward 'looking upon Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith'²²⁸⁷:

Depressed eras have a way of turning into Christian resurgences that regain lost ground and move beyond it to embrace a larger area with purer expressions of the Gospel. [...] Actually there are some indications that we are entering the greatest period of opportunity for the spread of the Gospel which the world has ever seen.²²⁸⁸

2286. For an example of women's contribution to mission, their faithfulness and compassion, see Valerie Griffiths's *Not Less Than Everything*: 'We meet ordinary women of extraordinary guts, faith and tenacity' (in the foreword, p. 9).

2287. Hebrews 12:2.

2288. R.F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1981 [1997]), 425.

Take this book in Thy wounded Hand,
Jesus, Lord of Calvary;
Let it go forth at Thy command;
Use it as it pleases Thee.

Dust of earth, but Thy dust, Lord,
Blade of grass in Thy hand a sword-
Nothing, nothing unless it be
Purged and quickened, o Lord, by Thee.

O Lord our God, we bring to Thee
The things our hands have wrought,
Unless Thou touch it graciously
It will do less than nought.

O touch, inspire and purify,
We lay it at Thy feet,
Let all of earth about it die,
Turn it to corn of wheat.

O blessed be the love that takes
This that we offer Thee,
And out of our poor nothing makes
Seed for Eternity.

Prayers of Amy Carmichael after a 'Dohnavur' book was released (*Gold Cord*, 28; *Wings*, 103, A.103; *Paper Books*, 147).

What I shall write here is for the glory of God. I cannot strike so strong and sweet a note, but I can say that, so far a man may know his own heart, the motive was the true missionary one, containing through it generally has various influences, but in which one predominates and acts as the combining element which gives solidity to the whole. This is all that need to be said about motive, important as it is in missionary life and in the history of missionary effort.

John Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides.



Dust of the earth, dust of God

Books and poems

Those who want to read more on vital mission issues, mission enterprise, mission history and missionaries will take up the books of Amy Carmichael with two different views. The first one will find in her books things now hard to be understood, and sentences and expressions of bygone days and not relevant for our 21st century. To the careless and the superficial her books will only appeal when they gird up the loins of their minds and hearts. The other will read, learn, mark, and inwardly digest its contents because they challenge mind and conscience, for it focuses on 'this one thing only'. Amy's books exhibit a deep, mystical relationship with God and at the same time, they show a great creativity in describing the day-to-day issues of the Dohnavur Fellowship. Her books and poems reflect the depth of her yearning for Christ's glory in India and a sort of harrow for some who are walking in difficult places.²²⁸⁹ 'Her work breathes an Indian inspiration.'²²⁹⁰ In reading her books we often seem to hover between heaven and earth. Amy herself declared, and here we join her:

To read and to believe what we read is to be lifted out of the murk of a choking fog into clear air. We can breathe there. It is to have our hope fixed upon nor dream nor vision, but upon solid splendid fact.

Amy liked reading, but she had an outspoken preference of what she wanted to read:

It is the eternal in books that makes them our friends and teachers – the paragraphs, the verses, that grip memory and ring down the years like bells, or call like bugles, or sound like trumpets; words of vision that open to us undying things and fix our eyes on them. We are not here, they tell us, for trivial purposes. We are here to prove to angels and to men, that life is not as idle ore, but iron dug from central gloom, and heated hot with

2289. Cf. her intention with *Gold by Moonlight*.

2290. So Bishop H. Moule in the foreword of *Made in the Pans*, 12. 'Come to Me and I will give you rest', becomes south Indian thought: 'Come unto Me, and I will cool your weariness' [p. 14].

burning fears, And dipped in baths of hissing tears. We are not here to be overcome, but to rise unvanquished after every knock-out, and laugh the laugh of faith, not fear.²²⁹¹

This can be said of Amy's books too, the 'eternal', the 'gripping' of her stories, the clear 'vision' spread before us, and the 'iron' that keeps us away from trivialities; from her first to her last book the content are all about 'God's business'. They whisper the secret of her burning heart, of a love that will never let go, and of a fully surrendered heart. Her deep, mystical relationship with God, together with creative use of the language, makes it worthwhile to read her books even now.

The things that are eternal are manifest in her books. She liked reading, but writing, too. And one wonders that with such a full and occupied life, she had time to write, and to write a lot. Her inkwell did not dry up quickly. Her written efforts did not die with her, and even for 21st century readers her work is readable for most of them. Tastes have changed, some words are not used anymore today and many who are not familiar with Biblical language and thoughts might find them something of another world, yet the contents appeal to us today. The distance in time can be overcome, when one realises that she writes not to be popular but to express things in view of eternity. Old conservative thoughts are often pillars on which our thoughts stand firm.

Because of the things that are eternal, it was not necessary for her to have her own name on the cover of a book that she had written. The children, who should be saved, were more important than she was. 'We think of them all, and we wish their names could be written on the cover of this book instead of the name least worthy to be there.'²²⁹²

In her foreword of *The Continuation of a Story* she expresses her feelings with regard to writing. Writing should have a purpose. In reading about Florence Nightingale's life she indicates that Florence's writing is exactly that, which she also wants with her books: 'She cared for writing only as a means of action'. Amy wanted to let the readers know and make them aware of the fate of the children in India, who without help would be in great danger. 'We fear exaggerated language.'²²⁹³ Writing is to write about the things as they are, because 'we have no desire to pile up words into sensational writing'. It is all about 'the fight, the battles' which are going on in the saving of the children. She had no desire for praise and approval, nor to be admired. As author, she possessed the truest independence.

Amy loved both writing and reading. In her youth she made a great contribution to the family's 'news-magazine' *Scraps*. To her children in Dohnavur she wrote hundreds of letters, to individual members of the family, or to groups, in case anyone had been overlooked, and she kept all the letters in a box, which was not to be opened until she had left them.

These letters, well-guarded in Belfast's archive, were sometimes written upon very thin paper, but they are still gripping and fresh. In everything she was a writer of distinction. Every little character and situation sketch, all the small stories are fragments of the real. What she once wrote, when she went through Thomas Walker's letters, we can now say from her letters:

We can see, and hear, and feel, as we read; and we wonder, as we turn the flimsy and slippery pages of those well-worn letters, where all the people are now of whom they tell, and how their contact with that ardent life affected them.²²⁹⁴

Those who once received these letters rejoice with Amy before God's throne, but the persons and things of which these letters speak still speak to us and encourage us to continue, until 'the battle' is over.

2291. *Gold Cord*, 311.

2292. *Lotus Buds*, 297.

2293. *Lotus Buds*, 298.

2294. *This One Thing*, 59.

Amy's books penetrate the conscience, revealing the Gospel truth and its application. She often felt a strong urgency to write. 'I write this under a sense of the solemnity of being a servant ... separated unto the Gospel.'²²⁹⁵ Writing was praying for her; she asked for the sentences she wrote and came from her upward look; every line had to be given to her by her heavenly Father. She herself was fully aware that all her writings without the direction of God were 'ashes and vanity',²²⁹⁶ and that she for all her writings was wholly dependent upon him. Therefore, every book written by Amy, after publication, was sent to Dohnavur where it was laid before the Lord with this prayer: 'Take this book in Thy wounded hand, Jesus, Lord of Calvary. Let it go forth at Thy command, use it as it pleases Thee.'²²⁹⁷ In many of her books, the pictures have a vital place. She herself gives a reason for it:

I hesitated about using these, for many see nothing in metaphor, and some see only prettiness. But you cannot live longer in the East than in the West without becoming a little Easternised, and the East thinks in parable still, just as it used to do. So will the very Western forgive? Some will find refreshment by the way, in these 'figures of the true'.²²⁹⁸

Amy's books had a very wide circulation; from all over the world her books could and can be found. Even in the second decade of the 21st century, many reprints find their way to readers. The reason for this success? Her books have a message. Murray quotes her plea to her family: 'Pray that every book, booklet, letter, that goes out from this Fellowship may have blood and iron in it. Pray that we may never degenerate to the merely interesting'.²²⁹⁹ By 1950 many of her books were translated into about 15 languages. In England 12 of her books were put into Braille, and 8 in the United States. Her books raised the awareness for the Dohnavur Fellowship.

What was it that attracted so many people to these books? Was it not the truth she so openly described and the intimate fellowship with her God? Her readers 'felt' the reality of faith while reading and that there is the 'seed of eternity' in these books. In the margin of her Bible next to John 8:55 Amy wrote, 'To hide the truth is no less falsehood than to spread error'. She had a real gift for writing and was able to express and put on paper deep thoughts in a beautiful way. 'Dowdiness is not acceptable to the Lord of beauty.' Murray again used her words as she advised young authors: 'Words should be like colours, each one supplying a dot of colour supplying a need, not one over'.²³⁰⁰

How was it possible, for someone who was so involved in day-to-day work in Dohnavur, that hardly any free time could be found – or must we say 'it was not desired' – that at least 35 books appeared from her hand? We cannot talk of her daily schedule, because always unexpected things happened which asked her attention:

Another year lies between the last chapter and this. For we can only write in odd corners of time, and sometimes time does not seem to have any odd corners. Quiet is even rarer. [...] Our story is told; how inadequately told no critic will see more clearly than the writer, who has stopped many times, wishing someone else would finish.²³⁰¹

In many ways, these written endeavours became the channel or vehicle through which she carried forth her missionary work. They were both catalyst and by-product of her efforts. She was a creative

2295. *This One Thing*, 51.

2296. See *Nor Scrap*, 3.

2297. In *Gold Cord*, 28; *Wings*, 103, A.103.

2298. In a note on the photographs, in *Windows*, XI.

2299. See Murray, *Amy Carmichael*, 107.

2300. Murray, *Amy Carmichael*, 107.

2301. *Overweights of Joy*, 288 and 291.

writer, and inspiration came through prayer, by being silent before the Lord, and from the treasures of the 'early fathers', and the mystics. She used contemporary authors to flavour her own writings. Of all her books and songs, most were written, due to her daily busy schedule, in scattered hours of the day or at midnight.²³⁰² As an author, Amy was as prolific and gifted as she was in her work; many of her books are considered as classics.²³⁰³ What she wrote was the transcript of her heart and work. Her books are her life. She wrote to explain what happened in Dohnavur. 'In a class by herself as an author, she had the gift of making people and events come alive for her readers.'²³⁰⁴

During her more than 50 years in India many things happened and several times facts mentioned were dated. Facts recorded in Amy's books with time and place are often in themselves meaningful and enrich our understanding of the situation.

The facts often speak for themselves – very loudly and effectively – without being shut in a special lock of secret meaning to which only Dohnavur has the key. It is a surprise, that in her later books, we have to search for the facts. She had heard and seen much that was not always published. She had her own reasons for not revealing everything. What had to be said was said – see *Things As They Are* – but very cruel scenes and immoral deeds were not brought into publicity. 'There is much that we know to be true but either cannot prove, or for other reasons cannot print.'²³⁰⁵

For what purpose did she write her books and poems? One of the main reasons was that her readers would really know what was going on in this far-away mission area. More than once, she wrote that people should know the truth. She felt that many missionaries were needed in a country like India, and yet they were so few compared with the millions who died every year without ever having heard the Gospel. To awaken the mission call among the readers was also one of her motivations to write. By writing about the need she hoped to stir her readers into praying very concretely for the work in Dohnavur and elsewhere, in seeking God's will and his provision for hearts that have to be moved by God and in donating for the work. In this she trusted that God would provide and just like in the story of Elijah, he would send his ravens; Amy knew that in her time mostly 'God's ravens' came by the postman who delivered the letters with cheques or cash inside.

■ A singing heart

Amy's work extended to the printed page; with her extrovert character, she had a heart that was always prepared to express itself. She was ready to talk with others and sing a song. She knew well that much of the treasure of a people's memory is to be found in their songs. People who cannot read can learn the Gospel by singing songs. The songs are 'part of our life as a family', Amy said.²³⁰⁶ Many songs in Indian style and sung to Indian tunes appeared from her hand. Especially for the children she wrote many songs, and with these songs, she had a clear purpose. 'For spiritual instruction is a thing to be desired, and there is nothing so edifying as music.'²³⁰⁷ After having searched through 200–300 pages of nursery rhymes and

2302. 'Her songs were given her at night', according to Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

2303. How many books Amy did write? The question is confused by the pamphlets. The figure thought most accurate by the Dohnavur Fellowship office is 35, while others include some pamphlets among the list of her books.

2304. *Lotus Buds*, 297.

2305. In *Though The Mountains Shake*, 37.

2306. See the foreword of *Made in the Pans*.

2307. *Lotus Buds*, 165.

many proper Kindergarten songs, she found few that belonged to the India babies' world, 'and so we had to make them for ourselves'.²³⁰⁸ As a lover of beauty, very sensitive and fluent in her language, she was able to write in an artistic and radiant way, as expressed in her poetry, songs and books. When reading the beauty of her utterances, can we say that she herself was like that? I am inclined to confirm this. She never lost a moment, and with her pencil she drove her thoughts back and forth over lengthy pages or just a little scrap. Sometimes songs came spontaneously or in odd moments. Next to one of her poems, she wrote, 'Walked down the hill on our way home. I wrote it on a scrap of paper with a stone for table'.²³⁰⁹

An ardent Bible lover, of many versions, she had prayerfully studied the Word of God and the wealth she found in it she scattered all around, mixed with inspiring quotations from 'friends' long ago and contemporary fellow pilgrims. She inspired many, and for those the reading of her books, or poems, marked a turning point in their life. The sick were uplifted by her, for she personally knew what it meant to be limited to the sickroom and missionaries were helped with her focus on 'this one thing only'. From Dohnavur, thousands of letters went across the world, always with that rare qualification of plain human thought and humour combined with deep spirituality. Recipients of her letters felt that she stood next to them, but never was she 'lecturing', but she lifted hearts and thoughts up to higher things. Her books and letters gave Amy many friends all over the world, who felt so privileged to share her thoughts, and by her correspondence, many were influenced and touched. The recipients felt that she had wrestled with God's written Word.

She added to the love of Christ the love of all things beautiful in God's wide world. The world of nature had always been a holy book for Amy, and the flowers, birds, the jungle, the mountains and the sky taught her lessons well worth reading. She revelled in the poetry of earth, sea, and sky, adoring God, the Father Almighty. Her life's work can still be seen in Dohnavur and in the previous chapters, we have asked you to come and look at it.

The book pages and the letterpress have the same intent – to make each of us take and read. Many things begin with seeing and reading in this world where God is revealing his wonders day by day. Her devotional writings are gems of wisdom, experience and reflection, and when expressing her deepest thoughts, she could describe her heart and mental feelings in vivid Wesleyan imagery. Her poetic nature constantly expressed itself in delightful verse. These factors explain her missionary influence, for one thing is certain – they worked to Amy's favour. In her, we have an author who takes us to the ultimate foundations and a totality of understanding for which many are searching. Before writing down her thoughts, she would observe the people, the children and nature for a long time, to get the real insight:

Sitting down on the white steps I looked long, looked until the scene was burnt upon my very soul. Would that I could dip my pen in liquid fire, and burn it upon yours. [...] Can I make it live for you? Last time I wrote for a fire-dipped pen, but now it seems as it one could write with one's own blood, if by any means we could touch some.²³¹⁰

Amy, as said, was a lover of beauty and very sensitive; however – in her own words – she 'tried to keep far from that which is only sentiment'. She wrote the truth and 'banished resolutely all imagination'. In writing about the children too she kept some 'reserve' and some things she could not even put on

2308. *Lotus Buds*, 24.

2309. In *Made in the Pans*, 45. The quotation is in the margin. Here Amy gives the date: 11 October 1916. On page 39, we read her words: 'Millisle. Co. Down. On the seashore'. On page 63, she wrote: 'Nagercoil. 1913. While nursing Ponnamal'. Next to the poem 'In Acceptance lieth Peace' (p. 99), she wrote: 'Beside Ponnamal when she lay dying', and next to 'Jesus Redeemer, and my Inspirer' (page 112), she wrote: 'While nursing Ponnamal'. The songs on pages 23 and 122 have in the margin, 'Sengelteri. Sept. 1914. For Preena who was inclined to look at the dark side of life'. The song 'I have no word' has next to the first verse: 'Palm Sunday. March 24, 1907' and next to the second verse: 'July 24, 1913. After learning of my mother's translation'.

2310. *From Sunrise Land*, 48–49 and 54.

paper, because it would be too shocking, and whom would she help with it? 'We write for the earnest-hearted, who are not ashamed to confess they care.' Mostly she wrote about women, and when she confronted the reader with a temple woman, her own heart spoke: 'but let us deal gently with the mishandled flower. Let hard words be restrained where the woman is concerned'.²³¹¹

■ Her readings

Amy demonstrated an unexpected strength in her views. Well-read, steeped in the Scriptures and cocooned in God since childhood, she was yet stretched by thoughts of Quaker authors, the mystical nuances of German, English, Dutch and French mystics and by solid Keswick leaders. In her quiet time when she studied the Bible, her Greek New Testament and the Septuagint were always at hand and there were always books to be read. 'Amma was a ferocious reader' said Nesaruthina.²³¹² While living in Manchester, during her work in Ancoats with Miss Crossley, the latter remembered her eating oranges and tomatoes – presumably too busy to cook for herself – and reading incessantly whenever she had a spare minute. Even in Belfast, in College Gardens she would bring a book to the meals, in order to avoid being pressed to eat.²³¹³ She not only read a lot, but what she read, she read with an attentive mind, underlining and making comments in the margins.

We have some titles of the books which in 1898 she took with her in her book box, like Geraldine Guinness's *The Story of the CIM*; Stanley Smith's *China from Within*; A.T. Pierson's *The Divine Enterprise of Missions*, Dr and Mrs Howard Taylor's *Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission* (I and II). Especially the old books were her real inspiration sources, while in her eyes modern books contained much 'sawdust', 'skimmed milk and tepid tea'. Going through Amy's bookcases, I was really astonished which books came into her hands and which she read from cover to cover. Many of them were marked and with comments she wrote in the margin. This missionary, without any academic affix before her name read books many of her fellow contemporaries had never read.²³¹⁴ In doing so, she modelled herself, especially in Biblical literature and devotionally stimulating books. You will look in vain for magazines she would have read – she neither read fiction nor fairy tales!²³¹⁵ Her love for nature, flowers, birds and dogs can be seen, for many books on the shelves deal with nature, dogs and birds.

For the well-known CIM missionary Isobel Kuhn (1901–1957), a prolific author who could use her pen so well, and who was so well known in mission circles, Amy Carmichael was her favourite author. She wrote to a friend:

Miss Carmichael could write about anything or anybody and be a blessing. Her words are always so full of the Lord. [...] I read everything by her that I can get my hands on.

It is obvious that Amy's thoughts, poems and style often appear often in Isobel's correspondence and books. Someone referred to Isobel as 'the CIM Amy Carmichael'. She wrote to an intimate fellow worker:

2311. See *Lotus Buds*, 283 and 284.

2312. In an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

2313. See *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 33.

2314. I found Plato's *The Republic* quoted in *Gold Cord* on pages 107 and 157.

2315. Perhaps Thomas Walker may have given her *Punch*, which he gleaned from time to time. Even Amy would refer to this magazine, however sporadically. See *Ponnamal*, 22.

This poor earth misses dear Amy Carmichael so much that they seize her laid-down halo and try to fit it on the first Irish girl they spy. It doesn't fit!²³¹⁶

■ A work of love

Amy's personality captured me in her books; all written by one who was adverse to cloudiness of language; they carry the fragrance of her life far and wide, and provide a unique glimpse into her spiritual heartbeat. She chose her words carefully, without quenching the enthusiasm that made her stories come alive to readers. She was both accurate and engaging. What Bishop Handley Moule once wrote in his foreword of *Ponnamal* can be said of all her books. 'Give God thanks for it; and read it again and often'. 'It will be a friend and helper to your faith, a kindling fire to your missionary thoughts, prayers, and efforts.'²³¹⁷ Amy's thoughts and books are grounded in Scripture and employ a careful exposition to make the mission work in Japan and India clear and compelling. She attributes everything to the glory of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For a variety of reasons her work is unknown to many – among them her use at times of archaic or unfamiliar terms, the difficulty of procuring her works, her style of writing, her deep thoughts – but they have always been read on all the continents by specific loyal souls. She has something of a mystic. Is not every sanctified soul a mystic? But she did not live in that region only, she was body and soul as well as spirit.

What was true in the mystical sphere is true in the moral sphere. Therefore, her books cannot be categorised as 'popular'. In 1947, she saw in a Christian publication that her books were thus described, and wrote in her private notebook: 'Popular? Lord, is that what these books written out of the heat of battle are? Popular? O Lord, burn the paper to ashes if that be true'. And in *Dust of Gold* some years earlier she had written:

Pray that every book, booklet, letter, that goes out from this Fellowship may have blood and iron in it. Pray that we may never degenerate to the merely interesting, the pretty.²³¹⁸

Especially in her early books, there is the strong determination to tell the truth. The truth about the fate of the temple children, the truth about what it is like to be a worker of God:

The girl in the corner would not speak – could not, perhaps – she only moaned; we passed her and went out. The mother followed us, half sorry for us, – there was something of the woman left in her, – half sullen, with a lowering sullenness. 'You will never see her again', she said, and she named the town, one of the Sodom's of this Province, to which the girl soon was to be sent.²³¹⁹

Often she was asked to write nice stories for missionary magazines; mostly she refused to do it, but sometimes she gave in and wrote a story. She once wrote, 'I don't often write orthodox missionary things in these epistles but for once you shall have the proper diet.'²³²⁰

In her personal devotions, she relied on Scripture and poetry. Many poems and songs in her work she wrote herself. Early in her life, she got the smell of printer's ink, and she has never got away from it. Writing was no labour to her and due to the circumstances of her life – her residence as a missionary abroad, with the inevitable long separations from family and friends – we have the mass of her

2316. In C. Canfield, *One Vision Only. The Life Story of Isobel Kuhn* (London: CIM, OMF, Lutterworth Press, 1959), 139.

2317. In the foreword of *Ponnamal*, V.

2318. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 329.

2319. *Things As They Are*, 258–259 and 260.

2320. In an undated letter (PRONI D/4031/24/1A).

correspondence and writings. In her letters, she shared her latest and best thoughts on all manner of things, both in heaven and on earth. In a very light way, she could write about troubles or things that hindered them. Sometimes she could tell facts with a lightness of style, but this is not because she saw and learned them with any lightness of heart. Smiles may come when tears are very near and laughter cover a sob. Thus far, inconsistency is sincerity, for a smile and heartache alternate in the fascinating land of India.

In a place full of mosquitoes she writes:

When first we found it, it was not a rill but noisome, choked-up swamp, a haunt of mosquitoes of whom, alas, a few remain for the discipline of our characters.²³²¹

Talking about the colours of a pool, she continues, 'and when the angels are in a very kind mood they send a blue kingfisher to fish there'.²³²² She could express herself in a very sensitive way:

After a baptism in the open air in fresh water, under evening skies, in India at any rate, is something very good. We almost heard the angels sing as we walked home together.²³²³

Her eyes penetrated to the inner of the object, 'and we climbed down the broken, time-worn steps and gazed and gazed till the beauty entered in us'.²³²⁴

She wrote in English; however, for preaching she wanted to know the local language, because 'translations are withered leaves'.²³²⁵ To her helpers and to the children, she spoke Tamil in which she was rather fluent; also in papers for internal use, she often wrote in Tamil. Her published work has a language steeped in the older versions of the Bible. The 56 years in India shaped her thoughts in an Indian mode and we meet her close personal walk with the Lord and total devotion to him between the lines. Many chapters yield some wise direction, some searching or some bracing thought. Her meditations are characterised by fine exposition, and saturated with beautiful spirit of devotion. Her books reflect a solid Biblical, Reformed Presbyterian stance, with a flavour of evangelical, mystic piety. Often her allegorical method of Biblical interpretation, the method by which the sense means one thing and also has a moral, mystical or analogical interpretation, was for her a valuable way to proceed with much of the Bible text. Like in prayer, the true aim is the interior conviction.

Under Amy's leadership, music and singing have been a most important characteristic of the community in Dohnavur. Wilkinson says that the songs of Amy are pure songs of love and adoration. 'For me', she says, 'it expresses her sensitivity to the beauty of God's world around her and her humility, both things so characteristic of Amma as we know her'.²³²⁶

To the love of Christ the Lord she added a love of all things beautiful in God's world. The children in the Fellowship grew up in a European type of Christianity, and therefore Amy selected the song carefully to allow the Gospel to meet their needs. Her hymns were made in the first instance for the children of the Fellowship. English hymns were not always culturally appropriate for the Indian children. English songs used in the Fellowship were carefully selected. Amy gives the reason for this. Songs need to be practical and she refers to Charles Kingsley who objected that in a new hymnody songs were used in which, for instance,

2321. *From The Forest*, 61.

2322. *From the Forest*, 32.

2323. *From the Forest*, 67.

2324. *Lotus Buds*, 3.

2325. *Ploughed Under*, 138.

2326. In *At BBC Corner*, 51.

is a direct invocation of ‘angels singing over the fields and seas’. People in the church do not hear angels singing over fields and seas or ‘congregations do not lie awake or weep thinking of Heaven’:

So did we who in the early days had to choose the songs and hymns that the children would learn; we dreaded also the insincere and what John Wesley called the namby-pambical. Tamil came first, naturally, but they were learning English alongside Tamil. There were many pleasant songs to be found, though most were a little too English; and there were some perfect hymns for children; but it is curious how questioning the mind becomes when it is thinking of the Indian child carefully considering the meaning of every word: ‘Pity my simplicity’, what did that mean? ‘Fain I would to Thee be brought, gracious Lord, forbid it not’. Did he, who said, ‘Suffer the little children to come unto Me’, wish that a child should be taught to say such words to Him? As for a hymn translated into definite Tamil in their hymnbook, ‘Earthly friends may fail or leave thee, one day kind, the next day grieve thee’ – was it necessary to teach the very young that depressing fact?²³²⁷

Amy never tried to force Indians to be an exact copy of European Christianity, neither in the way of living, nor in clothing and singing. The Gospel should meet their needs, and by her hymns, she got the opportunity to open doors to a new kind of India enculturation. Songs the children could understand gave them ‘more solid steps for their feet’. In another hymn we see many familiar ideas for the children:

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Once I heard | Sun and rain, | Then the bird |
| A little bird | Ripening grain, | That is heard |
| Singing very clearly; | Food and water given | Said it very clearly |
| And the bird | Leafy trees | ‘God loves you’ |
| That I heard | All one sees | Off it flew- |
| Sang, ‘God loves me dearly’. | Under the blue heaven. | ‘Loves you very dearly’. ²³²⁸ |

Amy clarified spiritual concepts through parallels in the natural world. All the ideas and pictures here employed – the magnificent Indian sunsets, a rose dropping its petals, the tired feet, the colour of twilight, the stars so clear in the night – were all familiar for the children and they could imagine that all this was God’s creation and that it said a lot about his love for them.

The song as given above is just one example of so many of these children’s songs. The daily reality in the songs teaches the children. It is a way of meditation. God initiated the supernatural concerning the mysteries of faith. This is a kind of positive mysticism, in which contemplation goes through the mysteries of faith to the reality beyond them. God’s eternal love is the greatest comfort possible in the Dohnavur Fellowship, and here in the abovementioned poem, Amy uses a beautiful metaphor. She contrasts the setting of the sun, the stars and moon with God’s love which does not diminish or fade. In many of Amy’s hymns God is seen in his creation. She used the creation around Dohnavur often in her poems. In many of them, she puts her work in the landscape of a wood, like the forest that surrounded Dohnavur. Amy’s artistic temperament is combined with her eye for colour and the beauties of nature by means of her pen. As she explains in the foreword of *Toward Jerusalem*:

But the Healer does not speak to us from a distance, He comes under our roof and sometimes we hear songs or fragments of a song. The songs in this book came in that way. Perhaps some may seem to have little to do with the business of life, but who so understands will understand.²³²⁹

The words in many of her poems convey a feeling that Dohnavur is a place permeated with God’s music, guidance and presence. One is reminded of the words of Zephaniah 3:17: ‘The Lord thy God in the midst of

2327. *Though the Mountains Shake*, 209–210.

2328. *Dohnavur Songs*, no. 50, 42.

2329. In the foreword of *Toward Jerusalem*, VI.

thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing'. Her songs grow from a contemplation where meditation with images go together. Some music came from Mabel Wade, but there were also others, like Kenneth Proctor, from outside Dohnavur:

Then, if the ear be open to 'strains from Elsewhere', perhaps music is given and sent to us. This happened lately; a book of prayer-music for some of our prayer-songs came from an unknown friend, an organist in South India. [...] From time to time for many years he has sent us beautiful music. Because of all this generous help, our children are growing up to care very much for singing. It is part of the substance of their life.²³³⁰

One of the prime means by which Amy sought to teach the children the goodness of God in her hymns was the application of nature as the universal sign of his grace.²³³¹ Amy interpreted beauty in nature as visible indicators of God's invisible grace. Even in a world so imperfect with sin and so full of brokenness God creates startling beauty as can be seen in the next quotation. It is a picture of God's redemptive powers and a foretaste of how he will restore the world to wholeness and health:

One day our Forest men brought down a log of rotten wood. It was not covered with the fairy cups and saucers of golden-brown satin so often found on such wood; it was a mass of fungi like little arum lilies [...] From many a place of pain today beautiful things are growing like this lily fungus on the log.²³³²

In *Homecall* Amy mentions 'Calvary', a word which acts as a metonym for the saving work of Christ upon the cross:

For the pure powers of Calvary
Battle little souls in innocence.
Tender, tender Thy love words be:
'Dear little child, come home to me'.²³³³

Here we see an adult's response to an infant's death, and Amy often felt the pain of the loss of a little one she had to let go. In all her questions she knows the child is blessed with innocence and has access now to full audience with God. Calvary, mentioned here by Amy, is connected with her theology in which the cross is so central as it is in Amy's Irish Calvinistic Presbyterian and evangelical background. It privileges the doctrine of the cross theologically and displays the belief that innocent little children also need to be washed clean by the blood of Christ. Christ's blood only makes a soul eligible to enter heaven.

Probably no missionary has ever written better, in point of style. One feels that she never committed to paper a word she had not instinctively weighed and measured; her style, while obviously a gift of God, was also a craft to be worked on. 'Words should be like colours', she once wrote, 'each one a dot of colour supplying a need, not one over'.²³³⁴ The words of C.A. Fox mark the essence of all her books:

These simple and unstudied utterances of everyday life in the mission field seem to me to be full of spontaneous fire and fragrance quite their own. The vivid touches of external nature scattered everywhere do but accentuate and make visible the novel environment and native setting of the all-important soul-scenery; indeed these pages throughout are marked by a holy vivacity and a happy glow and sparkle of colour. There is, as we all know, a modesty of outspokenness as well as a modesty of reserve, if only the glory of God be manifestly the absorbing motive, and the absence of self be felt.²³³⁵

2330. *Though the Mountains Shake*, 209.

2331. Cf. Elliot, *A Change to Die*, 214.

2332. *Windows*, 35.

2333. *Toward Jerusalem*, 48.

2334. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 333.

2335. In introductory note of *From Sunrise Land*, XI.

Already in her teenage years her gifts to express herself in writing were noticed. She was the one who started to write the family letters *Scraps*. Later on, while she was in Broughton Grange, some of her short articles and poems appeared in the Keswick magazine. In Dohnavur several verses were written and put together, like *Toward Jerusalem, Pools, Made in the Pans* and *the Valley of Vision*. Her imaginative gift is clearly seen in her verses, several of which were put to music and sung in several situations where Christians come together.²³³⁶ Her writing about the beauty of nature is unsurpassed. She loved flowers, 'those beautiful smiles of God'.²³³⁷

Meanwhile, she read books of travel, theology, and general literature. Many times we see quotations from various authors in her books, and her ardent practical temperament disposed her for niceties. The Bible was her first study object, but very earnestly and closely did she study nature and people.²³³⁸ What Amy saw she could put on paper and write vividly about Dohnavur's children and about some of the men and women she worked with. Very demurely she knew to describe a scene and the reader 'sees' the whole picture and 'feels' what the person described must have gone through at that moment. Describing Jasmine's search for God, she is able to touch someone's deepest thoughts:

Books have been written about the temples of South India, photographs of their marvellous towers and carven stone courts and corridors can be bought for a few rupees, but no books, no pictures, can give even a breath of the air of those mighty monuments of a people's faith, nor can descriptions show them to one who has never stood alone in the night in the silent space before the sacred symbol far within. [...] And yet God has not said a word. But the day will come when He will speak. [...] And He heard. Footsore and worn, and with a grief and patience on her face which still haunt us who saw it, a Brahman widow with shaven, polished head, and the white cloth of the widow wrapped round her, stood waiting in the Dohnavur compound. That was what was seen. What was unseen? The blue air looked as usual, not thronged with shining presences, but thin and clear and blue. And yet, if ever angels walk on earth and lead wayfarers by the hand, surely they were there that day. For now the search was over, the pilgrim had found rest. [...] Down on the floor she fell with outstretched hands as she held Him and would not let Him go. Nor that He wish to go.²³³⁹

The same we see in her capacity of writing in an intimate way about child life.²³⁴⁰

We are not anxious that our babies should know too much ancient history. Enough for them that they are in the fold. I am Jesus' little lamb, all day long I am. He will keep me safe from harm, for I am His lamb.²³⁴¹

Her writings are especially responsive to the brokenness of the world. In *For Our Children* she asks for the children to be protected from the dangers in a fallen world. 'Father, hear us, we are praying, Hear the words our hearts are saying, We are praying for our children.'

2336. In recent times Amy's poetical work has been put to music. Cf. Spencer, 'His Faithfulness'; Dohnavur Fellowship, *'Beauty of Dawn', The Dohnavur Heritage Series, Songs by Amy Carmichael*, vol. I [Dohnavur: The Dohnavur Fellowship, n.d.].

2337. *From Sunrise Land*, 151.

2338. 'To them, a hillside white with cherry-bloom, a flower shower, with the sunlight falling through, touched here and there with crimson, where peach or plum still lingers, is a deep and quiet delight. They come in little companies, and wander among the trees, staying where the view is fairest, to lovingly admire' [*From Sunrise Land*, 124]. 'But moonlight, though lovely to look at, is cold to sit in, and we were not sorry when at last we were put ashore, and set off for our walk to Matsuye, over roads which seemed rough to our tired feet, through lanes, among woods, and by paddy-fields lighted by pale flitting fireflies and thick with talkative frogs' [p. 129].

2339. *The Widow of the Jewels*, 28 and 30.

2340. Cf. chapter XIII of *Lotus Buds*, 107-114.

2341. *Lotus Buds*, 86.

Within the Dohnavur Fellowship context, we see that she touches, implicitly and euphemistically, on the horrifying subject of sexual abuse. It is as if Amy is invoking a protective spell to bind the children to safety. It was not meant for children's ears; it is a prayer for adults to make supplication to God. Although she knew exactly what was happening with the children in the temples, she was very reticent to mention these sexual abuses in words. The same abuses, the adult exploitation of vulnerable children is alluded to in *Come Lord Jesus*:

Because our little children soiled, and disinherited, despoiled,
Because of hurt things, feathered, furred, tormented beast, imprisoned bird,
Because of many-folded grief, Beyond redress, beyond belief,
Because the word is true that says, the whole world creation travails...²³⁴²
Of all our prayer, this is the sum: 'O come. Lord Jesus, come'.

Here we see the idea that little children are 'soiled', 'disinherited', and 'despoiled' not only refers to them being abandoned and neglected, but also to the more alarming danger of abuse by adults who should protect them. Here, too, she is lamenting the abuse of girls and boys dedicated to temples, who have to live there as *devadasis* and as actors in evil plays. But she knew how to articulate her thoughts so that those who sing or hear this hymn are not exposed to the horrors of all that she wanted to say. When Christ will come back everything will come to an end.

The style is the author. Amy's style is in harmony with the woman and reveals her particularities and her heart is revealed in her writings as in a clear mirror. In it, she supplies – not systematically – her mission opinion, an abundant array of missionary facts, from which we can draw our own inferences. She opened the eyes of many to what really was going on in India; also, fair-minded critics of missionary work will be softened by her beautiful style and honesty. During her voyage to Japan she wrote long letters. Regarding writing Amy saw her written work 'as a means of action'.²³⁴³ Her second book *From the Fight* consists of some small articles, bits from home letters and bits written for the book itself. 'Pen patchwork of a truth', she called it and this explains its 'broken and fragmentary character'.²³⁴⁴

■ Scripturally soaked

Amy's books give many guiding principles for missionary work and still she surprises us by her psychological observation and sparkling pedagogical wisdom. The first things that draw our attention when reading her written work is its familiarity with the Bible. Amy and the people close to her lived in a scriptural atmosphere. Scripture moulded Amy's thinking. As far as composition is concerned, her written work is in some way a little dispersed. It consists of letters, poems, Dohnavur history, biographies, Bible study, daily money affairs and writing about the children – but it is sustained by a deep searching, coherent vision, so that, without looking at the diversity, by only appreciating the content and style, we can consider these books of permanent value which Christian literature in the course of ages has brought forth. We admire the depth of thought, the law of love, the beauty of style and the simplicity of language. Her books are masterpieces of mission literature. Before 1931, most of her books fell into the category of missionary biographical issues, nearly all relating to the work of the Dohnavur Fellowship. As an invalid she was aware what other sick people had to suffer and

.....
2342. Here the poem refers to Romans 8:22. 'We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoptions as sons, the redemption of our bodies'.

2343. In the foreword of *The Continuation of a Story*, 4.

2344. In *From the Fight*, 3.

in her books after 1931 several books deal with the issues of sickness, pain and deliverance, books written 'from the ill to the ill'. The distinction of her work is connected with the sheer piety, the (mystic) experience and practice of fellowship and communion with the living God, inwardly and in real life. The secret fascination of Amy's language is made up of the way in which she makes the impression that it is welled up from a pure fountain, unfathomably deep. She writes nothing but that which she has experienced in her inner life. Writing meant for her: bringing people into the world of soul's fruit and soul's delight. She passes on what she receives from God. Amy does not write about mission, but as mission! It is difficult to choose which of the books she wrote is her *magnus opus*, but still today many books give us very worthwhile spiritual and missionary insights. During her life she wrote 35 books which all breathe a challenge urging all to be zealous for the Lord while there is opportunity. Her books have been translated into at least 15 languages. *If* and *Mimosa* are on top of the list of translated books.

Her subject matter was unvarying: the practical work of a practical mission. The many bookcases in her room show a wealth of books on various subjects and a look inside reveals that she read many of them all the way through. That she must have read a lot of books is also shown by the many quotations of other authors that can be found in her books. Many of her books have stories of the children in Dohnavur, interspersed with Scripture verses and illustrated with photographs of the children, the Dohnavur compound and several beautiful sepia pictures of flowers and landscapes. The work with the children inspired Amy to write her books and many of them have extended in their influence far beyond the scope of foreign missions. Still today from Dohnavur in south India Amy's influence is spreading throughout the whole world. Has any active missionary ever published so much? One wonders that she even managed to write some sentences, while she was interrupted all the time by visitors or staff members who needed her advice. Often she wrote while children were playing on the ground and claimed her attention permanently.²³⁴⁵

Gold Cord was written in a room full of 'a jumble of common affairs'.²³⁴⁶ From Japan many letters were written to family and friends. Amy's first printed book *From Sunrise Land*, published in 1895, contains excerpts from her letters home. Some of the sketches in it were from her hands, and William, Mr Wilson's son, contributed the others.

Things as They Are, Mission Work in South India, with a preface by Eugene Stock, published in 1903, did not receive a cordial welcome. It was too honest.²³⁴⁷ It was not nicely polished and not fit for those at home who always wanted to hear nice mission stories. Amy's books picture reality by camera and pencil.²³⁴⁸ The reading public expected a missionary to share only dynamic conversion stories and tales of miracles, not the difficulties and the setbacks of the work. Amy defended the descriptions of her less glamorous struggles by putting experiences into words, but she confessed that even for herself it was a challenge. She expressed her longing for the Indian people to know the Saviour:

I write this under a sense of the solemnity of being 'a servant'... separated unto the Gospel. I would not write one word lightly. But oh! may I ask you to face it? Are we honest towards God? If we were, would these people be left to die as they are being left to die? We feel for them. But feelings will not save souls; it cost God Calvary to win us. It will cost us as much as we may know of the fellowship of His sufferings, if those for whom He died that day are ever to be won. I am writing in the midst of the sights and the sounds of life. There is life in the

2345. Cf. in *Lotus Buds*, Chapter III, 19–26. 'I am writing in the afternoon, and two little people are playing on the floor. One has a picture book, and the other is looking eagerly as she turns the pages and questions: "What is it?" "What is it?"' (p. 31).

2346. *Gold Cord*, 366.

2347. 'Stories stripped of any glamour one might expect or imagine foreign missions to have. It is an honest, heart-rending account of Amy's itinerant evangelistic work in villages' [Williamson, *Amy Carmichael*, 29].

2348. As one wrote: 'The pen, as faithfully as the camera, has told the truth, and nothing but the truth' (confirmatory notes in *Things As They Are*, VI).

group of women at the well; life in the voices, in the splash of the water, in the cry of a child, in the call of the mother; life in the flight of the parrots as they flock from tree to tree; life in their chatter as they quarrel and scream; life, everywhere life. How can I think out of all this, back into death again.²³⁴⁹

Amy wrote about the things as she saw them in India – the events described took place in the years 1899–1901 – and what she knew about the practices in the Hindu temples painted a dark picture of Hindu life. At that time two of Amy’s friends from Manchester visited her. With their help *Things As They Are* was eventually published. Mr Hemingway of the Indian Civil Service was not pleased with this book. He could not believe the things Amy had revealed to be true. He started to research himself and found that Amy had written the truth. He became her lifelong friend. Through this book Christians from all over the world saw the burden and were stirred to think and to pray for the children’s rescue work. Mr Hemingway gave the report Amy had written about child trafficking and about what was happening in the temples to the Governor of Madras. *Things As They Are* led thousands of Christians to prayer and many started to protest against the evils Amy had described. In 1947, planning a new edition – the 13th reprint! – Amy wrote:

There is very little to revise. I had not looked at the book, much less re-read it, for forty years or more. To read it was like reading a new book – a new story, and a scorching one. Again and again, I had to stop. I could not bear it at all, I think, if I could not shut my eyes and see the House of Prayer full of redeemed children, the nurseries full of babies – and – such babies! – the Place of Heavenly Healing and all its lovely activities, the Converts’ Home, too, and so many there and elsewhere saved and protected from the wrongs and sorrows of which the book tells.²³⁵⁰

Reading *Things As They Are* one cannot remain indifferent and it stirred a lot of people to compassion and action. The publisher also had problems with some parts of *From the Forest*, ‘it was too harrowing’, and it had to be ‘modified, even for the grown-up people’, so he returned the manuscript. ‘But I could not’, she wrote, because:

[D]id it mean turn the pepper into flour, and the wrist-twisting into pats, smother the misery of the cross with flowers? But what good would it do? So I put the unwanted manuscript back in its envelope and wrote across it words I had read a week or two before in ‘Aurora Leigh’, ‘You must not pump cold water unawares upon a gracious public full of nerves’.

In the manuscript Amy refers to the Brownie and Pearl-Boy, she had wanted to help.²³⁵¹

The people in England did not have the slightest inkling of these things, used as they were to the romantic and adventurous mission stories told by many missionaries. Amy must have thought during the writing this book: ‘Facts, not mere sentiment, will move hearts’. Sometimes it was necessary to use ‘unpainted words’.²³⁵² According to Seton, this book:

[W]as shot across the bows of much of the overly optimistic missionary discourse of the period, and resonated with those who had experienced at first hand the frustrations and obstacles of evangelistic work [...] Her stark analysis offended many.²³⁵³

Eric Sharpe says: ‘The book came as an unpleasant shock to romantics and triumphalists alike’. But Amy had to bring the truth to light. She revealed the ‘Actual of India’. Eugene Stock, the author of the history of the CMS, writes in the preface: ‘What she says is the truth, and nothing but the truth’. And yet not everything could be written. ‘If she wrote it, it could not be printed.’ As Dr Rudisill writes in the

2349. *Things As They Are*, 51.

2350. In *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, 331.

2351. See *From the Forest*, 20.

2352. *From the Forest*, 20.

2353. In *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*, 185–186.

confirmatory notes, 'if the whole truth were told, an evil spirit only could produce the pictures, and hell itself would be the only place in which to publish them'. Stock very strikingly urges:

God grant that its terrible facts and its burning words may sink into the hearts of its readers! Perhaps, when they have read it, they will at least agree that we have used no sensational and exaggerated language when we have said that the Church is only playing with mission.²³⁵⁴

Worldwide the book found readers, especially after many had admitted the truth. Reviewers wrote:

The account of native life, of the customs of the people, of the few pleasures they enjoy, and the many sorrows that oppress them, is as accurate as it is lucid and entertaining. We will do well to give this book serious attention; it is so completely sincere, and so free from prejudice; and there are many excellent illustrations after photographs. In *Things As They Are*, are pictured by pen and camera some things as they are. It is all the more needful now when so many are deceived, and are being deceived as to the true nature of idolatry, that people at home who give and pray should be told plainly that what Paul wrote about idolaters in Rome and Corinth is still true of idolaters in India.²³⁵⁵

Other books followed. The first was strategically called *Overweights of Joy* (1906). The title of this book is from Coneybear and Howson's translation of 2 Corinthians 7:4: 'I have more than an overweight of Joy'. Thomas Walker wrote the preface, in which he confirmed that everything Amy had written was 'true again, absolutely true. [...] And Truth (with a capital "T") is the main thing'. Walker emphasises to the reader to read between the lines:

India has not yet been won. Thank God for what has been done; and Miss Carmichael was not ignorant of it when she wrote her book, as will be clear to anyone who reads between the lines.²³⁵⁶

Amy was at pains to point out that the book was written from 'Old India', the India of the villages, and not the 'New India' of the universities and colleges and political platforms, about which she sensibly disclaimed being qualified to write. In several reviews we read:²³⁵⁷

[O]ne of the most striking and inspiring missionary books of recent years. There is a life and enthusiasm and devotion, combined with literary ability and winsomeness of style, which make the book very captivating, as well as very touching. It is quite wonderfully illustrated with sunsets on the Ghauts, and all kinds of wonders, and withal it is a song of spiritual triumph from a soul that feels intensely the cost of the Cross. A book, indeed, for every Christian home.

Mr Hemingway also urged Amy to write about some of the children now safely in Dohnavur. It was then that Amy wrote *Lotus Buds*.²³⁵⁸ *Lotus Buds* was published in November 1909, when Amy was little short of her 42nd birthday. The book is known for the beautiful sepia photography illustrating it, and especially the photographs of young children, some of which are tiny masterpieces. Two visitors from England, Mary Hatch and Ella Crossley, a friend from Manchester, were the 'picture catchers'. Also a famous photographer, Mr Penn, of Ootacamund (Ooty), previously a landscape photographer, illustrated several Dohnavur books with beautiful photos. Otherwise, while some of the tough-mindedness of *Things As They Are* remains in *Lotus Buds*, it is counter balanced and sometimes overbalanced by sentimentality, especially where children died far too soon. In speaking about the matters of the trafficking of children in danger, she

2354. In confirmatory notes and preface of *Things As They Are*, VI and XII.

2355. In *Literary World* book review of *Things As They Are*, and Dr A. Rudisill's review published by M.E. Press, Madras. Both reviews in Ling, *Dawn in Toda Land*, 93.

2356. Rev. Thomas Walker in the preface of *Overweights of Joy*, VIII.

2357. In *The Christian World*, in *The Churchman* and in Ling, *Dawn in Toda Land*, 94.

2358. See also Wilkinson, *At BBC Corner*, 84–85.

avoided sentiment and banished all imagination: she expressed in her books the reality. 'We write for the earnest-hearted, who are not ashamed to confess they care.'²³⁵⁹ And yet:

[T]his book comes hot from the fight. It is not a retrospect written in the calm after-years, when the outline of things has grown indistinct and the sharpness of life is blurred.²³⁶⁰

Overweights of Joy, was meant to be a song of praise out of the darkness, which was the background of the work. Also in this book it is her aim to be true. In what she writes, she tries to avoid 'over-colouring' as she would avoid a lie.²³⁶¹ She even asks forgiveness for writing so plainly:²³⁶²

Graves and gardens: Weights and Overweights. Sometimes we pass backwards and forwards from grave to garden; then the scales are poised just evenly. Sometimes the grave appears to encroach upon the garden; then life's equilibrium becomes disturbed. Sometimes what we thought was a grave blossoms into a garden; then there is an Overweight of Joy.²³⁶³

One of Amy's most loved and trusted co-workers was Ponnamal. She was one of the leading women in the Starry Cluster and eventually she became Amy's right hand in the work. She was the one who with so many babies was sent to Neyyoor, where night and day she took care of the children. Even after being diagnosed with cancer, she continued doing her work as well as possible until she died in 1916. For Amy and the whole Fellowship a great blow, for her wisdom and leadership qualities would be greatly missed. In 1924 *Ponnamal, Her Story*, appeared, in which Amy paid a beautiful tribute to her. No less than Bishop Handley Moule wrote the foreword. In Amy's personal copy she wrote in 1936: 'Whose faith follow'.

Windows shows the way the Lord supplied all the Dohnavur needs. The book is very helpful and show us how the Lord dealt among his own, and how the work in Dohnavur went on.²³⁶⁴

Amy's walk of faith, is expressed in her 'crowning work',²³⁶⁵ the classic little book *If*. It epitomises her Christian walk and challenges us to walk in Calvary love – the way of the Cross – dying to ourselves and to the world. This booklet is written, especially for under-shepherds,²³⁶⁶ who are missing the way of love. In their work, they often encounter pride, selfishness, or cowardice in themselves. The only help is the knowledge of the love of God shown forth on Calvary. About how this little book came to be written, Amy says:

One evening a fellow-worker brought me a trouble about a younger one who was missing the way of Love. This led to a wakeful night, for the word at such times is always, 'Lord, is it I? have I failed her anywhere? What do I know of Calvary Love??' And then sentence by sentence the 'Ifs' came, almost as if spoken aloud to the inward ear. [...] Some of the 'ifs' appear to be related to pride, selfishness, or cowardice, but digging deeper we come upon an unsuspected loveliness at the root of them all.²³⁶⁷

2359. *Lotus Buds*, 283.

2360. *Lotus Buds*, 45.

2361. *Overweights of Joy*, 4.

2362. *Overweights of Joy*, 59: 'Forgive me for writing thus plainly. I pray that this message may shake in you all that can be shaken, that that which cannot be shaken may remain firm as the Rock of Ages'.

2363. *Overweights of Joy*, 212.

2364. Cf. the way Hudson Taylor informed the people about mission work in China. *China's Millions* reported about the progress and the defeats of the work, and about travel and Chinese affairs. In Wigram, *The Bible and Mission in Faith Perspective*, 11 and 12.

2365. This expression is from P.L. King, 'Amy Carmichael', in *Moving Mountains*, 184.

2366. Amy Carmichael in the foreword of *If*, VII.

2367. In the introduction to *If*, V and VI.

Amy wrote *If* for the Fellowship community she led to help them to love better. She asked the question ‘*what do I know of Calvary love?*’ with the hope of stimulating love in her team. Loving deeply is always a challenge, especially among those with whom we live, and those with whom we work. For me, a heart-piercing ‘if’ statement is this one:

If I say, ‘Yes, I forgive, but I cannot forget’,
as though the God,
who twice a day washes all the sands
on all the shores of all the world,
could not wash such memories from my mind,
then I know nothing of Calvary love.²³⁶⁸

This ‘if’, and also the others are strong stuff. But what a beautiful analogy to show God’s mercy for us.

Some years after her accident, in about 1935, Amy thought a lot of Arulai, who was physically very weak, due to smallpox and other illnesses. Up to that moment, several operations had not given promising results. What if she were to lose Arulai, a woman she fully trusted and of whom she thought of her as a future leader of the Fellowship? Her thoughts were put together in a dialogue between ‘the son’ (herself) and the Father. This dialogue was later published as *His Thoughts Said ... His Father Said*. Arulai was very precious to her. Arulai had her ‘Celestial Birthday’ on 24 May 1939. Already in 1939, on 21 April, Amy had written in the margin of 2 Timothy 4:

For now she is ready to be offered, and the time of her departure is at hand. She had fought the good fight, she has finished her course, she has kept the faith.

Amy’s books were ‘given’ to her, as she believed. She had the gift of writing. The limpid quality of her style, the grace and the charm of it grips the reader and the nice cadences make reading easy, although what she writes is not always understandable for those who are not fully introduced to the Scriptures. The flights of her fancy sometimes went high. Her written work is spiritual, and therefore eternal. In this sphere, words such as ‘success’ or ‘nice’ and ‘celebrated author’ are words and thoughts that did not appear in Amy’s writing head. Her books strike down to the reality.²³⁶⁹ She was not always content with a manuscript, and often many parts were rewritten and every word was thought about. ‘Words should be like colours, each one a dot of colour supplying a need, not one over’, she wrote in 1930 to Godfrey when he was writing his *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*.²³⁷⁰

One wonders, reading her work, about her ability to put into words deep thoughts in flowing sentences, but for her it was all God’s. In 1941 *His Thoughts Said ... His Father Said*, was ‘made up of ever so many people’s thoughts, talking aloud as it were [...] Some are very private thoughts’. ‘This morning’ – Amy wrote in 1947 to Godfrey – ‘I was reading *His Thoughts Said*. Constantly I find that the things His Father said open out, and I see what I did not see before in those words’.

In the Dohnavur logbook of 07 October 1932 is the entry is: ‘Mail. *Gold Cord* arrived’.²³⁷¹ Often people asked Amy to write about the history and the principles of the Fellowship, the beginning and the people involved from the beginning. Amy was very reluctant to do this. How could she escape personal details? What had to be mentioned, and what not? Finally, by ‘higher authority’, she was

2368. *If*, 40.

2369. Cf. her foreword in Godfrey’s Peplae *Brothers of the Lotus Buds*, V.

2370. Published in 1931 by SPCK (London) with a foreword by Amy Carmichael.

2371. Logbook of the Dohnavur Fellowship 1931–1941 [in the Dohnavur library].

convinced and about 1931 she started writing. This writing led to *Gold Cord*. She kept true to her principles and the whole story held to a single course, and wherever possible the book omitted personal aspects. She even did not mention her own accident in 1931, which made her an invalid. Yet reading, the reader notices the pen of the author in the way she expresses herself, fully dedicated to the truth, 'seeing the visible always in the light that streams from the invisible'.²³⁷²

Her published work is distinguished by the clearness of style, sparkling epigrams, homely references and clear evangelical teaching. Christ! Christ! All focused upon Christ. What Amy wrote was the transcript of her own life. She used the flowing language of her day to describe her innermost feelings. Amy's books were and are a real contribution to missionary literature, and to mission history of the later Victorian and Edwardian era. The piercing element in her descriptions is her radical honesty. Her literature was not like the type of missionary literature that paints the picture with the devil out of it, or a tamed, almost respectable, devil. Amy says 'such books had not been written then'. She talks about 1850. For missionaries it is so easy:

[T]o slip into a soft tolerance, which does not see sin as such in those for whom one is responsible, but slides along comfortably for the sake of peace and avoid tackling it in right earnest. It is terribly easy to get accustomed to the thought and the sight of people living without Christ. '

Revealing the creepy darkness of what was going on behind the big and strong temple walls, she feared 'exaggerated language'.²³⁷³ Her books strike down to reality and the descriptions are nothing if not earnest. Those who worked with her always said that nothing about her was, or ever had been, light or casual. In her meditations, hymns and sacred powers Amy has left a precious legacy to the Dohnavur Fellowship and to the world. All her poems and hymns were collected and combined in 1999.²³⁷⁴

In the years before her death the long-practised pen did not lose its inspiration. In the early years her books circulated in many countries, though in Northern Ireland it was difficult to find one of her books in the evangelical circles. Miss Wilkinson thinks that the reason is that Amy's mother settled in Manchester with one daughter, Amy was at Broughton Grange in Cockermonth, and her brothers went overseas, two to Canada and one to South Africa, while only one sister remained in Ireland. In due time the family was forgotten in Ireland, so therefore Amy's work and books, too, were unknown there for a long time. Miss Wilkinson, who also came from Ireland, heard of Amy while she was a medical student in England! Also in the Netherlands she is still unknown. I myself, having been at a mission college for one year and a pastor for many years, happened to come across her books years later on the mission field in Mozambique.

We really wonder how she managed to get on paper so many deep thoughts throughout all the books, poems and songs. Her sensitive heart and her open eyes felt deeper and saw more behind the clouds. Her vivid sense, not merely of her verse faculty in general being given to her, but every line, every poem or hymn, was given her by prayer.²³⁷⁵

2372. Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, 282.

2373. *Lotus Buds*, 298.

2374. See R. Delancy, E. Rogers & J. Longton (ed.), *Mountain Breezes, The Collected Poems of Amy Carmichael* (Fort Washington, MD: CLC, 1999).

2375. Here we are reminded of Frances Ridley Havergal. She once said: 'Writing is praying for me, for I never seem to write even a verse by myself, and feel like a little child writing: you know a child would look up at every sentence and say, "And what shall I say next?" That is just what I do; I ask that every line He would give me, not merely thought and power, but also every word, even the very rhymes. Very often I have a most distinct and happy consciousness of direct answers'. In F.R. Havergal, *Memorials* (Caswell Bay, South Wales: J. Nisbet & Co., 1984 [1880]), 248.

Amy Carmichael did not merely write about her missionary work. Many of her books are devotionals that have inspired countless men and woman into deeper love for their Saviour and a hunger to follow him more completely. Perhaps the greatest lesson that Amy's life and writings teach us is how to know Christ in the fellowship of his sufferings. Suffering was a constant companion to Amy Carmichael. Despite the bodily hardships she faced, her worst sufferings were not even physical. She had so much love and tenderness in her heart that words cannot describe her anguish when occasionally she would lose a child she thought she had rescued, sometimes from her very doorstep. Despite the difficulties of her life, the Lord helped Amy to see these sufferings positively, as battle wounds and honours gained in the service of her Saviour.

One note still has to be made. Amy took great care about the details and outer format of a book. Books had to be attractive in layout. She often changed the proposals of the publishers. In Houghton we read her correspondence in 1934 with the secretary of the SPCK concerning *Ploughed Under*, about its size, print cover, pictures and other details. And about price, she also had her opinion. She signed the letter with, 'Yours troublesomely':

You say, the more work I can do on it by thinking how I want it to look, the better you will be pleased. That's the sort of publisher I enjoy. After all, a book is a child, it's impossible not to know how one wants its hair curled. Well, first I want the book thin. I don't like podgy books [...] Don't let my little lover come out fat. [...] Here as usual we are a nuisance. But think: we are both (you and I) out to do heavenly business. The earthly part of it is only a detail. The people for whom this book is written are not rich [...] Please don't groan, but just do it.²³⁷⁶

In 1950 she laid down her pen. Her pen had driven her thoughts over endless pages. With her eyes always fixed on her vision, she had used her pen most purposefully. She had gleaned Bible notes, examined the Bible verses and scattered them around, reaping a soul-crop on the way. She had collected poems, even written a lot herself, and presented them to the faint-hearted, the sick and troubled, to encourage, to warn and to uplift those in need. Many friends, family, fellow missionaries, Indians and people overseas were inspired by her. Really, her writings are, even today, a spiritual tonic. It took vision and self-discipline to find time and a quiet place for such precious work. Sometimes Amy went to the house in the forest; there, surrounded by trees and the sound of the wild animals at night together with the grandeur of God's majesty of the high mountains, she found inspiration. But the inspiration for her writing came from a source higher than the mountains. Her productive pen was filled with more than common ink.

She avoided mentioning her own name or making references to her name. A new book was presented to the Lord. It was for his glory and the welfare of the Fellowship that she wrote. Avoiding her name, yet Amy seemed to make an intimate approach that drew forth an intimate response. She could picture the life, the joy and the problems of the Dohnavur children. She had the talent of making an interesting letter from a small incident in a child's life. Really a gift from the hand of God.

Her books are nearly over 100 years old. Occasionally the style is dated, and the language is not always very easy, her thoughts often high, and yet surprisingly easy to read in our 21st century. Amy wrote in an expressive and affective way as an impulse for the readers to conversion, to deepen their faith and to emphasise what really happens behind the scenes.

2376. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 332.

In a very compassionate way she knows how to interpret Christ's passion on the Cross. Her emotional rendering of the lost state of the heathen and the urgency of telling the Good News to them is a subject which runs through all her work.

Wherever one opens one of her books you will find it easy to get into and you will strike pure gold. There is a variety of themes but everywhere the full implications of the Scripture doctrine of the Saviour are brought to the reader's notice. It draws us from the human arrogance and confused thinking of much modern evangelism to the apostolic norms, which are permanent. And it comes to us from a woman on the job.

The ardent religiosity of her writing has meant that she often has been unjustly neglected by literary critics. In the last few decades there has been more sympathy for religion in the lives of men and women. The message she wants to spread is for encouragement as well about the need to serve God actively in the world and to demonstrate a return to the inner life and contemplation. Regarding Dohnavur as the radiating centre of her influence, many recognise today that through her books she has enriched the whole Church of God. Many people are still inspired by her writings, not only as a commitment to mission, but even more fundamentally to consecration of one's whole life to the Lord. Amy's inspiration will help us in our present era where we see a lack of theological reflection in mission thinking, that we make sure that biblical reflection infuses all that we say, do and write about missionary work.

**The path of a good woman is indeed strewn with flowers;
but they rise behind her steps, not before them.**

John Ruskin

The most glorious triumphs of Christ are spiritual, and His noblest work is that wrought in the secret of the soul. Not the conquest of kingdoms, but *self-conquest*; not the renunciation of anything external merely, but *self-renunciation*; not the consecration of substance, but *self-consecration* in the service of God and man – these are the hardest deeds to accomplish, and the most divine attainments.

They shine with the peculiar light of Calvary. H. Grattan Guinness, in Taylor, *Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission*, vol. II, 261–262.

Trained faith is a triumphant gladness in having nothing but God - not rest, no foothold - nothing but Himself. A triumphant gladness in swinging out into that abyss, rejoicing in every fresh emergency that is going to prove Him true. "The Lord alone" - that is trained faith.

Lilias Trotter in M. Huffman Rockness, ed., *A Blossom in the Desert. Reflections of Faith in the Art and Writings of Lilias Trotter* (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 2007), 48.



Loving God enough to break ancient rules

■ Secluded openness

Amy, a genuine missionary, lived in a quiet place far from the buzzing city life, with no concern for fame or recognition. She was ‘praise-proof’. The strain of a continuously busy life, the hot climate of Tinnevely district and the prolonged invalidity of the latter years took a toll upon her frail body. But she continued ‘climbing’ and the ‘fight’ went on. Yet, there is no doubt that she would welcome anyone to come and see what had been done to save children from a life of shame and vileness. Her life, given to God in a way only few accepted, will always bear fruit because of the work of the Holy Spirit. Amy gave all she was and had into the hands of her Saviour. Despite her clear conservative beliefs, she set a movement in motion – motivated through her belief! – of which today the end can still not be predicted; the south Indian world she touched has changed forever. She succeeded in overcoming the often-felt ambivalence between a worldwide horizon and the strict Presbyterian upbringing, merging the two nicely together.

In Belfast as in India she was not afraid to oppose some accepted canon of convention. The Dohnavur Fellowship has an openness, always secured by biblical standards, and this openness to adjust aims and priorities is a hallmark of an organisation that is sensitive to the cultures in which it operates. Amy steered the middle way between the Scylla of continuous attacks and ignorance of her contemporaries and the Charybdis of a realised vision exemplified in the Dohnavur Fellowship. Today’s Santhosha Vidhyalaya Secondary School is a sign that the Fellowship’s staff members wholeheartedly keep themselves following Amy’s vision. ‘The missions she established in Ireland and in India more than a century ago still flourish to this day and the influence of her writings is beyond measure.’²³⁷⁷

Today she is credited by many in India and abroad for having changed the moral lives of many boys and girls, a benefit for Christian families and the society as a whole; she was a woman ‘prepared to be

2377. In the preface of Maxwell, *Amy’s Tin Tabernacle*, 11.

unconventional'.²³⁷⁸ By the light and the love of the Gospel, age-old practices were elucidated.²³⁷⁹ She was able to see things others did not see. Her visionary insights proved to be from God, and that is the reason why we cannot bypass her anymore in the missionary debate. You learn so much from the life of this remarkable missionary's life that now, coming to the end of our study, we come away feeling like somehow we have been mentored by this woman. Stella Entwistle's words are so true for Amy: 'You will know the saints, and they will know you, if they see the light of God's love shining through'.²³⁸⁰ She had her private communion with God, and what was felt and expressed deep in her heart remains hidden for curious eyes and ears, but she was so transparent, showing us a life in which the light of God's love was shining through.

The photograph of Amy in so many houses and other buildings within the Dohnavur Fellowship's extensive compound in India, in the Welcome Church in Belfast (Northern Ireland) and in homes all over the world, remind the people of God, of the one who symbolises all that was done in love in a missionary life. For many she belonged to that realm which is above criticism. A sinner saved by grace who longed for the day to see 'God's jewels', the children of India, and all those who live in darkness, part of Christ's crown. In the creation of the Dohnavur Fellowship a unique mixture of devotional and practical elements of Christian expression come together. Elements of the early Church, Mediaeval mystics, French monastic piety, Moravian organisation and Keswick holiness formed Amy's piety along with the actual day-to-day business in Dohnavur. Her story is so exceptional that any retelling of it is bound to be a good read. Although we affirm Amy Carmichael as one of God's great servants in the first part of the 20th century, still we have to bring into focus that as a true missionary, faithful to God, a woman of prayer and power, she was an unusual character, in fact a missionary who seemed to have had a highly idiosyncratic factor. She seems to have learnt to celebrate her strengths while working on her weaknesses, knowing her own shortcomings. A woman who every day underwent God's judgement over her life as she needed his blessing. From the throne of grace she was willing to give herself for others.

Though unknown to the world, she was a true servant of the risen Lord Jesus; an example of a Christ-like sacrifice and consecration for the healing of a big sore in south India's Hindu communities. She saw what many did not see or did not want to see, the grotesque, religiously sanctioned, hidden abuse of little children. She rose up and stood in the gap between this evil practice and decent society. People had to see what she saw and know what she knew of evil that had to be stopped. And she not only used her voice and pencil, but her hands created a safe haven for hundreds of children in danger who were saved. Her love is at the heart of the Christian Gospel, and was part of her from childhood when she learned the love of God, a love so amazing, the love from Christ Jesus' widespread arms on the Cross.

Her memory is fragrant and transparent, exposed in her work in Dohnavur and revealed in her books and poems. A long life of hard work toiling with head and hand, but all done with a heart of intercession for the children in danger and their future after they were saved. Daily you could find her in the nurseries, kitchen and office; all these places were meeting places at the Throne of Grace, to be continued after she became bedridden. She sacrificed her heart's affections in the cause of the Dohnavur Fellowship and all the people there. All done in an unpretending way and with a calm perseverance which continued to the end of her life. She could not have done more, for she gave *herself*.

With her preference for the writings of the mystics and the well-organised structure of the Dohnavur Fellowship we get the impression of a 'seclusive identity' in the south Indian plain where Amy as the

2378. Jacky Woolcock in the foreword of Williamson, *Amy Carmichael*, XII.

2379. Cf. here Paul who saw the triumph of Christ when he wrote: 'He disarmed the principalities and powers, and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in Him' (RVS), Colossians 2:15.

2380. In S. Miller, *I Can Trace A Rainbow* (Singapore: OMF, 1988), 33.

spiritual director – even until her death from her long sickbed – dictated her ideas, drawn from the Scriptures, guided and served the whole community. In all her work she needed to have divine sanction from the Scriptures; in the way Scripture was interpreted we see Amy's own blend of mysticism and practicality, in which we can trace her own prejudices. In her mission principles she moved within the biblical principles as the majority of evangelicals at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century saw them as their line. However, from the very beginning, in 1893, she gave her own interpretation, and independently since 1927 went her own way. Amy, who saw much nominal Christianity in India, like Walker, put her mind on God, personal piety exercised in love, prayer and patience, all in a conventional setting with some ascetic traces, with vows of poverty and obedience and she herself acting as mother superior. She never lived in isolation and with her eyes open to the world she transformed Christian life in such a way that it fitted the needs of the world. She never condemned the work in other missions and had high respect for many others in India as well as in England who faithfully did their God-given work. She could ask advice from others, but turned everything of value for her into her own moulding. She did not allow Biblical interpretations to become a flight of personal fancy, although her exegetical material give us many original thoughts of interpretation.

As in the lives of Madame Guyon and Theresa of Avila who, as abbesses, ruled their convents in obedience to a male supervisor and confessor – for instance François de Sales – Amy in the first years, from 1898 to 1912, leaned heavily on Thomas Walker, who gave a lot of advice.²³⁸¹ In itinerating work Amy followed the Walkers and, once settled in Dohnavur, this also became the spin-off place for Walker who resided here when no outside campaign was on the agenda.

Like women visionaries Amy shared God's talk, revealed to her from the Scriptures, with others. She always remained close to the Scriptures and never let her thoughts wander in far-away ecstatic talk and thought. She had cultivated for herself a devotion not free from mystical elements.²³⁸² She sought for herself to be in absolute obedience and subjection to God. In her seeking of the spiritual communion with Christ she never went as far as her Roman Catholic sisters did, because she never left the Bible guidance. She knew her God from his revelation of himself in the Scriptures, not through visions or mysticism.

She lived her Christian life in a community, in contact with children and many grown-up people. She did not live a life in seclusion, nor in a way of self-imposed abnegation of the body and extra Biblical meditative techniques. What attracted her in Madame Guyon and Teresa of Avila was their independent way of ruling a convent, and their devotion to Christ. Not unworldly, they managed in many difficulties to be focused on the one thing necessary.²³⁸³ Amy in a certain sense had something of a Catholic and a unifying spirit.²³⁸⁴ The way she operated will help a new generation of mission workers who often have to do the work in complex cross-cultural mission situations where they find overt opposition to the message that is brought and cannot even count on full support from everyone involved in Church work.

2381. 'Amy was a kind of Teresa of Avila, matching the Spanish reformer in her zeal, in her devotion to Christ and to her charges, and also in the intense and contradictory elements of her dominating temperament' (Davies, *Genius and Grace*, 204).

2382. Cf. G. Davies: 'She had the genius for expressing the mystical Christian insight'; 'the frequent quotations from great Christian mystics and missionaries of the past are as enchanting as ever'; 'Amy was very aware of the spiritual world and was by any standard a Christian mystic' (*Genius and Grace*, 193).

2383. Not only Amy, but as shown in Severance, *Feminine Threads*, 209–210, the missionary Adoniram Judson in Burma, the preacher Charles Spurgeon and the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, refer to Madame Guyon, whose writings benefitted them.

2384. Amy from her father's side descended from the Covenanters, and on her mother's side she was a Dalziel (in old Scots, 'I dare'), from the Royalists who persecuted the Covenanters. In her own spiritual life, she more or less unified these two.

Presenting God's message in our present day, the mission worker, to determine his strength and weaknesses, needs a framework in which to operate and to decide about the priorities.

Amy did not reject institutional Christianity, as many of her Quaker friends, did, but created her own way of serving the Lord in the community, where the personal experience of Christ was sought after and was lived by the Scriptures. There is order during the services in the House of Prayer. The quietness and the silence, the singing and worship are integral elements of the service.²³⁸⁵ Her meditatively praying the Scripture and an inward holiness through God's personal work in her heart encouraged her to have a godly Christian life independent of human work and institutional Church rituals. Like Count Zinzendorf, who not only offered a place of refuge for those who fled persecution, but also became the leader of the Moravians, Amy too in the organisation in Dohnavur, separated the sexes in the community where each individual was assigned to a particular group. The church service was done together but also here, boys and girls were separated, as it is customary in rural India. Harmony within all the groups got priority and sins had to be confessed.

The two pinnacles on top of the House of Prayer tower, not found in the usual Tamil Nadu architecture but Amy's invention, were the indication of the adoration, the love to God and the love reaching out to others. Her devotion was spiritual and this led her to leave the track of printed liturgical material that used age-old patterns in which there was no life left. In her vision of holiness the Dohnavur congregation had to be as the Bride of Christ.

■ A real inspiration

The intention of this broader research was to get a closer and clearer picture of Amy Carmichael as the founder of the Dohnavur Fellowship. Also to give a balanced account of her dealings with people and especially her life with God. From these perspectives, I studied her background and spiritual development. The more I immersed myself in her written work and tried to fathom her thoughts, the more I admire her and thank God for such a gift to the children of India, and to the missionary world. My research in Belfast and my stay for some weeks in Dohnavur, where I could speak with many who knew Amy personally, completed the circle, and I feel, even with all the years between us, that I could somehow really touch her and talk with her. She was a child of her time and lived against it. She did her work in Dohnavur in a time that saw two world wars. In a desert-like place she lived in a fast, absolute, solitary way, but it was a world on its own. In this 'small world' we have met a great personality, who through solitariness succeeded in reaching an extraordinary activity. The fascination originating from her is the fascination that comes from a life lived in holiness for the solitariness became a school of godliness. She was called for a communal walk with God, and therefore she had to avoid all unnecessary companionship. She saved many children from a life of shame and became a soul-guide for many across the world. As a virtuous letter writer she encouraged many downhearted and sick people all over the world.

The present author has not sought to defend all her views in every detail. She would not have expected me to do so; she stood before her God and lifted up her eyes to him expecting everything from him. Amy's legacy has remained and has been publicly honoured and remembered. From time to time her work is studied which results in a publication. Several of her books are still reprinted and have a wide reader interest. Many of her letters and works are well kept and preserved in Belfast's PRONI archive. Faithful workers in Dohnavur continue her work in the way she would have liked. There are more tangible reminders of Amy and her work. The Welcome Evangelical Church in Belfast (the

2385. Like Madame Guyon 'seeking Christ, by a quiet faith, not by outward ceremonies' (Severance, *Feminine Threads*, 208).

former Welcome which Amy started) erected a commemoration tablet and on 19 August 2016 opened a new Amy Carmichael Centre to continue the legacy of Amy Carmichael.

In Dohnavur each year, on 16 December, a party for all staff and children remember her birthday, during which many stories about her are re-told. Today ‘the name of Dohnavur deserves to be as well remembered as that of Lambarene, where Albert Schweitzer built his hospital’.²³⁸⁶

In her we meet a real missionary of Christ and not one as so many in her time a missionary representing the Christian civilisation of the West. For those to whom she was sent, she longed to see that they got redemption and that conversion to the living God was a reality. ‘The cross is the attraction’, and for her the Cross stood against the lurid sky of history in the shape of a great key – the key of holiness and love and redemption.²³⁸⁷ The practical consequence of this view is seen in her Dohnavur Fellowship where spiritual and physical lives were set free and boys and girls could grow up in a normal way. Word or deed? For her it was not a question:

For us the special call is to serve our generation by doing ordinary things to the glory of God. It is not scriptural to divide life into sections and call one secular, the other sacred. All is sacred. Our Lord’s walk on earth shows no other attitude of mind. He recognised no dividing line. So why should we? The one aim of all our work is to lead each man, woman and child to our Saviour and to teach them how to follow Him as dear children (Ephesians 5:1), and thus prepare them for His use and lead them out into His service.²³⁸⁸

Her love for Christ translated itself in her love and compassion for those in peril.²³⁸⁹ She just did what the Lord asked her to do, to sacrifice herself, to be an instrument in his hands. She had learned from Madame Guyon that ‘God often makes His will known only in the time of action’.²³⁹⁰ The Gospel of Christ provides the solution for prevailing sin, but also in individual and social life:

If by doing some work which the undiscerning consider ‘not spiritual work’ I can best help others, and I inwardly rebel, thinking it is the spiritual for which I care, when in truth it is the interesting and exciting, then I know nothing of Calvary love.²³⁹¹

In *Overweights of Joy* is a passage in which she indicates what the cost is of doing mission work and the full dependence upon God’s creative power:

But ‘crying’ is not nearly enough. We look to you, brothers of India, to do. Many can talk and many can write, and more will do both, as the years pass, but the crux is contained in the doing. God alone can strengthen you for it. He who set His face as a flint, can make you steadfast and brave enough to set your faces as flints, till the bands of wickedness are loosed, and the heavy burdens are undone, and every yoke is broken, and the oppressed go free. It will cost. It is bound to cost. Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood. It is only sham battles that cost something less than blood. Everything worth anything costs blood.

She urged strongly not to compare in the Kingdom of God the work of one with that of another and not to discern among each other of what is more or less spiritual:

2386. Davies, *Genius and Grace*, 195.

2387. The image of the ‘key’ I borrowed from S.M. Zwemer, *Thinking Missions with Christ*, 3rd edn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1935), 49.

2388. *Fragments That Remain*, 25.

2389. Here we can think of Luther’s expression: ‘A Christian is a Christ to others’.

2390. Cf. her annotations in Madame Guyon’s *Spiritual Letters*, in the Dohnavur library.

2391. *If*, 43.

Each was a pioneer missionary, each was a flame of fire. [...] But the conditions under which each worked varied as widely as they varied climatically. Can we compare their work [*Amy was writing about the work of Brainerd in North America and Henry Martin in India and Persia*], or measure it by its visible results? Did God? Let us leave off comparing this with that – we do not know enough to compare. Let us leave off weighing eternal things and balancing souls in earthly scales. Only God's scales are sufficiently sensitive for such delicate work as that.²³⁹²

All her time in India she met fierce opposition, which she met with prayer, believing that through prayer victory will be gained. During the beginning of the 20th century, millennial thoughts were very strong among missionaries. Many adherents of Keswick agreed with the pre-millennial view. The burden to evangelise the world weighed heavily on them as they saw that the millennial clocks ticked only to the midnight hour. The great commission had to be completed before Christ's return. In the expectancy of the 'last days'²³⁹³ outpouring of the Spirit grew more intense. Amy did not actively propagate the pre-millennial view – she was too much of Presbyterian breed – but more or less agreed with it. Her pre-millennial view demanded from her that what she was doing was for eternity and from that was this sense of other-worldliness, of stewardship, a supreme sense of the urgency of her task.

All our work, and that Amy knew, is under the searchlight of eternity. Amy could be quiet amidst the turmoil of her time and amidst the daily problems she faced in Dohnavur; amidst everything towers the Cross, as a tower of strength. She was not the only outstanding missionary during the first half of the 20th century, but what made her so special is her walking independently of self, straight to God, proving in her own life of what she had written, never 'off duty' and always living and working in the knowledge that the Cross is the attraction. In a certain deep joy she shared in Christ's sufferings. She followed her life course and by her hands, her words and her deeds she passed Christ's love to thousands of children, faithful to her high calling. By life and lip at every point, she reflected the glory of the great Shepherd. The Spirit of Christ Jesus was pre-eminently manifested in her life and character.

In our world today, so completely different from 150 years ago, to a generation which is introduced to the rat race in modern society in which there is an increasing scramble to keep ahead, in such a loveless way of life people need the healing ministry of Christ of comfort and consolation.

Amy showed us, like a caring mother to her little children, the stern note in God's Word to preach the Gospel to the people and to apply the balm of it, the blood of Christ, to the spiritual and physical wounds. The secret part of her life, not seen by many and of which she rarely talked, was her disciplined life of prayer. She lived all that she preached.

Scholars and government personnel, not directly connected with Christianity, could appreciate the work that was done.²³⁹⁴ Done in a world of almost a growing, unprecedented political and social instability – even India's independence in 1947 was a year of much brutal bloodshed. In this situation Amy restored with her Dohnavur Fellowship a sanctuary in a kind of church life in the pattern of the New Testament. In this setting she offered radical solutions: the principles taught by Jesus himself. She was a motivator, an inspirer, breaking fresh ground. Others capable of further transforming her work and vision were inspired by her to apply it to the spheres of their own.

Amy's integral missionary method applied in the image of a servant-like Fellowship is an example of a creative balanced Biblical encultured act against all institutionalising of the power of self-love. Her paradigm invites us to shift our attention from searching for great things to the 'one thing necessary', for

2392. *Things As They Are*, 281.

2393. Cf. Joel 2:28–29.

2394. For example Dr Mutthu Laksmi (Madras), Mr F.R. Hemmingway (Indian Civil Service), Gwen Pakenham Walsh (State Commissioner). Also in the awarding of the Kaiser-I-Hind medal for services to the people of India in 1919.

every follower of Christ, and to make the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus present in a life of conversion and spirituality for this generation. From her we learn, that we are 'a little flock' (Lk 12:32), people on a pilgrimage in this third millennium with a high and a demanding vocation. This applies to the Indian mind, for the Indian Christians are thinking Christians.²³⁹⁵ Her fame as a missionary, even during her life, is beyond any question. In many aspects she broke new ground, although in retrospect it is clear how much she was influenced by her spiritual upbringing in Northern Ireland and by her Keswick affiliation. She was a missionary who placed no restrictions on God.

Her thoughts and the perils of innocent children in India were brought to the utmost parts of the world by her letters and books. It seems hard to believe, but she has stood out all these 56 years in India as a unique soul in her indomitable courage, hopefulness, and patient love, as well as in all her natural gifts, creating in Dohnavur an atmosphere of love, praise and joy. She was consistent in her love of Christ and in her love for the Indian people. The Bible was for her a never-ending fountain of inspiration. In expounding the Scriptures – sometimes they came as 'scraps' to the Dohnavur family – she found 'gold' which she applied to the actual Dohnavur situation with which she encouraged the sick with a right word at the right time. There is a strong element of consecutiveness in all her work. She remained, where others moved around and travelled a lot. Where the Lord had allocated her, there she blossomed. Her core beliefs and mission thoughts never varied; she became a touchstone of mission enterprise and represented an era, which ended at the time she died. She was one of the cherished missionaries, bred by the late Victorian evangelical piety of the second half of the 19th century that swept over the country; a missionary with the one vision of changing hearts and circumstances, and she did! By her life, work, words and books she also shaped the ongoing mission of the Lord's people.

The spiritual sphere in the Dohnavur Fellowship was all-important. Holiness to the Lord engraved in her heart and this characterised her whole mission work. A pioneer who presented a most inspiring example of Christian love, courage and perseverance. Far above Ireland, England and India still sound her prayers; her books are an inspiration, a mine of wealth, and treasure rooms in which history and Christ's work in history are to be seen. In Dohnavur she showed us what she stood for. With the smallest means on a very little scale, she reached the greatest. It did not come from rational work, but was due to her understanding of the candescence of the Lord, his gracious incarnation on earth. Amy's theology was that she unfolded the incarnation of Christ under the theme of service. The Lord's dominion and sovereignty is service. The here-anchored Christology cannot be by-passed to the deaconship. God's servitude has consequences. The more you govern, the more you serve. By service, one governs, by renouncing one saves.

The question was raised, 'Did Amy ever make mistakes?' After her death in 1951, the Fellowship grew quite large. The young ones were getting older and government regulations tightened. The Fellowship was hemmed in by its own success, but could not cope with the fast-growing, changing attitudes in India. Amy and her colleagues of earlier days are the first to admit their own fallibility, as Nancy Robbins writes.²³⁹⁶ But are we in a position to criticise them? In their life with God, in their example of single-minded devotion as well as their undeviating sincerity in seeking, knowing and doing God's will, it is not to us to put the blame on them. On the contrary, we thank the Lord for having given us women like Amy Carmichael who changed life's values for little children and offered women a life of peace with God. Their spiritual maturity put them in a position far above many of their colleagues of today. Amy herself disliked any indulgence in personal publicity on the part of Christians. She rarely referred to herself in her publications but she will have an ongoing history. Her spirit seemed so indelibly to mark her 50-year-long work that her life and work still goes on.

2395. We can say that the Indian Church is a thinking Church, the European and North American Church a rationalistic Church, the South American Church a social Church, and the African Church a singing Church.

2396. In *Not Forgetting to Sing*, 108.

In Dohnavur the influence of Amy is now, after more than 60 years, still felt and many across the world feel inspired by her. She made people decide, which changed the current of their lives. Her influence exerted upon individual souls is still alive and operative. As a missionary she had no piles of cards signed, no numbers of converts. No! But one can feel and share the sense of the eternal in all her doing.²³⁹⁷ Dohnavur came to stand for a special kind of spirituality. In Davies's words:

It is in her gift for expressing her devotion to Christ and to His service that Amy Carmichael's name lives on. She took the best of a certain type of Keswick teaching – very different from that of the last few decades – and infused it with a blend of many Christian traditions and ways of thinking which she had derived, in the first place, from her links with Robert Wilson. For her, 'The Higher Christian Life' became a question of finding, to use well-worn phrases from childhood arithmetic, not the lowest common denominator but rather the highest common factor. I have spoken to some distinguished Christians who were alarmed at the books found in her bedroom when she died. But Amy made no secret of them in her account in *Gold Cord*: Our meetings were mainly in English. Except our Bible and the Pilgrim's Progress, there were no books in Tamil [...] Rolle, Suso and Tersteegen [...] Bishop Moule and Josephine Butler of our own time, and Thomas a Kempis, pupil of Grote and brother of the Common life. Samuel Rutherford and Père Didon, brothers in spirit though divided by the letter of the law, and the brave and burning souls of every age, these had left torches.²³⁹⁸

God's model biographies in the Bible faithfully portray sins and mistakes of judgement as well as acts of faith and obedience, and during writing I had in my mind to do the same. Amy, when she was young might have been an impulsive, daring Irish personality, but she lived a singularly even life in the mission field with the faith she had learned in her childhood as the thread which guided her through the maze of her mission life.

She never hesitated – after having talked with her Father – to take firm action when others had different opinions about the affairs of the Fellowship. It cost her dearly at times to refuse advice of others in cases she thought that she had to obey God's guidance. Never was she to say, 'It does not matter'. Her example of sacrifice and obedience inspired countless others, both in missionary service and in motherhood. A woman with a message, who knew experimentally Jesus Christ as the only rock and foundation, for herself as for the Dohnavur Fellowship. The task of intercession, establishing a daily prayer time – day by day she schooled herself in meditation and in reading the Scriptures. In her communion with God there was a holy intimacy. It was the simplicity of a child in faith.

She faced a lot of opposition, which she looked straight in the face, talking, discussing, pleading even with government officials and in courtrooms. Having set her hand to the plough she would not look back. What she undertook, she accomplished, not willing to be distracted from the road she saw before her. What she did, she believed was from God, and therefore she rather suffered all than disobey. She observed the people she met and sorted out thoroughly the things put on her way. 'It is only as we look and look, that we really see; and the more we know of the thing at which we look, the more we see in it.'²³⁹⁹ Eager always to know and to see more of Jesus Christ:

How much are our eyes able to see of our Lord Jesus? [...] I want more and more to see His goodness and His beauty, not vaguely, intermittently, but truly and continually, in His work, in His dear lovers, in His Book, in Himself.²⁴⁰⁰

2397. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013, in Dohnavur.

2398. In *Genius and Grace*, 206. I, the author, spent several days in her room and all the books there went through my fingers. I also wondered about the wealth of literature and the extent and wideness of her reading. Many a theologian cannot touch that!

2399. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 203.

2400. *Thou Givest ... They Gather*, 203.

She did not ask of others an obedience which she was not prepared to render herself to those above her in the Lord. In the exercise of authority in the Fellowship, she took a humble part when she sensed she might have hurt someone and was prepared to confess her impatience and when someone had to be punished she did it in a way that the victim saw she was most hurt in her heart. In small talk or the lighter side of life, she showed no interest. The experience near the fountain in Belfast on that memorial Sunday had definitely changed her life's values. She saw the very need of the people:

Sitting down on the wide low steps I looked long, looked till the scene was burnt upon my very soul. Would that I could dip my pen in liquid fire, and burn it upon yours.²⁴⁰¹

In the quiet hours Amy had been thinking over the matter of the general outlines of advance, of how the Dohnavur Fellowship should keep to Indian lines socially. She did not want the Fellowship to be run on a European line. 'Amma did not want English leadership after her death.' 'India should be run by Indian leadership.'²⁴⁰² In Amy's own words regarding the Dohnavur Fellowship: 'Always the missionary element is to the fore'.²⁴⁰³

She started a mission which has lasted more than 100 years. Aside from her mission experience as 'mother', counsellor, prayer leader, educator and facilitator, other influences on her missiology include her Biblical and theological convictions, and Keswick leaders. Thomas Walker, Hudson Taylor and others have helped to shape Amy's understanding of practical mission work. Thomas Walker also gave her deep insight into the Hindu culture and thinking. Mission work was in her opinion a fight. Missionaries are constantly engaged in spiritual warfare.²⁴⁰⁴ To be a match for Amy does not mean that we have to return to the situation as it formerly was in Dohnavur. When she forces us to make decisions, to go in her footsteps, that does not mean that we go 'in Amy's harness'. Amy has left us an unfinished heritage. She has started something that is pushing us ahead. Her heritage is for us a God-given task. Her heritage is a future, still for us in the inner closure of what she began.

Today, some of the accents she laid have shifted in a certain way. We cannot just continue in an uncritical way; it would not be fair to her. But I think that we have to take it on us anew and to rethink Amy's expressions and mission aim seriously. In mission work we have to keep on thinking of the essentials, knowing that the honour and the height of a Christian fall together with the depth of their fear of the Lord. They who do not fear the Lord, cannot control themselves. Without the fear of the Lord all mission work remains powerless. Man or woman, they personally are important for God, and as a member of Christ's people on earth we are here to praise and adore him.

■ Amy's significance

Seen in retrospect Amy's life's work had an appropriate air of inevitability. Nothing in her life seemed wasted and she was able to secure full scope for her remarkable work in India. Since the experience as a little child with her mother in a Belfast teashop, until she finally settled in Dohnavur, all her experiences educated her precisely for the great task ahead. Her life story is a moving story. But a moving story is worth little if it only moves the feelings. For us the question that matters is, how far out of its selfish track does it move our life into ways of sacrifice? Amy had prayed:

2401. *From Sunrise Land*, 49.

2402. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

2403. *The Continuation of a Story*, 45.

2404. In *The Continuation of a Story*, 'And so we go on, and must go on, in this attack upon the prince of darkness' (p. 45).

Oh, let us have done with limitations, let us be simply sincere! [...] But if the Call is a true Call from heaven, it will change to a song as she obeys.²⁴⁰⁵

Amy's life is so well pictured in the words of Bishop Creighton, which she wrote down in her own Bible: 'Life has no more to give than the opportunity of loving service'.²⁴⁰⁶ She lived this life.

Today's observers might well feel dismayed by her blend of humility and mysticism with a sense of unique, clear Biblical vocation. But does it not make authentic holiness people more truly human? She belonged to an era in which she was not exceptional in her claim to a divine commission. She, however, knew how and when to become flexible in practical issues, when she sought to embody the teaching of the Bible and some of the mystics in a settled missionary world and in a society which opposed her when she sought to bring the ideas received into practice. Amy made India her home and, according to the Indian scholar Kushwant Singh, who stated that a missionary who has cut off nearly all connections with her homeland and made the country of her work her home country, this is regarded as the best.²⁴⁰⁷

Humanly speaking, there will always be different opinions on Amy's life's work, from complete denial of anything good to nearly complete sainthood. It will always be easy to find evidence for a negative or positive judgement. We mislead ourselves if we concentrate overmuch upon a way of working and in what way her ideas took shape in Dohnavur. We see her as a woman in the school of Christ that has always been on earth since the days of the Apostles. I see in her a missionary with a high concept of God's majesty, which made her abandon herself having everything in Christ for life and death. A surrendered life, given in the hands of the Holy Spirit to be led by him and to give all her thoughts under the obedience of Christ. She gives us a wake-up call to see the missionary tasks of our own era. We have not yet reached the final; yet, thus far, our performances as 'players on God's mission chessboard' make us shrink for the holiness of God, to be found with those who were before us, at Christ's feet. All my further observations about her life's work in Dohnavur as well about her written work has to be seen under the here described flag. Myrtle Hill has observed:

Perhaps the greatest testimony to her leadership, however, is the fact that the community survived both the ending of British rule in India and her own death in 1951. Continuity was ensured by adapting both the ethos and the work of Dohnavur to the India of the late twentieth century, and although the fellowship members are now all of Indian nationality, the work still continues today.²⁴⁰⁸

Amy was rather afraid of publicity, 'as it opens up the way for pride'²⁴⁰⁹ but her existence could not remain hidden, being as she was from a rather well-known middle class family, with an outspoken church affiliation, influenced by pietistic teaching and shaped by a strict Presbyterian upbringing. She did not age when young. She was allowed to act her age and as a little child and teenager was raised in a happy family. Until the death of her father and the loss of the family mill business she knew little pain. She took life seriously but enjoyed it nevertheless. Her fantasy was very productive and growing older, she had access to her own childhood. One can say a symptom of a real grown-up life. During her whole life, she remained a private thinker.

She not only observed her own environment but she had a good overview of what was happening on the mission field and in the inner thoughts of the people. She had a strong urge for independence and

2405. *Lotus Buds*, 337 and 340.

2406. In the Bible that belonged to Amy. This information was given to the author by Brett Irwin of the Records Department, Access and Cataloguing, PRONI, Belfast, in October 2015.

2407. Kushwant Sing, in *Sunday*, 10. He also defended the cause of Christian missionaries who were ordered to leave India in the aftermath of the successful visit of the late Pope Paul II in 1986.

2408. In 'Amy Beatrice Carmichael', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

2409. *This One Thing*, 35.

kept off all that had not gone through her. She wanted to discover everything herself. As we have seen she had moments – Mount of Transfiguration experiences – that she was very near to God and God near to her, but, mostly, the transition quickly followed in this demon-possessed valley. The test of mountain-top experiences, of mysticism, of visions of God and of solitariness was when she was nearly daily confronted with the demon-possessed environment of actual circumstances. She was not living in the clouds but on earth. From the very beginning, she never described the sunny side of the work only. She was honest, able as she was to look beneath the surface and she refused to ‘modify truth’.²⁴¹⁰ In her work she was faced by winds of adversity, and overcame the enemy in the name of the one who had told her to go and conquer by climbing. Born to climb, she knew the Saviour around her, and the angels and the redeemed, all encouraged her to persevere.

In developing the structure of the Fellowship’s compound she showed a very practical mind. This is denied by others, who call her temperament ‘mystical and impractical’.²⁴¹¹ Through her Irish temperament and Scots covenanter blood she had inherited pioneering qualities which made her a natural leader. The upbringing in her mother’s home developed all that was practical. As an itinerant missionary her distinctive contribution was in the realm of pioneer evangelism among women in Japan and south India. Amy was a missionary who, to a greater or lesser degree, was a ‘product’ of her own cultural background, and nobody can undo that. This, however, can be said of all missionaries who by their sense and control influenced the forming of churches in their respective work fields. Many churches in mission areas reflect European or American denominational divisions. Tinnevely today is still dotted with parish churches, which look remarkably like Anglican parish churches in Victorian England. The church next to the Dohnavur compound is a clear example of such a church building. Many young churches and institutions are like David in Saul’s armour. However, in the shaping of the Dohnavur Fellowship we see that Amy tried to mark the Indian character in everything. In building style, clothing, the learning of the Tamil language, in keeping the caste rules for some children, in the naming of the children, in money affairs living in dependence on the Lord for funds, and for herself she took Indian citizenship. Her style of writing showed her long stay in India. Nowadays, fully under Indian leadership, the Fellowship continues its mission as it had 100 years ago. Of course, also here things are changing and computers are used by the staff members, but still Amy’s vision for the Fellowship is always the starting point of the work, and still the Lord is the ‘Unseen Leader’.²⁴¹²

On mission in general, and on the south Indian mission work in particular, it is difficult to state Amy’s influence with precision. Regarding the effectiveness of Amy’s missiology the difficulty is that her thinking on reaching the people with the Gospel and her practical involvement as shown in the Dohnavur compound is so locally situated and contemporary, that there is hardly any critical material related to her work.

Despite the limited information regarding her influence, it is unmistakable to discern that she has had influence in India’s Church and social circles, which were and are involved in the work to solve the problems of thousands of children in physical and moral danger. From the very beginning in her itinerary work for the evangelisation of south India she involved saved and consecrated Indian women. Doing the work in this way she was ahead of her time in knowing that India can only be effectively evangelised by its own people. Amy lived to see her dreams realised. We now see the outward work of

2410. See *Things As They Are*, 221.

2411. Elliot in *A Chance to Die*, 239: ‘It must have seemed to the men trying to monitor her activities, her disclaimers notwithstanding. And there were the less definable spiritual differences, such as an amorphous ecclesiology and a do-it-yourself creed’.

2412. Nesaruthina Carunia, in an interview with the author, 16 November 2013 in Dohnavur.

her life's work, but about its inner history and its crises she first had dealt with God through her prayers in the lonely nights in the Dohnavur bungalow. Her life was spent trying to change dreams into realities. Has the work been completed? No, not until India is Christ's.

Amy loved life, enjoyed the company of people, saw the beauty in God's creation. An inner-directed woman, living a restrained life in a modest way, eyes looking forward and a heart upward to the high, the holy, the heavenly. Her enthusiasm of life was somewhat hampered by Victorian conventions and boundaries, but Max Warren's opinion of Victorian missionaries – who with all their 'limitations thought big and built large'²⁴¹³ – is certainly true for Amy Carmichael, in many respects 'the ideal Keswick missionary'.²⁴¹⁴

Amy, an unlikely candidate for the life of a missionary, became a missionary princess at a time when mission fields were rich in such women even if some contemporaries felt that their days were already something of the past. God's servants come and go and most of their names do not appear in the chronicles of the church. Their names are written in heaven. Known unto God. Some, through their distinctive way of work, the influence of their writings, which both not only inform us, but also transform the thinking about mission, will last until the last person who knew them dies. Her work was unique, using innovative methods, done in a God-given time, and cannot be repeated now, but her mission view has not lost its primacy. That up to this day the demand for her books is ongoing, indicates that what she has to say is still of great value. Amy was pre-eminently such a missionary. Within evangelical circles throughout the first half of the 20th century her work and writings were well-known all over the world.

Her exclusive way of working in India attracted and at the same time could distract many. Her role in mission circles remained as ambivalent as it was powerful. Her critics found her too exclusive, although it was not easy to gainsay her magnetism. At the time she went to India her faith and mission were settled with God. The first 30 years encapsulated the religious seriousness of the outgoing 19th century. What Amy had heard and learned from God in Belfast, Keswick, Japan and Ceylon was the foundation for the 56 years in India. The element of consecutiveness until her death had not gone. Her gift was caring and management strategy, although – and here we see her connections with the Friends – she was suspicious of formal methods, since these could quench the Holy Spirit and become a substitute for direct experience of the Spirit of God. She always was looking for real spiritual life, for the vital touch of life:

There is plenty of preaching and praying and singing about it [*Calvary*]; Good Friday sees crowds in church for hours. There is most efficient machinery, wheels of all sorts and sizes are turning all the year round. But oh! for the vital touch of life, the sence that burns like a live cinder pressed into the flesh! It was for my sin He died, I crucified Him. [...] May God save us from 'paper-grace' and give us grace to live it, and to continue to live it.²⁴¹⁵

When we oversee the development of the Dohnavur Fellowship and the part Amy played in it, I come to the following observations:

- In a few words, we can define her life: a fully Christ-focused life. Her passion was to make the supremacy of Christ known in every walk of life. Lifelong she remained true to the words that were on the banner during the opening ceremony of the Welcome in Belfast, THAT IN ALL THINGS HE MAY HAVE THE PRE-EMINENCE. All her aims, all her ambitions, all her desires, all her pursuits, all can be gathered sharply and clearly into the focus of 'this one thing'. Is not this

2413. M. Warren, 'The Church Militant Abroad: Victorian Missionaries', in A. Symondson, ed., *The Victorian Crisis of Faith* (London: SPCK, 1970), 60.

2414. Eddy, *Pathfinders of the World Missionary Crusade*, 124.

2415. *Fragments that Remain*, 102 and 147.

making life just to focus on one thing only? Narrow, as in a certain sense Christ's life was narrow, this was her aim; narrow with regard to self-seeking, but broad as the love of God to all around her.²⁴¹⁶ A woman who had realised God, who lived in such a natural way with God, as Enoch in the old days. She displayed an independence of thought and courage to follow the dictates of her Master in obeying his Word, branded in her as if they were her own convictions. For some she was not easy to get along with and too independent. What came first in her choice was to live the Joshua life. It meant a daily turning to our Master with a 'Yes Lord' to everything, even to what went most 'against the grain',²⁴¹⁷ and always counting the cost of discipleship. In her books and poems she 'preached' discipleship and it was discipleship she practised. The tenor of Amy's life was layered with exile in her calling to evangelise the people in south India and to save children in danger. She leaves us with a high standard of a life marked by tenacity of purpose, by powers of endurance, and indefatigable perseverance. She will remain an authoritative voice for the cause of authentic missionary enterprise.

- It has been stated that missionaries who went to India in the 19th century 'failed to appreciate the Indian point of view'.²⁴¹⁸ Amy was a splendid exception. As a missionary from the West, she had no difficulty in unloading her cultural baggage. Despite facing a lot of opposition, she loved India and its people. Shaped intellectually in a conservative Ulster Victorian environment and having her own theological presuppositions, she believed that God's love had no boundaries. All the features of New Testament evangelism as shown in the first centuries were benchmarks for her shaping her spirituality and her work. Not hindered by ecclesiastical traditions she formed her 'own' Fellowship, a family closely knit together for sanctified living under the guidance of the unseen leader, and at the same time the Fellowship became a prominent voice, especially for righteousness and justice for little children in danger. One wonders how a woman could accomplish the founding and leading of the Dohnavur Fellowship in spite of physical frailty and the latter for 56 unbroken years. Did not her physical weakness mask an exceptional inner strength? Her comrade in this spiritual warfare, Lilius Trotter of the Algiers Mission Band, also had a frail constitution, which forced her to take several months off per year to regain strength. Both ladies, Amy and Lilius, were turned down as missionary candidates due to physical frailty and yet both lost sight of their physical limitations, proving in their lives that God's grace is made perfect in weakness.²⁴¹⁹ We also have to take into account that the way Amy did her work was unconventional and daring. She did not follow the mere missionary code and system imported from her home country. In starting the Dohnavur Fellowship she had no other example and having seen in her itinerary period what the result was of formal and nominal

2416. Here I had in mind Lilius Trotter's *Focussed. A Story and a Song*.

2417. *Edges of His Ways*, 17 July, 102.

2418. See Edwards, *Christian England*, 338: 'Among the Indians generally, suspicion far outweighed the acquiescence – it can scarcely be described as anything more active – of some of lower classes and occasional support of a far smaller number among the higher castes. Sometimes, too, there was open hostility to individual missionaries. From the British government in India the missionaries might look in general for approval extending at times active support, but an incautious step might produce immediate recriminations. [...] Indians observed that the missionaries when they destroyed the centuries-old fabric of custom had no idea about how to replace it from within the Indian tradition. [...] Here was the paradox of the British mission to India. It became well-intentioned but always wounded. It accepted many sacrifices. When independence came in 1947, probably there were two million British graves in India, most of them filled by disease. It contributed much, as independent Indians have often acknowledged. Yet even when it was being self-sacrificial, acting as conscience dictated in justice and kindness, bringing to India Christianity and many other benefits, the British presence in India was wounding because it was patronizing' (pp. 338 and 340).

2419. 'It is somehow reassuring to know that great leaders have feet of clay' (Huffmann Rockness, *A Passion for the Impossible*, 14).

Christianity, she chose a 'higher way', by listening to the Word of God and the inward voice of the Spirit. She often must have felt loneliness, because nearly no companion stood with her. With the Walkers was tremendous collegueship in the early days. The sense of loneliness came after Walker's death in 1912 and the death of her mother in 1913.

- The Dohnavur Fellowship is an interdenominational Fellowship. Relationship with other Christians is on a firm basis, personally and spiritually, if not ecclesiastically. Amy distinguished between principles, which were not open to alteration, and customs, which were subject to revision. Converts won through the hospital work or evangelistic enterprises were encouraged to join the church nearest to their homes. Amy often had the model of the Church in the first century in mind when the Dohnavur Fellowship took shape. 'Oh for a return to the days of the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, to obscurity, and poverty, and suffering, and shame, and the utter absence of earthly glory, and the winning of souls of a different make to the type thought sufficiently spiritual now! Oh for more signs of Apostleship – scars and the cross – the real cross – the reproach of Christ the Crucified, – no mitre here, but there the crown.'²⁴²⁰ What she thought of the existing denominational churches of her time is expressed in what she wrote: 'Breathe the air of the New Testament and the church of today appears to be structure of ice.'²⁴²¹ She had always encouraged indigenous church leadership, and discouraged reliance on overseas funding. What we see worldwide in our age is an increasing number of independent bodies of Christians, 'independent Christian fellowships' or 'base communities'. In a certain sense the Dohnavur Fellowship has given a successful example of a relationship between the main Christian confessions and an independent body of Christians. The interdenominational element of the Dohnavur Fellowship is also to be seen in the workers from overseas, who came from various different church backgrounds. The Fellowship was a testimony to the truth of the Keswick motto, 'All one in Christ Jesus'.
- Amy was a providential agent sent of God, to revive the truth and fullness of practical Christianity in southern India. Done chiefly by placing the motives and exhortations to a strict and regular devotion in their highest, clearest, and most affecting light, and laying down rules for the attainment of a habit of piety. God's grace seemed so natural to her. Amy's life showed a beautiful blending of the natural and the spiritual. She holds an outstanding position among Protestant missionaries, influenced by and familiar with many mystics, and it is very clear that she was not at cross-purposes with other missions. Her knowledge of the work of most noteworthy Christian mystics from the early Church to Madame Guyon in the 17th century and the works of other mystics opened in her new heights of inspiration. Her mysticism was related to her understanding of religion as an inward principle, grounded in the deeper nature of the soul, which moved her to seek after union with God. Amy learned by experience that the Holy Spirit reigned supremely and that he had come down through the centuries and guided Thomas à Kempis, Madame Guyon, Père Didon and many others, and reiterated the unchanging demand of a holy God: 'Be ye holy, for I am holy'. Amy's was a nature that took things deeply, and while her missionary calling and work had a strong appeal, it was sometimes too sacred to speak of, except between the Lord and herself.

2420. *Things As They Are*, 248. Cf. too pages 295–296: 'Oh the spiritual confectionery consumed every year in England! God open our eyes to see if we are doing what He meant, and what He means should continue'.

2421. *Meal in a Barrel*, 42. In *Things As They Are*, pages 115 and 116, she writes: 'Dead they are in apathy and ignorance and putrefying customs, and the false security that comes from adherence to the Christian creed without vital connection with Christ. [...] Over and over again it is told, but still it is hardly understood, that the Christians need to be converted; that the vast majority are not converted; that statistics may mislead, and do not stand for Eternity work. [...] God has His saints in India, men and women hidden away in quiet places out of sight, and some few out in the front; but the cry of our hearts is for more'.

- In Amy we see a missionary who always was very candid and forthright. She never drew people to herself, she drew them in God's nearness. She hardly involved herself in a theological debate, but focused on the 'one thing that is necessary'. She identified herself with the people who were the recipients of the Gospel and was continually in dialogue with them. Adopting indigenous methods, enculturation and contextualisation was done by her through her dressing, her lifestyle and language study, the structures of the House of Prayer and the houses where the people lived. As a lover of the mystics, as she herself had a number of ascetic features, the children were not brought up on the thought of the Middle Ages, nor of the 20th century either, but she saw a happy life for them when the children's walk 'were all Emmaus walks'.²⁴²² Meanwhile she was so real as Amma, a woman of flesh and blood, who was happy when the children were happy and who was hurt when she saw others in need and distress. As a missionary she exuded a rare blend of earthliness and holiness; we see a missionary fully immersed in life's practical realities of everyday living and meanwhile totally engaged in assimilating those realities through an eternal perspective. She used her practical skills and meanwhile shared the fragrance of Christ, which spoke to the Indian people very powerfully. Her contribution to mission is that she brought missions to the centre of the worldview of many Christians, so that God could be glorified among the nations.²⁴²³
- Amy's mission view is primarily derived from her Biblical and theological convictions. God had led her and her whole ministry was strictly Biblical. She never put aside her Presbyterian upbringing, although later on she was soaked in Quaker thoughts. She was more interested in the Church universal, but basic reformed principles can be traced in her writings and thinking. Her old Presbyterian, often pietistic conception of Scripture focused on a soteriological reading and explanation of the text. The Keswick tradition helped to guide her strong will and determination in her mission to the children of southern India. She did not remain silent; she sounded the alarm. An aspect of her character was her serenity, an authentic mark of the evangelical Irish Presbyterians. In her talking to God, there was no difference in tone from that which she used to everyone else. She was at home in the realm of God as she was in her daily work in the Dohnavur Fellowship. Natural in everything, there was no barrier between the spiritual and the natural world. Her spirituality offers to our contemporary world a new awareness of the value of community against the increasing individualistic tendency of this 21st century. So many are involved in a stream of activities, but lack contemplative spiritual practices and a real involvement in the lives and thoughts of the people they work among. Compromise? Not a word in her dictionary. Frivolities were not touched and like Thomas Walker she went after higher things.²⁴²⁴ For herself and from others she expected utter holiness, crystal pure.²⁴²⁵ New recruits learned from her in 1894 to consider the cry and the call, to welcome all tests of whatever sort before they crossed the seas.

2422. Cf. *Ploughed Under*, 134.

2423. Cf. J. Piper's *Let the Nations Be Glad. The Supremacy of God in Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), who has opened the eyes of many that mission work is not the ultimate goal of the church. 'Worship is. [...] Worship, therefore, is the fuel and the goal of missions' (p. 17). Piper's plea for a God-centred, Christ-exalting mission has been realised in Amy's Dohnavur Fellowship. After having spoken of Amy's self-denial, Piper goes on: 'God is most glorified in us, when we are most satisfied in him. And the supremacy of that glory shines most brightly when the satisfaction that we have in him endures in spite of suffering and pain in the mission of love' (p. 107).

2424. She wrote about Thomas Walker, 'for that great, old, unfashionable word, "Puritan" was one he held in honour. He would never have felt it necessary to apologize for leaning that way, and such was the crystalline quality of his conscience that anything once seen as the will of God for him was followed to the end in fidelity; but judge others he did not' (*When God Came*, 10).

2425. She wrote in Japan in 1894, 'If we are not clean when we bear the vessels of the Lord, we may profane His Holy name in the things which we hallow. Our very service a defiling thing'.

- Amy wanted to be among people and her sympathetic nature brought her easily into contact with young and old. But more, that sympathy bound her to people. With an open mind to each new situation, she made a conscious effort to balance her impressions with facts and emotion with objective consideration. She only trusted the Holy Spirit to provide guidance. In looking upon the Holy Spirit, for Amy God's agenda became a reality in her context in that he prepared the way for evangelism. The Church as the body of Christ was more important for her than denominational differences. The 'one thing only' was so important, that where she wanted to go she would go, not afraid to blaze the trail. 'Our God asks for faithfulness, not for compromise: *Sow not thy field with mingled seed*'.²⁴²⁶ In Amy, we meet a person who felt things very deeply. She rejoiced greatly in seeing great deeds, and felt emotional pain deeply. Frustrations had much to do in conforming her into God's image. Suffering: she knew what it was, but even more the sweet consoling fellowship in that suffering, revealing to her the power of Christ's resurrection. Next to the blessings, the Dohnavur Fellowship experienced opposition. After new converts had been baptised or after the dedication of the new hospital, unexpectedly the devil retaliated as was seen in the sudden death of new converts or, in case of the hospital, 12 workers from Dohnavur falling ill at the same time. But generally the dominant note in the Fellowship was a note of happiness.
- Dohnavur had grown into something distinctive under the leadership of Amy, who knew the meaning of pragmatic governance. She was averse to views that lacked a Biblical foundation and did not shy away from controversial decisions when necessary for the children. Always crystal clear on her fundamental issues, she said and did when she was faced with 1001 decisions what she thought was right. She was one of whom Custis spoke: 'His [*God's*] image bearers are agents of those life-transforming forces'.²⁴²⁷ She had surrendered her life to God, but this surrendered life became the assertive. Wholly given herself, she always kept true to her once given promise 'Yes Lord', and surrendered to nothing else than to her Master's will. Waiting upon the Lord is one of its main features. A nice trait in Amy's work was that she wrote about her experiences with God and with the people. These written records are a wealth of understanding of the real Amy. In reading about her fellowship with God the sparks of piety in the reader's mind will soon kindle into a flame. She was a lover of nature, and loved to dwell in the Forest House. How she loved the beauty of her Lord's dear handiwork, coupled with his direct dealing with her in her heart. Often the living God had spoken to her when her eyes were open, and ears attuned to the sound of so many living creatures, or she was submerged by the beauty of a place; all this was healing and quieting to her.
- By any standard of measurement, Amy's achievements have been judged to be remarkable and, in many aspects, she was clearly ahead of her time. Not trained in any academic discipline of missiology but in the school of the Holy Spirit, the gifted Irish missionary demonstrated an intrinsic grasp of fundamentals of missiology. She defined her missionary priorities, of which the drawing of people to Christ was the first one. As a missionary with a surrendered self she went into a creative self to save others. With the slightest means, she achieved in Dohnavur the greatest in a very small location. A fundamental mastery of the Tamil language and knowledge of the Hindu thought and culture, she stood firm in discussion with Brahman scholars; in the education system in Dohnavur she did not alienate the children from their Indian roots. Before the term *enculturation* was used in missionary thinking, she introduced and developed an indigenous Christian fellowship with many Indian characteristics, even in architecture, dress, in the names of the children and buildings, in all her writings we see 'an Indian flavour'. The startling impact of Amy's books opened the horizon of many people in the West about the conditions of women and girls in India's society, and the strong Biblical views on missionary calling and the appeal for holiness and

2426. *Ploughed Under*, 147.

2427. James, *Half the Church*, 184.

endurance in suffering awakened dormant Christians and churches to new possibilities. Her emphasis on the 'one thing necessary' kindled renewed interest in carrying out the great commission. However, she never allows us to lose sight of the fact that the children were the core of the work.

- Amy's leadership skills were rooted in her intimate friendship with God. She trusted her God in everything and loved what was most precious to him. She was *that* person who was led by the will and the love of God. A person faithful against all odds who did not shrink back and who was ready to let the people know that she went for the 'one thing necessary'. She was the person through whom God performed his deeds in Dohnavur. In quiet trust she could work night and day for the children. That she was dubbed 'the hare', as some mentioned, is not far from the truth, but also as a 'Maria' she could sit at Jesus's feet to be in his presence and to listen to his voice. That was Amy: a leader who, once she knew the mind of the Lord, did in obedience what the Lord had said and rested in the arms of him whom she had grown to love and to trust with her whole heart. Did she not make any mistakes? Was she perfect? She was one who wanted to be in his will, and was a person who had been met by God, and it was *that* where her authority came from to be active and serve the Lord, often in a new way, and daring.²⁴²⁸
- In Amy we meet a passionate spirit tempered by love. People who met Amy were overwhelmed by her love for others. The love of God radiated from her like a power magnet, touching so many lives and irresistibly pointing towards Jesus. Those who knew her personally agree that to a marked degree, love was the element in which she lived and it was the overall impulse in her work. Being a lover of Jesus Christ, it was this love that accounted for the catholicity of her spirit to drop the denominational labels and to have fellowship with all who fear the Lord. Children saw in her a person you can trust. In the words of Star who wrote her first impressions of Amy after having met her: 'And the spring overflowed in love for that Ammal in the sari, and as I looked at her I knew that if only I could go to her, she would have a place in her heart for me.'²⁴²⁹ Also adults had this impression and she was for them 'the child catching Ammal'. For Amy her worst suffering was her anguish when occasionally she would lose a child she thought she had rescued, sometimes from her very doorstep. First-hand she saw the huge danger of innocent children exploited for sexual purposes in the temples, growing up under conditions far from the eyes of most missionaries and dignitaries at that time. Indirectly in her work she helped to write the laws, effected in 1948, that set innocent children free. She was a woman who saw 'deep'. She not only saw and heard many things, but she was able to judge and to bring her reflections in written words. Amy felt for life at the margins and her empathy was with suffering people – and with suffering animals – and from this sprang her readiness to identify herself with and support those who suffer.
- The main goal of her work she saw was transmitting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of India, as she herself explains: 'For always the missionary element is to the fore.'²⁴³⁰ The Dohnavur children should become real messengers of Jesus Christ. She waged war against everything that somehow would divide her work from her goal. In her we see that getting people and also the Dohnavur children to 'make decisions' and cross the line between death and new life was vital. In this, she fully agreed with Thomas Walker. Today many Christians are frustrated, longing for a deeper relationship with God. They want to make an impact for the Kingdom of God and to share their faith in a way that works, but are unsure how to do it. Stuck in a rut, they are oblivious to how different their Christian lives could be. Amy's way of

2428. The Carmichael's family motto, after Amy's grandmother Jane Dalzell. The name Dalzell came from the Scottish word meaning 'I dare' ('To have sufficient courage for any purpose' in Noah Webster's dictionary).

2429. *Ploughed Under*, 31.

2430. *The Continuation of a Story*, 45.

working is helping people to discover the fruitful lives and intimate relationship God intended for them. In her life we see a bracing combination of vigorous theology and first-hand observation of what is happening at the front line and we witness a remarkable treasure, which points to God's power and purposes. Amy told the gritty truth, even about mission. Vulnerability and truth build trust; after all, our God is a God of truth. Notwithstanding the opposition her actions evoked and the barriers she faced, she tried to make people make decisions and cross the line between death and new life.²⁴³¹ She knew what she wanted and, when necessary, was not afraid to rock the boat of the missionary establishment when she felt her cause was right. And her deeply anchored Christology could not leave out the diaconal work. Christ came to serve and not to be served. What Amy held on to was Calvary love and she focused on the sacrificial *agapè* love of Christ and living that out in her life. She personified the spirit of missions with a social conscience.

- As well as her writing about her missionary work, her devotional books to this day inspire countless men and women around the globe into deeper love for their Saviour and a hunger to follow him more completely. The 35 published books exhibit a deep, mystical relationship with God and great creativity. I see as one of the most important lessons that Amy's life, her personality, and her work and writings teach us is how to know Christ in the fellowship of his sufferings. This, despite her own physical weakness – she suffered from neuralgia, a disease of the nerves. Today we would perhaps call it fibromyalgia, and that declares her weakness, which caused her sometimes to stay in bed for weeks. For the last twenty years of her life she also had the sufferings being an invalid due to the accident in 1931. The issue of suffering is an item in Amy's missiology that she took serious. The world she lived in mandated that suffering be looked at with eyes that saw the connections to the suffering of Jesus: 'Captain beloved, battle wounds were Thine, Let me not wonder, if some hurt be mine; Rather, O Lord, let my deep wonder be That I may share a battle wound with Thee.'²⁴³² Amy had a tremendous amount of experience in itinerating evangelistic enterprise, in Japan and Ceylon as well as in India. She showed that reaching people on the spot is the most effective way of doing mission work. The example she gave us in disciple making is still effective today. By doing her work in the itinerating team she made an impression on many in her time. Was not her life a life full of vision fuelled by prayer? Seeing below the surface still her eyes were drawn upward, from where her help came.²⁴³³ In her books she kept the balance; she did not gloss over sin, nor did she omit the failures of one or another, yet she wrote with a note of triumph as she traced the spiritual growth in several Christians. She never pushed herself into the limelight, and reading her books we see a missionary, like so many others, faithfully doing the work the Lord had laid on her shoulders.²⁴³⁴ Amy found a way of combining the spiritual with the actual, and of contextualising her vision of evangelism and practical work, which was apt and truly functional.
- I picture her as typically British, though she was a blend of Irish and English. When you read her story, yes, she could take it! She could take the hardship. She was not a sissy by any stretch of the imagination. She endured abuse on the mission field, sickness, all kinds of administrative problems,

2431. Cf. Geraldine Taylor-Guinness: 'Where are those willing, for His sake to put their lives into this work? It is lonely, far away and difficult: it is urgent, satisfying, and near to His heart'. In G. Taylor-Guinness, *The Call of China's Great North West of Kansu and Beyond* (London: CIM, 1923).

2432. In *Rose From Brier*, 34. Cf. also Brewington, *The Sacred Place of Exile*, 31–33.

2433. Cf. Psalm 121:1.

2434. Cf. what she wrote, 'Humdrum we have called the work, and humdrum it is. There is nothing romantic about potters except in poetry, nor is there much of romance about missions except on platforms and in books. Yet "though it's dull at whiles", there is joy in the doing of it, there is joy in just obeying. He said "Go, tell", and we have come and are telling, and we meet Him as we "go and tell" (*Things As They Are*, 24).

and harassment from local authorities. She somehow was able to keep her perspective about all of the hassles and tribulations she had to deal with in order to fulfil her call.

- She was conscientious. She knew the Indian mind and could understand their way of thinking and doing.²⁴³⁵ In learning the language and culture of the people among whom she worked, she could identify herself with women and children, especially. Amy respected the people and their culture. In Japan as well as in India she was always careful to observe the wishes of the people. The culture as such in its resistance against the living God and its sinfulness she judged as anti-power against Christianity and salvation, but the adherents of another religion she treated with respect, even in her contact with the children. She very sharply saw the position of women, often being seen as 'things', less than animals. Through her knowledge of the culture she knew that sexism was the root of all the oppression. She would not express herself in this way, and the forms of oppression having many varieties, she led the Dohnavur girls to maturity, as women as God meant them to be.
- Amy had a holistic approach to mission work. Since her understanding of salvation she had always been attracted to the needy and the poor. In what she told from the Scriptures there was a distinct emphasis on practical theology: the application of age-old Scriptural truths in the arena of everyday life. The relationship of social concern to evangelism, an issue largely ignored by Keswick, was taken up by her.²⁴³⁶ Christ always, she found out, was drawn to those who could not help themselves. She was always ready to 'go into the pit', sit next to someone others would evade. She had learned the love of Christ.²⁴³⁷ Nesaruthina said 'Amy used every opportunity she had to meet people and give them the good news. A person never left Amy without hearing of God and of the Gospel'. She even sang with the children and recited Bible verses before Government officials, and another old woman said that 'she believed that faith in Christ should be seen in action'. Balaleela Carunia of the DF wrote, 'She never separated the non-Christian from Christians. She shared equal love and helped them always'.²⁴³⁸ Her evangelistic approach was direct and heart searching. Her attitude was to serve and not to be served. She was transparently honest in seeking only the glory of God. The award of the Kaiser-I-Hind medal was a 'shock' for her. 'Would it be unpardonable rude to ask to be allowed not to have it?' Her Master had always been despised and rejected, not kindly honoured. She absolutely did not want to be in the picture. There is a strong current of rationality in her missionary programme. It was known that in her contact with representatives of other religions she could talk with them on equal level and talking with them in their own language she could defend the Christian belief in the way Paul dealt with the scholars in Greece.²⁴³⁹ She was very realistic. Not only the soul but the care for the body was essential for her. You cannot 'pitchfork souls into heaven' she said when some made the remark that in building all the nurseries she was not doing evangelistic work. When the boys' work required building new nurseries and workshops, she had her answer ready:

2435. When Amy wanted to understand what really was in Ponnamal's heart, she confessed that it was often so difficult for her really to understand the Indian way of thinking. 'For the Indian mind rarely recognizes that which ours seizes upon as the crucial thing' [*Ponnamal*, 10].

2436. See O. Barclay's comment on Keswick's ignorance on social issues, in Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Britain*, 93.

2437. Cf. 'If I refuse to allow one who is dear to me to suffer for the sake of Christ, if I do not see such suffering as the greatest honour that can be offered to any follower of the Crucified, then I know nothing of Calvary love' [*If*, 57]; 'If my interest in the work of others is cool; if the burdens of others are not my burdens too, and their joys mine, then I know nothing of Calvary love' [*If*, 59].

2438. These statements in Matthews, 'The Theological Contributions of Amy Carmichael', 34.

2439. See Acts 17.

‘Well, one cannot save and then pitchfork souls into heaven – there are times when I heartily wish we could – and as for buildings, souls (in India, at least) are more or less securely fastened into bodies. Bodies cannot be left to lie about in the open, and as you cannot get the souls out and with them separately, you have to take them both together.’²⁴⁴⁰ Mission work, in her own words, is ‘not what we are going to say or sing, or even feel or pray – *but what we are going to do*.’²⁴⁴¹

- She stands out as a shining example of a missionary who had great concern for the lost. She did not give the impression of being of more importance than others. At first in modest Quaker dress, and as well in Japan as in India in local dress, she was the sinner saved by grace, never putting herself in the forefront. Was not she ‘Nobody’ in the early *Scraps*? Out of compassion she was prepared to identify herself with the people she met and lived with. When she had an opportunity to speak to the people, she never used an abundance of words or evaded the most important things. Directly she took the people in her talking about the Gospel to the heart of all things, the Cross. We see this already in her letter to her mother after she had heard the call ‘Go Ye’. Nothing could stop her to convey the good news. Until the end of her life her main concern was that those around her, children and elderly people, had a saving knowledge of Jesus. Her humility showed her to be a real servant of the Lord.
- Since the appearance of her first published works, her talent as a writer has been recognised. Long before worldwide digital social connections existed, she already had a wide social network. From and to Dohnavur letters went and came from across all over the world. By the worldwide spread of her books, many in various translations – many of them reprinted as late as the second decade of the 21st century – her devotion to Christ, her mission views and way of working have become known all over the world since her first official publication in 1895. Also in many devotional books, her name is mentioned. As a result of her highly influential *Things as They Are: Mission Work in Southern India* (1903) and *Gold Cord* (1932), Westerners were alerted to the evils in the Hindu temple system and played a key role in the eventual downfall of evil practices and opened the way for legal actions. She looked upon her sufferings in a positive way, as battle wounds and honours gained in the service of her Saviour. This cannot be better explained than in her own words, ‘Give me the love that leads the way, | The faith that nothing can dismay | The hope no disappointments tire, | The passion that will burn like fire; | Let me not sink to be a clod: Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God.’²⁴⁴²
- Amy so valued singing. She wrote numerous new songs for the children and taught them well-known mission songs of their time. It is a desideratum for our time to revive the old songs, to get God’s people to sing the mission mandate. When vital elements in Christian worship are not heard anymore, they will disappear out of the memory of Christians and will not anymore be mentioned in their prayers.
- She was practical and she dared to do new things.²⁴⁴³ She, who knew that it was easier to put a text on the wall than to live in the spirit of it, always sought for the reality in life. She had certain qualities that made her perfect for being the Amma of the DF. She could look over ‘the borders’, had the creative inclusiveness of spirit, was faithful to the fundamentals of faith and did not switch her convictions, all wholly combined with a far-ranging vision. To supply the daily food for all the children, she bought land to produce rice and vegetables. Today the Dohnavur Fellowship occupies most of the land in Dohnavur. She created job opportunities for women and encouraged women to be practical, but she also implemented her restrictions. In Nesaruthina Carunia’s words, ‘Amy was

2440. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, 213.

2441. In *Things As They Are*, 56.

2442. *Gold Cord*, X; *Toward Jerusalem*, 104.

2443. As J.E. Williamson says about her mission skills: ‘She “built with love and grit. Grit is love that continues”’ (Amy Carmichael, 136).

strict to discipline the children. She did not let them read worldly books, she did not take them to cinema theatres, she did not allow them to dance to Hindu tunes and she had many other such restrictions, she did not like to exaggerate things and colour them to suit the needs of people. [...] She would write nothing for the sake of pleasing readers but only the truth.²⁴⁴⁴

- Raised with Victorian concepts of helping the underprivileged and imbued with the attitude of the one who said: 'I am among you as one who serves', she achieved satisfaction in her work and a sense of freedom and independence. Amy's creation, the Dohnavur Fellowship, has become a model of Christian living. Far from perfect, yet the growing community has few parallels in our modern time for the unity, prayer and love that emanated from it. Amy saw the first centuries of Christianity, not yet divided by dogmatic and denominational differences, as a model. With the Fellowship she shaped a community close to that mentioned in Acts 2:42. She was also a kind of role model for single women missionaries abroad. Her whole life demonstrated an approach to mission that intricately weaved Christian religion and knowledge, spirituality and social action. Without hesitation, I see her as a great missionary, in a sense that she is great in love as shown in her life as Love Unlimited.
- It is time to get a picture of Amy's contribution to the missionary cause. Her pioneering contribution to the missionary movement has been unknown too long in broader missionary circles and deserves to be better known. Now, at the commemoration of her birth 150 years ago and seeing with great concern the worldwide impact of missions nowadays, Amy can encourage and guide us, to 'keep climbing'. Until now, she has been looked upon by many as a late Victorian narrow-minded, old-fashioned missionary, following the paternalising British model. On the contrary, she did not follow the beaten track, but she was ahead of many in her time. Of course, she is a representative of the outgoing 19th century, raised in a sheltered atmosphere, and this may be the reason why she sheltered the children in Dohnavur, and also the readers of her books, from all that was offensive. However, she already innovated in India the things that we take for granted in our time, before they were generally accepted in missionary circles. Some of these innovations were: the thorough mastery of the language, which she accomplished through the straightforward way of evangelising the people. The acquisition of the knowledge of the culture and the religion of the people among whom she worked and the obtaining of the knowledge of the literature of these people, the teamwork with local people and even their training for leadership. She never made it easy and never offered them an alternative. She developed a disciplined and methodical co-leadership. Before the word was invented they had already practised 'multi-tasking' as an executive model, in which she showed a patience and a trust in the sovereignty of a loving God. She did not neglect the social aspect of mission work. We can say it was in her DNA to help in a physical and spiritual way. In 1942, she got a book, titled *A Colony of Mercy, Social Christianity At Work*, and she wrote on the first page: 'A dear old book, beloved a long way old. Aunts in Portaferry long ago'.
- The most characteristic note of Amy's life was: a whole-life devotion to her Saviour, Jesus Christ. To be so transparent in her life that Christ was seen through her, and that His love and life might be reflected in her. Through her work we gain a deeper understanding of the importance of trusting God for provision, guidance and protection and discover how to trust in God and develop an attitude of contentment. His watchful care was sufficient. Foundational to her view of living as a Christian, was that every day she took time to read and study the Bible. A vital part of Dohnavur Fellowship life was the constant recurring reminder of things unseen. The finance meetings were 'angels meetings', the hospital the place of 'Heavenly Healing' and the hospital

2444. In Matthews, 'The Theological Contributions of Amy Carmichael', Appendix, XII.

ward the 'room of kindness'.²⁴⁴⁵ New to many was that in her concept, the natural is sacrificed to the spiritual, but in dealing with the natural, it is in a natural way soaked with the spiritual. God delivers from sin and she prayed that the Dohnavur children with body and soul would present their life to God to be transformed into a spiritual life of obedience. In a natural way, she turned from the things below to the things unseen. She never argued, never sought to force her viewpoint on others; her written work and deeds speak for themselves.

In all she did, she was driven by a higher purpose and by a sense of urgency based on a belief in the imminent return of Christ. She valued time, never losing a minute by idle business, but she used all her God-given capacities towards good stewardship. She had her own ideas of ruling the DF and was not easily inclined to allow any outside forces to monitor her. It tells us something of her greatness that, when necessary, she was prepared to be led by others. In this process, she joyfully took the cross and followed him who had said: 'Follow Me'.²⁴⁴⁶ It is the climbing that counts.

Love was her sovereign preference for Christ and she identified herself with Christ's interests for others. Her interpretation of sanctification was her aspiration after unbroken communion with God. Visitors to Dohnavur sensed a familiarity with God and Christian living in actual life. She was living witness to the realities of Christian experiences. In the actual realities of daily south Indian life could be seen in the first half of the 20th century her 'extra ordinary self-sacrifice under the roughest of exteriors'.²⁴⁴⁷

■ A faithful steward

In these pages we look back with love and thankfulness. In mission circles and in our memory she will remain one of God's faithful servants, whose greatest desire it was to summon young and old to Christ Jesus. She lived out a life of love. This is the story of Amy Carmichael, the woman with the brown eyes, whose radiant life in Dohnavur is best portrayed with the Indian word for such a woman: *darshan*, the blessing or benediction imparted by the mere sight or physical presence of a great soul. Her history is a supreme assertion of the supernatural in ordinary life. She was a traveller who, starting on her journey with a clearly marked and time-worn route before her, found herself checked by the touch that is not human and turned to a way, very difficult and hard to find, that led to a destination that she had not figured out herself.²⁴⁴⁸ However, the time and the things described here will never be only the years and the things that are gone, but will give us the encouragement and the perspective that the worldwide work done today by God's faithful servants will not be in vain, for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever'.²⁴⁴⁹

The two paradigms of mission work that Amy emphasises are the total dependence on the Lord and the systematic approach as can be seen in the Dohnavur premises. Amy in all her work, to keep on the right track to the end of her life, kept her gaze fixed on God. Her joy was in God's company and her heart pure in its devotion to the will of God. If ever there was one who fed on the Word of God, it was she, and that Word never failed her. She was committed with a handful of seed, and the fruit of what she

2445. Cf. *Though the Mountains Shake*, 112, 26, 139 and 19.

2446. Cf. John 21:8 'Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go'.

2447. Chambers, *Still Higher For His Highest*, 121.

2448. Cf. Sanders, *Sainte Chantal*, 1.

2449. Hebrews 13:8 (RSV).

sowed was seen in the lives of hundreds of Indian children who worshipped the Lord and were Christ obsessed. It was done in such a way as to be put as a seed in the earth herself, the Lord's way with her to see much fruit. Poor indeed in this world's goods; the money that came to her was given by the Lord and all was used for the children. But she was so rich in the treasure that she laid up in Heaven. There she had investments of unsurpassed value, and she looked eagerly for the interest that would accrue from that deposit. It is paying off up to this very moment. Her God was and is so faithful!

What is the secret of her consecrated life and far-reaching influence? She had a God-controlled life and followed her Master as a disciple who never flagged for herself, and with an intensity of purpose she made many in India and abroad see both the reality and the power of real Christian religion. And the legacy? So many lives were touched and changed irrevocably.²⁴⁵⁰ Amy has left behind a memory, which shall not die, and a work for God which cannot be destroyed. In her work in Dohnavur, as well as in her books she provides us with some cornerstones for a modern accountable mission.

Her fight against the battalions of darkness is still going on. A new generation has to be informed of what is really happening behind the scenes. The battle against evil and the extent of the grief, suffering and need of so many women and girls worldwide is still going on. In Fuller's *The Wrongs of Indian Womanhood*²⁴⁵¹ is written 'The public so soon forgets, and needs to be reminded so often [...] to remember the wrongs of Indian womanhood', and in the margin Amy wrote in big letters 'Yes'.

By breaking an evil tradition, in attacking the devil's territory and to accomplish her vision, Amy remained true to God and knew that she was not the designer of her destiny. She had heard the call of God, obeyed and realised what he wanted her for. Started in a pioneer time and area, it nowadays needs to re-tool the existing structure to prepare and to strengthen the Fellowship for the 'battle' in present times. She nicely combined both aspects of the Gospel, the verbal proclamation and a Gospel ministry of justice. The test of her life was not what she could show at the end of her life, but faithfulness as a steward of the mysteries of God in Dohnavur life as it was at that time. 'This one thing', to glorify God, was for her the glory of God manifested in the redeemed lives of the Dohnavur children. In pure devotion to God she did her work in the actual human south India conditions, learning to live the life hidden with Christ. She never talked of success, never did she put herself in the forefront; she evaded the cameras – she even erased her image in a photo of a missionary group – and never allowed people who visited Dohnavur to focus on her, all glory belonged to the crucified and the risen Lord!

Her life of faith was not lived in a monastic way, and did not consist of acts of great self-denial and heroic virtues, but of all the daily conscious acts of her life. She was not called to success, but to faithfulness. Still today many who have known her love her, because their love was born of deep respect for Amy's life of absolute transparent sincerity, of selfless devotion and unreserved consecration. Today there is something very moving in experiencing the love many have for Amma in Dohnavur, a love still firm as a rock.

Through the work of Amy and some other concerned people, temple prostitution was banned towards the end of Amy's life. Yet today the practice is going on, for it was never really enforced. The horrific sexual perversion of children, both girls and boys, is still a blight upon the great land of India. In

2450. While writing this section the present author heard of the legacy of one of his colleagues, Sr. Rie Staal, missionary to the Turkana people in Kenya in the 1970s and 1980s. She died in Kenya and was buried among the Turkana people in Lokichar [Kenya]. A young theology student from Turkana told us in 2015 that in Turkana people talk with great love about Sr. Staal who out of love for Christ and the people gave a future to the blind and the crippled people, so they could earn a living for themselves.

2451. Fuller, *The Wrongs of Indian Womanhood*, 13.

the 21st century violence and oppression against women manifest themselves in molesting, stripping, rape, eve-teasing, kidnapping, abduction, domestic violence, wife battering, dowry harassment, dowry deaths, cruelty to women, driving them to suicide and in several other forms.²⁴⁵² In Amy's time:

[A] woman was considered a completely inferior species, inferior to the male, having no significance, no personality. Socially, she was kept in a status of utter subjugation, denied any right, suppressed and oppressed; she was further branded as lacking the ethical fibre.²⁴⁵³

Amy's courageous efforts to rescue children from sex trafficking was a shining example in a spiritual dark land with the dark deeds which ages ago had invaded the Hindu religion or in Amy's words 'the smoking hell of battle'.²⁴⁵⁴ God's vision for women unlocked that potency, unleashing, at that time, an unparalleled message of hope for tiny children and opening for them opportunities to grow into mature, healthy, God-fearing girls and boys. It gave them a real future as they were prevented from living and dying in places where human suffering, female oppression and sexual exploitation – in Amy's own words, 'such unutterable wrong [...] should be swept out of the land without a day's delay' – sink to unimagined lows. As Amma to her children, combining a heart being moved to deeper feelings, she helped many to understand themselves today in a world that has changed so much and so radically and where people see a great number of the old values and certainties fall away, and to care about contemporary mission issues.

The little girl in Millisle who prayed for brown eyes had seen throughout her life that God hears prayer. The children whom God had saved and brought to Amy are but a drop in the sea. Despite the strong opposition she faced, despite the proud strong huge temple walls, she was confident that it was the Lord's right to reign in the world, also in the utmost south of India. In the face of it all she was in her Father's will, and 'it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones perish'. Although new laws have been implemented that forbid the trafficking of children, Amy already knew that more was needed:

But let it be remembered that good though (we trust) the now nearly approaching change will be, it will not end the evil, it will not end the need for the work we are doing. No blessed full stop to this work is in view yet, nor can it be till India itself in its inward parts is renewed and purified.²⁴⁵⁵

Travel on several highways and secondary roads brings the visitor in one and a half hours from Tuticorin to Dohnavur. Along the road, in the villages and towns, the temples proudly tower above the houses as bastions of idol worship. Still the words *Salvation* and *Praise* are above the entrance of one of Dohnavur's moon gates. The outside world has never been without confusion and grotesque sins. Reading through Isaiah 60:18 you read, 'Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders'. But the selective abortion of females – 'a genocide of epic proportions'²⁴⁵⁶ – and child trafficking is still going on secretly in south India and many boys and girls fall into the hands of adults who exploit them. Sex trafficking of little girls into a life of prostitution is a booming business and many innocent young women are lured into the brothels for the pleasure of many Western 'holiday'-goers. The church has to raise her voice over this commercialised practice of shame.²⁴⁵⁷

2452. Cf. G. Mukerjee, *Dowry Death in India* (Delhi: Indian Publishers and Distributors, 1999).

2453. S. Ruhela, *Understanding the Indian Women Today: Problems and Challenges* (Delhi: Indian Publishers and Distributors, 1999), 47–48 [in Matthews, 'The Theological Contributions of Amy Carmichael', 18].

2454. *Things As They Are*, 3.

2455. *The Continuation of a Story*, 7.

2456. In James, *Half The Church*, 29.

2457. See James's plea in *Half The Church* (introduction and Chapter 1, 29–43).

Today many young people work as slaves in industries making clothes for the Western markets. Still the 'garments of praise' are not worn by everyone. Here Amy worked for more than 50 years, a woman used by God for a special task and the Lord bestowed on her special gifts and graces to lay the foundation of the Dohnavur rescue work and far beyond.

Nowadays many houses of the Fellowship in Dohnavur are empty. Maintenance of the buildings is in arrears. It is now more than 10 years since a baby was brought to Dohnavur. Government regulations have to be adhered to and many children without any parents are now put under government care. The missionaries have all gone and present-day Indian leadership goes on with the same love with which they were received and educated in the Fellowship. Many elderly women, of whom the majority still remember something of Amy, constitute the greater part of all the inhabitants of the compound. But this number is decreasing every year. The hospital is still running, although on a very basic level; the equipment and the buildings show what happened here 50 years ago but can no longer meet the required medical standard of the 21st century, and so they have had their best years. No longer do the medical staff pray in the House of Healing at 7 a.m. every day. People talk openly about their anxiety of what will happen in the future. Is the younger generation willing to work here without any payment? But God is faithful, for in the *Praise and Prayer Notes* of the Fellowship we read: 'Give thanks for the Lord's guidance, protection, faithfulness and love in leading the work of the hospital for the past 80 years [*as at 15 November 2016*]'.²⁴⁵⁸

When CIM missionaries were driven out of China by political force, we witnessed that the mission drive had not weakened but rose like a phoenix in the second part of the 20th century, spreading the Gospel in many Asian countries. The name change of the CIM to OMF, and the settling of the headquarters in Singapore, did not change Hudson Taylor's vision. This switch and the total and economic situation could have challenged many countries after World War II when they got their independence – India in 1947 – but on the contrary, missionaries gained footholds in many of these East Asian countries, spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Dohnavur Fellowship never made the transition to the new era after Amy's death, like the CIM did after 1951. For too long, until the 1980s, missionaries from overseas had the final say. Despite the unselfish, serving, fully dedicated staff of the Dohnavur Fellowship keeping things going as from before 1951, outside reality crept in, and now they are daily faced with the outside world. Even the grown-up girls who need to be prepared for their future experience the shock of being confronted with the reality of the present-day Indian society, a society connected with the whole world. For future leadership Amy had always had in mind that Indian woman should be installed as leaders and she herself trained an Indian woman; however, she died early. 'Some of the women', and Nesaruthina was the first:

[G]raduated from colleges, and came back with renewed ideas about the management of the institution and also had the skills to work these ideas out, but were put aside by the men, because men here do not like ideas coming from outside. And among the women there are sometimes dissatisfactions about who will have the leadership and there are situations to reconcile quarrelling and gossiping persons.

Nowadays all the Dohnavur girls get their training at various colleges, but in the rather conservative south of India the dominant influence of men is still felt in the 'women' institution that the Dohnavur Fellowship is:

India is not a Western country. People here are afraid of each other. [*But*] in the spirit of the Scripture and as Amma would say, 'love is the answer', we don't want to quarrel about this issue and we have reconciled here with the idea.

2458. In *Praise and Prayer Notes* of the Dohnavur Fellowship, December 2016.

I value Carolyn C. James's plea for (women) leaders as they go deeper in their relationship with God to contribute their gifts to the church and to use their expertise in the saving programmes for children in danger.²⁴⁵⁹

In Amy's time the Lord showed her his pattern and revealed his will. In her mission work she made sure that biblical reflection infused all that she said and did. She never went empty and nowadays the life of God and his dealings with Dohnavur is given to the present leaders that they may draw the living water from the same fountain and know the way to go on. The Dohnavur Fellowship is not put in God's showroom. 'God never has museums',²⁴⁶⁰ but is willing to lead and guide those who have to make the decisions. In due time, people who have known Amy personally will never say the lovely words about Amy again; they are and will be in the land of welcome with their Saviour whom they loved. When we all meet again, it will be to sing with them the glad and new song of praise: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing'.²⁴⁶¹

The Dohnavur Fellowship is still going on and has not lost its primary vision. Today many are involved in rescue work in Asia in the rescue work of children in danger, but the women in Dohnavur will be encouraged by Carolyn James's words:

Although everyone is concerned about the need to reach more men, maybe these high percentages of women should make us wonder what God is doing, for he often forges significant inroads for the gospel by beginning with women.²⁴⁶²

To bring him glory is the best thing anyone in heaven or earth can do. Since the Dohnavur Fellowship started it has gone through sorrowful ways; many a storm came. But still, above and within and around, like a fountain, there has been something bright, even that 'sweet original joy' which nothing and nobody can darken or quench.

And yet! The year 1867 showed us the birth of the two children of which we read in the introduction: the Irish girl outlived the Scottish boy by nearly 50 years. Both started a remarkable work, a work continuing in our 21st century. When Peter Cameron Scott set out for Africa in 1895, he had a very clear goal in view – a chain of mission stations between Mombasa, on the Kenyan coast, to Lake Chad; a way to the heart of Africa. He saw this as a vital barrier to halt the southward spread of Islam and a base from which to reach out to the unreached peoples of east and central Africa. Now after more than 120 years of mission, the work of AIM continues to grow, with ministry taking place in over 20 countries and millions of believers worshipping the Lord. 'But we are still not there yet'. The ultimate goal is to see: 'Christ-centred churches among all African peoples'.²⁴⁶³ Triumphant love gives Katie Davis in Uganda the strength and the courage to save so many lives of children:

A baby was born who transformed the world then, and still does today. [...] I realize I have chosen an unusual path in my life and come to the conclusion that it is something extraordinary. That I am courageous. That I am strong. That I am special! But I am just a plain girl from Tennessee. Broken in many ways, sinful, and inadequate.

2459. See James, *Half The Church*, 159. 'For what I can see, women and girls are a rich and largely untapped goldmine – a powerhouse of blessing and gifts for the church, of strength and wisdom for our brothers, and of enormous good for the world' (pp. 159–160).

2460. In Chambers, *The Complete Works*, 940.

2461. Revelation 5:12.

2462. In *Half The Church*, 27.

2463. In *The African Connection 2* [AIM, 2013], 3.

Common and simple with nothing special about me. Nothing special except I choose to say 'yes' to the people He places in front of me. You can too. I am just an ordinary person. An ordinary person serving an extraordinary God.²⁴⁶⁴

And for us? As a pregnant mother is responsible for the welfare and health of the child she carries, so is every church is responsible for its generation within its 'womb'. To use Amy's vocabulary, we are at war with the most sophisticated enemy the Church has ever faced. The price Satan claims are our own precious young men and women. It is for us to adopt a wartime mentality and to discern the subtle attacks that are taking place every day in our homes and schools.

In south India the Dohnavur Fellowship continues since it started in the early 20th century. Still the thoughts of 100 years ago linger through all the publications. The aim of the Fellowship is still the same and put in the same words Amy wrote long ago when she was asked this question:

What is your chief desire for yourselves and for others?

For ourselves it is that our Lord should be 'the inward power which colours all our thought, and gives us direction and quality to our affections'. For others it is that they should know and love Him too.

What is your message to the people of India?

We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Christ's sake.²⁴⁶⁵

Amy's life work in saving thousands of children in physical and moral danger is going on in Dohnavur, as the need for a home, care and shelter for male and female babies still exists, and the educating of young girls and boys from all over India at the Santhosha Vidhyalaya Secondary School. After 1947 social welfare centres gave protection to many children in need; however, at the beginning of the new millennium the Dohnavur Fellowship stated that many children born out of inter-caste marriages were often rejected, female babies considered a burden and a curse due to the burden of the dowry system, and due to poverty, quarrels and divorces, in most cases the best way to get rid of the child is thought to be by killing it. In cases of a second marriage, a step-father or step-mother nearly always refuses to accept the child or children and small girls are even poisoned or thrown down the well. 'Therefore, the Dohnavur Fellowship still exists, and prayerfully tries to seek-out and save children from such dangers.'²⁴⁶⁶

The work began with one woman, and without the work Amy started these children would never have known what it meant to be loved unconditionally. Primary and secondary education is now offered for the children of Indian missionaries from all over India, so they can grow up into faithful women and men. After having finished their education, they go back to their respective areas and the women will serve the Lord in Christian motherhood, in all kinds of work in society or in evangelistic work. The Dohnavur Fellowship today is still prepared to receive, and to be a home for, children who have no family.

In this third millennium India will be evangelised by independent Indian missionary effort, backed by prayers from Christians all over the world, prayers born of fellowship with Christ and by that unseen cloud (Heb 12:1). In the hour, the Christian message being unpopular, it is the women who fearlessly declare themselves disciples of Christ. They are now important in sharing the burden of many un-evangelised in India as well as in the majority of the East Asian countries. God honoured these and thousands of other early missionaries as they faithfully preached the Gospel and previously

2464. See Davis, *Kisses from Katie*, 118.

2465. See *The Starry Cluster*, 11.

2466. See Nesaruthina Carunia, 'Jewels For His Coronet', in *Dust of Gold*, no. 246, August 2001, 13.

unreached people were reached for Christ. Is not this how we should regard her, as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God? The reward she sought was the glory of her Master, self-remembrance in her was dead. Was not she the embodiment of 1 Corinthians 4:2 – ‘Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy’ (RSV)? In describing the Dohnavur Fellowship’s principles Amy wrote that all who joined them ‘followed from the first a path to a clear goal’.²⁴⁶⁷ This 21st century asks for faithful men and women to see to that the ultimate goal is reached. Men and women with the one desire, one vision to gather the lost sheep, and who in comprehensive ministry to body, mind and spirit, in sacrificial dedication, are obeying Christ’s commission, ‘Go ye’.

And yet, is the work worth doing? And the future? Let Amy answer these questions. When on a Palm Sunday some of the elder girls and boys were to confess Christ in baptism, she wrote:

They were standing in a semicircle on the sand by the water side, and round them a ring of converts, now workers, each with a little child in her arms; for the babies were with us that day so that their nurses could come. One by one the children walked into the water, and we on the shore were watching, when from the far West, over the mountains, a flood of glorious light streamed out upon us all, till the children in the water seemed bathed in liquid gold. It was so sudden and so glorious that instinctively we looked up, almost expecting to see something seen but once – long, long ago; and the glory of it flashed through us, laying bare for us one brief moment all the inwardness of joy deep under reach of speech. Do not such moments come to all who have known something of a walk with Christ at midnight over moonless seas? Moments when the joy is so exquisite that the heart knows well it is not of earth? It is just a note dropped from the song of the Lord our God and our Redeemer, just an overflow of that transcendent joy. But it is enough for us, enough till the mortal has put on immortality. More would be too much.²⁴⁶⁸

It was a long way from Belfast’s fountain experience until the end in 1951. Everything that was of herself had gone by the board when the tests came, even when the supreme test came. It was applied by Paul.²⁴⁶⁹

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.

Amy, in full dependence and obedience, built on the only and one foundation: on Christ – the solid Rock – and his Cross.²⁴⁷⁰ We are never told to follow in all the footsteps of God’s servants, but only in so far as they have obeyed God, as Paul says,²⁴⁷¹ ‘For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me’.

She, truly great as she was little in herself, made no account of any height of honour ever. Truly great is who is great in love. Humility and holiness always go together. Her walk as God’s missionary, with a strong family likeness to Christ Jesus, was gloriously difficult, but also gloriously certain. With body, soul and spirit comprehended in the manifestation of the marvellous power and grace of God she was brought into fascinating captivity in the Lord Jesus Christ. She walked worthily,

2467. *Roots*, 1.

2468. *The Beginning of a Story*, 22–23.

2469. In 1 Corinthians 3:12–13.

2470. Cf. O. Chambers, ‘Studies in the Sermon on the Mount’, in *The Complete Works*: ‘Discipleship is based not on devotion to abstract ideals, but on devotion to a person, the Lord Jesus Christ, consequently the whole of the Christian life is stamped by originality’ (p. 1441).

2471. In 1 Corinthians 4:15–16.

with no show to keep up, no veneer, but with the words of the other messenger of Christ, John the Baptist, looking upon Jesus as he walked, 'Behold the Lamb of God'.²⁴⁷²

This book is written nearing the 150th birthday anniversary of Amy Carmichael. Never, in all those years, has the Lord failed to answer Amy and the Dohnavur family, and to this day the Dohnavur family and their friends worldwide speak of the faithfulness of God. And the future? Ralph Manning has this question: 'How does the Dohnavur Fellowship continue to serve the Lord Jesus in His great commission in the 21st century?' He sees challenges and great opportunities for the Gospel, too. The rescue work and care of vulnerable and abused young people will continue. New hopes for leading young girls and women to Christ's tender life-changing care are nowadays more complex and difficult to address, but the Fellowship prays to seek and find appropriate ways to meet these challenges.

The hospital still gives opportunities for Christian outreach and will focus more on the great problem of alcohol abuse and addiction. The Santhosha Vidhyalaya boarding school continues to release many missionaries for active service in India, knowing that their children are safely educated and cared for in Dohnavur. Continuing care will be given to the elderly women, the former Accals and other 'unsung heroes' (those who taught, cooked, nursed, cleaned, etc.). To be in Dohnavur today is a privilege, as we can see what the Lord is doing there first-hand.²⁴⁷³

It is beyond the scope of this book to write about the present-day church in India. Hundreds of pastors and missionaries, Indians as well those as from abroad, serve the Church in India. There is a vibrant Church in many parts of India today, members of which look back with gratitude to Amy, at least in the south. And here we remember with thanksgiving the other godly Indian women and men who, in Amy's days and in later years, laid the foundation of churches spread over the whole of India.

Modern India of 2017 is rapidly embracing the 'nuclear family' lifestyle, already prevalent in the Western world. Can the Fellowship structure as it was created by Amy in the beginning of the 20th century continue? Jacky Woolcock told the present author:

The Dohnavur children are still very much a family and this is one of the wonderful things about it. They have a name as Dohnavur or Amy's children and they have each other and they can come home when there are problems. If a girl gets into difficulties, say in Chennai, the other girls there will be among the friends to rally round. It is such a deprivation to be without own family.

Since 1951 we have, in missionary circles, missed the deep theological reflections Amy gave us, spread all over her publications. We miss them dearly because in the last 50 years mission agencies have mostly dealt with practical issues. The Dohnavur Fellowship continues making day-to-day decisions depending on the situation. However, Amy's ideas and reflections need to be translated into and developed in our time, so that the Fellowship, so deeply rooted in the Scriptures, will be in rapport with our time. And still the question is: What about the future? We give the pencil to Amy:

'The Future' – that word used to appear in letters which in weak hours fastened on the mind like claws. But always there was inward solace: 'Shall I not be in the future?' [...] Days may come when it will feel like a legacy of difficulties. The more fully those others are trusted and the dearer they are, the keener the thrust of the question, What if they be over-burdened? They will never bend, what if they break? There are many familiar words that have power to parry that thrust; they will occur at once. But some not so familiar have lately been strong succour, and as what helps one soul often helps another, I will write them here: 'Who has wrought and

2472. John 1:36.

2473. See R. Manning, 'Dohnavur's continuing mission in changing times' in *Dust of Gold*, no. 298, 7–9.

done it, calling the generations to the beginning? I the Lord, the first and with the last (or as the marginal reading is, with those who come after); I am He'. Almost the eye would read, 'I the Lord, the first and the last'. But no, it is the eternal 'with' of His blessed Presence; I the Lord, the first and with the last. [...] Small questions fall on us in a light refreshing shower. We can answer them easily, and, in answering, our hearts are refreshed in faith. Who hath wrought and done it, Thou and no other.

Did I ever fail thee when thou wast carrying on that work? Never, Lord, never.

And shall I fail those who come after?

That cannot be, O Lord; Thou art The Same. Their travail shall not seem little to Thee. If this be so, be at rest, My child; cast not away thy confidence which hath great recompense of reward. Let not thy heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Scholars find something arresting about the grammatical form in which these words are cast; it gives them 'an impressive, affectionate and so to speak caressing tone'. Need the heart that has known, not once, but a thousand times that 'caress' of the Eternal Comforter, ever be anxious about those who come after?²⁴⁷⁴

And nearly at the end of her life Amy wrote:

What called you together? Love, Divine Love.

What holds you together? That same Love.

What will hold you in the future? Again and only, that Love.

What is most attacked in your Fellowship life?

Love, and the kind of prayer that means traffic with Heaven hindered access to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. [...]

That is its true desire. But its word is, Not as though we had already attained either were already perfect. No, we are far from being that, but trusting to the pardoning love of our Lord and His lovely grace, we follow after – we are pressing on. And we ask Him of whom it is written: 'He had in His right hand seven stars', in His mercy to continue to hold and direct The Starry Cluster do that being joined together in the same mind we may all 'move together like a flock of wild birds.'²⁴⁷⁵

Dreaming of the past we take courage for the future. Looking back at the work as it took shape, Amy who leaned on God and had learned lessons of reliance upon the invisible alone:

We see it like the mountainside that is familiar to many of us now, for it stands above our Forest House. There is apparent change in that mountain. The colours of the grass and the trees vary with every swift lightening and shadowing of sky and air. Mists in the clefts and hollows, torrents tearing down the face of the rocks, the sweep of the seasons – change is in each of these. But there are scars in the rock, and there is something changeless about a scar rock. The ways of our work may change, the colours will call for new decisions; but the elemental things, the convictions, which are part of its creation, these will remain. Stuff up the scars with brushwood, soften their firm lines, try to make them just a little more decorative, and the mountain will not be the mountain that you know. 'The work' will never go deeper than we have gone ourselves. 'I bear in my body the marks – I

2474. Cf. the chapter in Amy's book *Windows* that she calls 'With Those who Come After' (pp. 206–209).

2475. In *The Starry Cluster*, 21. The last sentence is a quotation Amy uses from James Jeans, *The Stars in Their Courses*. Of the importance of Love speaks Saint Teresa of Jesus in her *The Interior Castle*, these words were underlined by Amy: 'Know my daughters that true perfection consists in the love of God and of our neighbour. [...] This love of one another is so important, that I near wished it to be forgotten. If you go about remarking in other little nothings, which often are not even imperfections, but perhaps, in your ignorance, you take them amiss, you will lose your own peace of mind, and trouble that of others' (p. 15).

bear branded on my body the scars of Jesus as my Master'. Can he have followed far, who has nor wound nor scar?²⁴⁷⁶

And the future of the Fellowship in this 21st century? Amy saw the future of the Fellowship in the light of Christ's coming:

Will not the One to Whom we always look as alone responsible, undertake the future when it comes – if it comes – for is He not the God of the future as much as of the present? I say if it comes, for at least some of us are hastening unto the Coming of the Lord in glad anticipation. But if that Coming be delayed and the difficult future has to be lived through, even so, need we, should we fear?

The family members of the Dohnavur Fellowship trust in their unchanging and unchangeable God.

Who started the work? Who chose the place. [...] Surely, then, the choice of the place may be left in peace. [...] He Who has been with us to-day, planting flowers by our road-side, will be with us tomorrow.²⁴⁷⁷ What is now our present was once future to us. [...] Will not the One to Whom we always look as alone responsible, undertake the future when it comes – if it comes – for is not the God of the future as much as of the present? [...] The future was present to the One who chose Dohnavur for us, when He chose it.²⁴⁷⁸

Amy ran the race set before her. She lived for the things that are eternal; she lived her life which had for its centre Christ. Today we know her in the unseen cloud of witnesses that surrounds us. Not to miss God's opportunities we 'run with endurance', 'surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses' – of whom Amy is one – we 'look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith'.²⁴⁷⁹ What remains for us is to have our eyes fixed on the Lord, to continue and run the same race, looking forward to Jesus. When the situation seems perplexing, the onward path obscured by clouds, lack of understanding, threats, and accusations of making converts, God was and is faithful! We have a God who lives in eternity, and knows no limits. God is on the move today, and how we will respond? Amy would say with the words of Isaiah 6:8: 'Here am I, send me'. She was faithful until the end, a missionary who put faithfulness to the Word of God and trust in his promises before every other consideration.

Looking at the life story of Amy Carmichael in south India and her Christ-centred missionary work, we in Christian service today, often working in difficult situations, find encouragement in God's Word and his Spirit can wonderfully transform even difficult situations for those evangelising the Christian faith. Often in our little thoughts and work it seems he is delaying to work out his plan, but for him, for whom one day is 1000 years, and 1000 years one day, it is to have room for himself to work out his great thoughts. This tiny 'sanctuary' in south India, 'a small plot of heaven', where the Dohnavur Fellowship exists 'with God for others', will never be out of his control. And what about the future?:

There may be no future. Perhaps He will come for Whom we are all looking. But should there be a future, what can we do but train our children in truth and in love, and trust Him to open the way before them. We never deceive ourselves by imagining it will be easy for them. We are trying to prepare them to endure hardness, every kind of hardness, as good soldiers.²⁴⁸⁰

2476. *Gold Cord*, 72.

2477. *The Continuation of a Story*, 43 and 42.

2478. *The Continuation of a Story*, 43.

2479. Cf. Hebrews 12:1–2.

2480. *Nor Scrip*, 123.

Christ Jesus, the risen Lord, is in control and his pierced hands are over the Dohnavur Fellowship – her future is as sure as the promises of God. My story about Amy Carmichael has been told. For whom? Amy would agree when I say that it is written with the aim:

[T]o the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is Himself continually fulfilling the vision of the ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached to heaven, and to Whom the least of His lovers is dear.

It has been written for those who in the simplest find true things that quicken ‘the sense of the Unseen behind the seen’, and for whom ‘the temporal holds the seed of the Eternal’. In closing we read Amy’s remarks to Westcott’s note on John 11:21–22:²⁴⁸¹

Martha said, ‘But I know that even now...’. Faith reaches forth to that which it does not grasp. ‘Even now’ – the utter abandon of faith that accepts what is not received. This is faith triumphant. [...] We have our Lord’s own ‘Even so’ to help us. [...] It is the ‘Yes Father’ of the unoffended, the ‘Even so, Father’ which accepts all mysteries.²⁴⁸²

The final words in *Ponnamal*²⁴⁸³ are the last words for this book:

It goes out into a world spent with suffering, wounded unto death. But death is not the end, it is only another beginning, and that which makes life lovable and glorious cannot die, for Love is eternal.

2481. Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. And even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you’.

2482. In *Whispers of His Power*, 11 May 104.

2483. See page 118.

Retrospect

Call back all the days of the ages
 All snowflakes come down from above;
 All flowers of summers departed
 But think not to measure His love.²⁴⁸⁴

From 1901, when the first girl of all the myriads of south India's innocent temple children was set free to serve the Lord of glory, the beginning of a search to save these children has continued, to which the previous pages give witness. This binds the Fellowship, being sure that what is done is what the Lord wishes to be done and they continue to serve him, bound together in love and therefore continue because they know that there is no limit to the kindness of God

The tiny tots, the Lotus Buds, who once played in the Dohnavur nurseries have become old and many rest with the Lord; 'they are all in glory'. Without the work of one godly woman whose life's story this book tells, these men and women would have never known what it meant to be loved. 'All gone now into the world of Light.' They are buried in God's Garden. Those who once carried along the life of the Dohnavur Fellowship still speak to us of being not disappointed having followed 'the Gleam'. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives into death.

In all the Dohnavur buildings Bible texts encourage us to retrieve as a living temple among those for whom Christ Jesus poured forth his soul unto death. As they hung there 100 years ago, they have lasted through the decades and while reading the call comes to us to translate them into fact. When we on our side rise to the call that the time has come, it may be that we shall see yet another timing from heavenly side. Today still the Tamil as Amy spoke it with her Western accent is the mark of recognition of many who belong to the Fellowship and spreading all over south India their witness is as true as in Amy's time. And in Dohnavur, the little children who wave while singing with the coloured flags in the House of Prayer, together with the young girls in Dohnavur's choir, are the ones who will carry on the trust of the founder of the Dohnavur Fellowship, in living a Christ-like life, in ongoing loving service and outreach.

For more than 100 years in south India has been the one Dohnavur family, on one journey, with one child who changed the world forever. All those who have read this book will earnestly pray to be open for the call of God and translate this into fact; to go in obedience to the place he directs, for millions a month are passing away beyond the reach of the Gospel. May it be that we all do not depart from that devotion and singleness of heart so characteristic of Amy Carmichael, founder of the Dohnavur Fellowship, and of those associated with her in the earlier days of mission work. The privilege still may be ours of not counting any cost as great, if we but 'know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings' (Phlp 3:10, NIV). The Gospel of Jesus Christ changes people's lives and eternity. That is worth spending our life for. Amy gives us this final word: 'Let us be still for a moment and think. Christ counted souls worth Calvary. What do we count them worth?'

2484. Henry Suso 1295-1366

■ Landmarks of the Dohnavur Fellowship

- 1895 Amy Carmichael arrives in India²⁴⁸⁵
1896 Amy moves from Bangalore to the Tirunelveli District
Itinerary work with *The Starry Cluster*
1901 The first girl, Preena
1903 Publication of *Things As They Are*
1910 The Jeevalia School
1912 Death of Rev. Thomas Walker
1913 In London Amy's mother, Mrs Catherine Jane Carmichael, dies
Arrival of Agnes Naish who took over the educational responsibilities
1913 The Square Compound
1914 The Round Compound
1917 Purchase of the Grey Jungle land
Building of the Forest House (Naraikkadu)
1918 The first boy, Arul
1923 The 30th nursery is built
1924 Vanacharbu, the boys' compound
1925 Joppa, the holiday retreat house in Kanyakumari bought
1925 Muppunthal, Three Pavilions
1926 Arrival of Godfrey Webb-Peploe in Dohnavur
1927 Building of the House of Prayer
The DF officially registered under the Societies Registration Act
1928 Arrival of Dr Murray Webb-Peploe in Dohnavur
1936 Jeevanunda (Kindergarten)
Parama Suha Salai (The Place of Heavenly Healing)
1937 Place of Confidence
1938 Kamaneri Ricelands
1942 Building of the Clock Tower
1948 The Gideons (boys going to boarding schools)
1949 The Timothys (girls going to boarding schools)
1951 Amy Carmichael dies in Dohnavur on the early morning of 18 January
1982 Santhosha Vidhyalaya Secondary School
1984 Ananda Vanam closes
The last boys leave Dohnavur
1992 The end of permanent missionary presence from the West in Dohnavur
Hillary Rogers, dentist, leaves Dohnavur
1996 Salem Office
2000 Ubahara Salai, Place of Help
2001 Centenary Celebration
2013 The 'new' Joppa in Kanyakumari
2017 150-year anniversary of Amy's birth

2485. See also *Dust of Gold*, no. 246, 9–12.

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Appendix

■ 1. DISCIPLESHIP which means DISCIPLINE²⁴⁸⁷

The question is often asked: 'How can I best begin at home to prepare for the life of the mission field?' Here are a few practical suggestions.

Effort – It will not be easy. We must go out of our way to acquire this preparedness. We are called to a strict training for a hard fight which will not end till we hear God's 'Well done'.

Difficulties – Let us learn to choose the hardest things, to do what others leave undone. We can begin in the ordinary affairs of home life. The joy of hard climbing and the glory of the impossible should not be mere phrases but experienced facts.

Helpfulness – Make opportunities each day to help others, in inconspicuous ways, not grudgingly but joyfully, though it may mean far less time for yourself. Be kind and thoughtful. Be courteous and good mannered. 'Love is never rude, never selfish.'

Sleep – Do not waste time sitting up late talking. King's business talk is different; but what about the late rising in the morning, the shortened quiet time, due to our letting the pleasant conversation of the night before drive on?

Food – 'I don't like this.' Well, learn to like it, unless it actually does physical harm. Be grateful for what God has given. If it is just a case of likes and dislikes, learn to be able to eat things that are not your choice – and enough to keep you fit and strong, not a mere mouthful. The ability to eat unflinchingly may mean much for friendship with peoples of another land whose food is very different from ours.

Clothes – God wants us to be tidy, and certainly not to be conspicuous through slackness. But fashion should not be our master even in the smallest things.

Spending money – There are many unnecessary gadgets and ornaments that it are very nice to possess, for which we spent money without thinking. All our money is God's if we are his children. Rich and poor, we should think and pray before we spend, and we should learn to do without. Some, after indulgence in small ways, find it hard to stop. The people among whom we are to live in the mission field, for the most part, never could buy such things or their local equivalent. The unnecessary separates us from those we come to serve. Do not let us live like misers, but pray before we spend.

Tidiness – Some people seem to be born tidy, others think that they never can be. Can we imagine the Lord Jesus when he was on earth with his clothes untidy and all his belongings lying about in disorder? It saves time and is excellent training to deliberately study tidiness.

Comfort – Do not become too wedded to the armchair. The comforts of modern life may not be found abroad, and we must learn to be independent of them, and to cut out the things that make us soft. Physical discomfort for its own sake need not to be sought, but it must never cause us to turn back. 'Be careful of your body, but careless of your life.'

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2487. Prepared by Godfrey Webb-Peploe for missionaries who wished to join the Dohnavur Fellowship. Many of these recommendations can be found in *Gold Cord*.

Accuracy – This is part of truth. Train the mind to accurate thinking and the lips in accuracy of speech. What of the stories we retell? Do we add to the facts to make people more impressed or more amused? Truth has little place in most non-Christian lands and, when we speak of the necessity of utter truth, our words and ways are watched.

Truth – Let there be no pose. Many Orientals can read us like a book and we cannot deceive them. According to God's scale of values we are certainly no better than they, so why pretend to be so?

Pride – If you take offence easily, do not come to the mission field thinking that it does not matter. He humbled himself. He did it deliberately. So do not let us care overmuch for the praise or blame of men, even of other Christians. To our God we live. If something is misunderstood, learn to go direct to the other one concerned. Be frank and humble and straighten it out.

Speech – Don't argue, but learn from God when and what to speak, and realise the value of silence. Never break confidence. Never fear to speak the truth, though it lead to trouble. When God says 'Speak', deliver without fear or favour his whole message, to individuals or in a meeting.

Humility – If we are wrong let us confess it. It will be humiliating, but it will be the straight thing to do and no one ever loses standing in the eyes of those he seeks to help by being honest. Be willing to learn from the experience of others – experienced older people, inexperienced younger ones, people of the country, anyone, if only we may do our job for God's glory. The best way of doing things in the homelands is very often not the best way abroad.

Popularity – This is dangerous, attracting people to oneself; influence is most often unconscious. God can use the latter if we live near enough to him, but the former should never be sought. 'He made Himself of no reputation.'

Adaptability – We must learn to be adaptable, and be willing to start from the beginning and to go to school again to learn the language and the customs and the mind of the people to whom we go. If we do not like having our careful plans altered and something quite different substituted, then the sooner we learn to be able to take this joyfully the better.

Patience – This is needed for the study of the language and ways of our new homeland. It is no use trying to hurry the deliberate East. It is seldom any use to give someone 'a piece of your mind'. It is usually not worth giving. And the heat of the tropics does not encourage the spontaneous growth of patience. So it is a lesson to be learned, a gift to be asked from God who freely gives all we need.

Temperament – Even among Christians, differences of natural temperament often lead to friction and lack of peace. You may find yourself in a mission station with another missionary whose tastes and interests and temperament are the very reverse of yours. If you do not get on together, God's name is dishonoured before those you hope to win for Christ, for such a feeling of estrangement will soon be known to them. What have you in common? A love for the Lord, a call to his service among those who know him not. PRAY. Pray frequently together. Pray for others. Worship and adore your Lord together, and the petty things that might cause friction will be harmless to annoy.

Thoughts – Think the best of others. Critical thoughts, unclean thoughts, worrying thoughts, envious thoughts, thoughts of self-pity that dwell upon difficulties ahead, or that imagine offence or opposition in others, may be put into our minds by the evil one. Do not let them stay. If we give place to them and begin to think them over, we shall be led into sin, for even the thought of foolishness is sin. The Holy Communion is within us and knows our thoughts. Let him control them, and keep us too from that waste of God's time which we call day-dreaming.

Books – What do we read? For refreshment, encouragement, uplifting help of all kinds, there are many books. Let us keep to these. Do we sit up half the night to finish something interesting or exiting? Let us curb the lust to finish, and be disciplined in our reading as in other things.

Friendship – Every true friendship should make us more accessible to others and more understanding and helpful. Exclusive friendships are unhealthy.

Marriage – Very many look forward to this as God's good gift. In the mission field there are some kinds of work where married people can do more because they are married. There are equally a number of situations where single men or single women are far better able to do the work that God has appointed. So let us take nothing for granted and be very, very sure, of God's guidance in this most solemn of decisions.

Social life – Do not become slave to social life, for it is a snare to many on the mission field. Can you do without the company of people of your own race? Do you crave the social amenities of the homeland? How much time is wasted in these things! Be independent of them, and learn to love the company of the people you have come to serve. They will soon understand, and to win their confidence is worth all.

A sense of humour – Not only does this at times help us in a difficult situation, but it lightens the necessary stress of the daily work. How can one who does not understand or appreciate the fun of life be the messenger of 'the Gospel of the happy God'?

Joy – Be glad always. Praise God always. When you are ill or tired or tempted or at your wit's end, learn the habit of perpetual praise, for it prepares a way whereby God may show us his victory.

The Bible – If you do not believe it to be wholly the Word of God, for Christ's sake, I say it reverently, do not come to the mission field. Keen Hindus believe in their holy books, Muslims in the Koran, and they have not much respect for one who brings a holy book that is unreliable.

The quiet time – The source of strength for each day. Get through to personal converse with the Lord. Let it not become formal. It must be a conversation with our Beloved whom we love above theirs. Do not merely ask him for things, but worship and praise him. The devil will try to let your work be cut short God's hour, but do not give in if you want to be of any use to the Lord. It is not the multitude of things accomplished, but the closeness of our walk with Christ that determines whether our building will be of gold, silver, precious stones, or of wood, hay, stubble.

Prayer – Pray often with your fellow labourers, with anyone who loves the Lord. Let all work be spiritual – medical, educational, evangelistic, industrial. Don't be caught in the machinery of the works. Keep the spiritual uppermost and the balance right. Many have lost their first spiritual enthusiasm through pressure of work, so pray, pray, PRAY.

All manner of service – Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all. For even the son of man came not to be served, but to serve and to give. This from Sister Eva of Friedenshort sums up the spirit of Philippians 2:5–8, which we need:

Because we children of Adam want to be great – HE BECAME SMALL.

Because we are always seeking to climb higher – HE STEPPED DOWN.

Because we will not stoop – HE HUMBLISHED HIMSELF.

Because we want to rule – HE CAME TO SERVE.

■ 2. The Dohnavur Fellowship Today

The work in Dohnavur still continues, but now the Fellowship leaders and officers are family members who grew up in Dohnavur. In fellowship with others of God's children, they seek to make his love and salvation known to those around them. The legal scene is very different from the time of Amy Carmichael. It is registered both as a charity under the auspices of the Tamil Nadu Societies Act and under the Juvenile Justice Act in 2010. The Child Welfare Committee checks the standards of the home and their approval is required for any child to be admitted. In the UK the Dohnavur Fellowship Corporation is a charitable company (reg. no. 232520) that supports the work in India, accepting donations to send to India and sending out newsletters.

The Fellowship provides a home and family for children in many different kinds of moral or physical danger. The dedication of girls to the temples is now illegal. Government rules mean that the Fellowship can only accept children over the age of five years old. In 2016 there were almost 100 girls under the age of 18. The need to care for them continues until they are securely launched into jobs or settled in marriage. The aim is still to bring them up to know and love the Lord Jesus and to follow his example as those who desire not to be served but to serve. There are also many elderly, retired staff being cared for in the Fellowship, some requiring full-time care. The hospital provides care for the family's own medical needs and also treats patients from the surrounding towns and villages. They include rich and poor, highly educated and illiterate. There is work with leprosy patients and a busy dental department. Through this medical work God continues to bring to the Fellowship the people whose need is for spiritual as well as physical healing.

The boys' work finally came to an end in 1984, but the buildings they occupied in Dohnavur have been put to full use. In 1981 the Fellowship, in partnership with other Christians, formed the Santhosha Educational Society to administer a co-educational, boarding school, primarily for the benefit of the children of missionaries of Indian nationality. There are now facilities for over 600 students. Their parents come from Indian missions and organisations working in many parts of India, including tribal areas.

In matters of finance, the Fellowship follows the pattern shown from the beginning of the work. Amy Carmichael rejoiced in her Heavenly Father's faithfulness in supplying each need. His faithfulness is the same today.

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Web pages: www.dohnavurfellowship.org.in
www.thedohnavurfellowship.org (where songs written by Amy Carmichael can be read and downloaded with music)

■ 3. Author Biography

J. (Hans) Kommers served as an ordained minister in four congregations of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN). He holds a doctorate in theology from North-West University (NWU) in Potchefstroom, South Africa. His PhD thesis is about Revival and Revival sermons in Wuppertal (Germany) in the 19th century. Currently he is an extraordinary professor at the Faculty of Theology at NWU. After finishing his education at the Teachers Training College 'Felua' in Ede, he studied theology at Utrecht University and started in 1976 in the pastoral ministry. After a year of missionary training at the Hendrik Kraemer Institute in Oegstgeest, he and his wife were missionaries in Kenya and in Moçambique.

In Kenya he initiated a Theological Education by Extension (TEE) programme in the Reformed Church of East Africa and his wife did home schooling for the children. In Moçambique he ministered in various local congregations in Tête Province and incorporated the TEE programme in the curriculum of the Bible school 'Hefsiba', while his wife was involved in an adult literature programme. For many years he was a board member of the Reformed Mission League (GZB) in the Netherlands.

Together with his wife, he wrote *Zending zonder franje* in 2017, a study about the calling, the joy and the temptation in mission work. Since 2008 he has been a member of the International Reformed Theological Institute (IRTI) of the Theological Faculty of the Free University (VU) in Amsterdam. He regularly publishes articles on mission and homiletics in *In Die Skriflig*, the official theological journal of the Theological Faculty of NWU. In the Netherlands, as well as in Africa, he is involved in mission training programmes.

He married Aly in 1973. The marriage is blessed with seven children. He and his wife live in Harderwijk (The Netherlands) and he may be contacted at j.kommers777@gmail.com

After many years of research I wrote this book in the hope that Amy Carmichael's commitment and faithful service will be an inspiration and encouragement to confront the challenges of our 21st century for real Christian discipleship. We all will learn of the highest major principle of our Christian life that 'all that troubles is only for a moment. Nothing is important but that which is eternal'.

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This scientific-historical biography explores the influences that shaped the spirituality of Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur. J. (Hans) Kommers investigates the historical background of Amy's childhood in Millisle and Belfast and provides new and more scholarly information than existing biographies. He researched a variety of Keswick-related literature in order to provide a fuller picture of Amy's connection with the Keswick Convention and their teaching. The descriptions of the life of the millworkers in Belfast, the happenings on the worldwide stage and Victorian missionary work and methods round out the picture to give the reader a greater understanding of Amy Carmichael. These new facts are most enlightening.

Dr Jacqueline Woolcock MB BChir MRCP (Lond), Director Dohnavur Fellowship Corporation, Shoreham by Sea, UK, and Doctor in Dohnavur India 1969–1987

Triumphant love: The contextual, creative and strategic missionary work of Amy Beatrice Carmichael in South India provides the most extensive biography thus far of Amy Carmichael (1867–1951), a major figure on the missionary landscape of the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century. She is seen by some as the Protestant mother Teresa (both women worked in India and devoted all of their time and energy to the poor).

The book is very well researched. The author states that the purpose of the extensive research he undertook 'was to get a closer and clearer picture of Amy Carmichael as the founder of the Dohnavur Fellowship'. Also, he wanted 'to give a balanced account of her dealings with people and especially her life with God'. He does this. It provides the most comprehensive picture of this remarkable woman. It is the definitive source of reference.

J. (Hans) Kommers's view of the life of Amy Carmichael is that of a fellow evangelical. He explains that not only Amy, but many missionaries of her time were inspired by the ideal that all people should have the opportunity to hear of Christ's salvation. According to him, her inspirational work is still relevant today.

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