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PART I

Christian Mission,  
Educational  
Institutions, and  
Identity Formation

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## **Kalimpong as a Transcultural Missionary Contact Zone**

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**Abstract** This article explores Kalimpong as a transformative mountain space for mixed-race children, a locality closely associated with a range of imperial missionary activity, notably through the personality and career of its famous adoptive citizen, the Rev. John Anderson Graham, the founder of the St Andrew's Colonial Homes, now known as Graham's Homes. From the 1870s, the Foreign Mission of the Church of Scotland undertook an array of activities directed at the diverse populations of the hill-station towns of Kalimpong and Darjeeling on the mountainous edges of British India and the regions of Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, and Tibet. The chapter examines how Scottish Presbyterian associational networks around print, religion, education, social reform, and self-help enterprises helped develop Kalimpong's role as a transcultural and transnational hub that functioned as a key contact zone in the Eastern Himalayan region.

## Introduction

This chapter explores Kalimpong as a dynamic contact zone for transcultural and transnational missionary interactions. It explores those historical trajectories with particular reference to the Eastern Himalayan Mission of the Church of Scotland, as well as the associational and transnational networks that emerged around this space. Since the 1870s, the Foreign Mission of the Church of Scotland had undertaken Christian preaching and local outreach around the British Indian hill-station towns of Kalimpong and Darjeeling, particularly in the areas of education and health, which had considerable local demand. In 1887, the Rev. John Anderson Graham arrived there as a representative of the Young Men's Guild of Scotland. Within a few years, he expanded into a second career as an imperial reformer who aimed to find a solution to what contemporary observers called the "poor white problem" for British India. He sought to achieve this through the St Andrew's Colonial Homes, a pedagogical and bio-political institution inspired by late Victorian cottage homes that became in essence a transcultural contact zone where subaltern children could be socialized into the colonizer's culture. As the inter-workings of empire and mission drew local interlocutors and imperial emissaries into encounters around print culture, education, health, philanthropy, and civic action, this article examines Kalimpong in its role as a transnational contact zone of the Eastern Himalayas where "peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (Pratt 2003, 6–7).

## Scottish and Presbyterian roots

Of Celtic parentage, John Anderson Graham was born in 1861 in London where, like many educated Scots, his father worked for the government as a customs official (Perry 2008). After his father's retirement, he spent a happy childhood "running barefoot over the moors" around Glenboig farm at Cardross, Dunbartonshire, on the family smallholding. This bucolic upbringing was crucial to the childrearing and economic philosophy that later underlay his Kalimpong Homes (Minto 1974). The Graham family belonged to the lower reaches of a British middle class that, for the most part, expected sons to supplement the household income once they had finished primary school. The exception would be a brilliant student for whom a family might be able to provide opportunities for higher education and a professional career. Social mobility through education was easier in Victorian Scotland than in other parts of Britain due to the excellence of its free primary schools (Anderson 1983). The thirteen-year-old Graham showed little talent for the classics, which would have enabled him to stay on at the parish school. But his unfashionable aptitude for figures helped

him to obtain a junior clerkship at a Glasgow law firm. Even a brief exposure to city and office life showed this prescient youth that limited schooling would give him little scope for future advancement. He decided to resume formal education at Glasgow High School by residing at the Cardross farm and commuting to save on rent. Soon this determination earned him a civil service position that would serve as a stepping-stone to law studies.

Ironically, the next fourteen years that John Graham spent in and around Edinburgh courts did not transform him into a city lawyer. Instead he became a colonial missionary and imperial social reformer. The compelling reasons lay in the social circles of the Scottish capital city where he found congenial companionship. In staunchly Presbyterian Edinburgh, the majority of middle-class leisure activities revolved around kirk circles, especially through the Young Men's Fellowship Association where Graham began to officiate as Secretary. Such instances of what Jose Harris terms the influential currents of Victorian "associational culture" brought Graham into close contact with Edinburgh's influential personalities, such as the Rev. Archibald Charteris (Harris 1994). Inspired by such examples, Graham resigned from his legal clerking job and matriculated at Edinburgh University with the eventual aim of taking holy orders. He received support and encouragement from his former parish minister, the Rev. John McMurtrie of St Bernard's Church. The latter was the editor of the Church of Scotland's influential new magazine *The Christian Life and Work* that the Rev. Charteris had established in 1879, for which he hired Graham as a clerk.<sup>1</sup> This position connected him to Charteris's other associational innovation, the Young Men's Guilds and Women's Guilds, whose widespread branches incorporated lay workers into kirk activities (Magnusson 1987, 58).

During this Edinburgh existence, John Graham experienced firsthand the potential of such grassroots initiatives to harness the energies of ordinary citizens in the cause of religious and reformist outreach. The *Life and Work* stint convinced him that his mentors were right when they held that the printing press was such an effective mobilization tool that the Christian apostles would have used it had they had the opportunity. After just one year, *Life and Work* acquired as many as 70,000 subscribers (Kernohan 1979, 9–13). Such associational activity gave Graham firsthand exposure to the transformative potential of what the Rev. Charteris termed "Applied Christianity," a world where devout men and women might work, worship, and socialize together (Minto 1974, 8). Such institutions, which allowed ordinary people to harness faith to secular service and civic activity, became seminal to Graham's career when he later founded the *St Andrew* and *St Andrew's Colonial Homes* magazines, and established the transnational networks of supporters and volunteers that coalesced around his Homes, alongside the local Guild branches that enrolled Himalayan converts as members.

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1 The *Life and Work* magazine still exists today, in its 137th year. <http://www.lifeandwork.org/about-us/who-we-are>.

In 1885, the year that Graham joined the Divinity Hall of Edinburgh University, his mentor, the Rev. McMurtrie, became Convener of the Church of Scotland's Foreign Mission Committee. A strong enthusiast for the support of overseas missionaries, McMurtrie's new responsibilities had an immense influence on Graham, who helped him prepare magazine supplements for *Life and Work* that showcased their local and global endeavors, such as a special issue about Ceylon-based congregations (Kernohan 1979, 14). Such print and publicity initiatives inspired Scots to sustain imperial kirk activities through long-term strategies that went beyond the usual cash and clothing parish contributions to missionary boxes. One such strategy originated from James Dunlop of Hamilton, who proposed in 1885 that the Young Men's Guild should sponsor its own overseas missionary. Guild members all across the country endorsed this proposal (Manuel 1914, 30-31). In response to their offer, the Foreign Mission Committee requested that the Guilds join them in the maintenance of an existing Indian endeavor, specifically the Kalimpong division of the Eastern Himalayan Mission. The newly qualified Graham offered himself as the first candidate, receiving support from 164 Guild branches to the generous amount of £364 a year (Minto 1974, 13-14).

In 1889, Graham voyaged to the Darjeeling-Kalimpong borderlands, which lay on the frontiers of India, Nepal, Bhutan, and Tibet, alongside his new bride, Katherine McConachie. They had met when she was a lay worker for the Edinburgh University Missionary Association, where both she and John volunteered to work with slum children of the city. Over the next half-century, the Grahams brought up a family of six at Kalimpong. They periodically returned on furlough to Edinburgh, especially when he became the first missionary elected as Moderator of the Church of Scotland, but the longest portion of their life was spent in the Himalayas. Both Grahams received the Kaiser-i-Hind medal from the Viceroy of India, John in 1905 and Katherine in 1916, in recognition of public service roles that transcended the conventional sphere of the missionary.

Shortly after his arrival at Kalimpong, alongside regular pastoral duties, John Graham initiated several printed forums that would bring his colonial subjects and metropolitan supporters into contact, if not at firsthand, at least at secondhand through missionary accounts. The first forum was a magazine on the lines of *Life and Work*, titled *St Andrew: A Quarterly Record of the Life and Work of the Church of Scotland in India and Ceylon* which showcased missionary work on those distant fields for Scottish audiences. In 1897, Graham published his first book, *On the Threshold of Three Closed Lands*, a work that vividly described his Guild-sponsored endeavors at picturesque Kalimpong (Graham 1897). The first edition of 10,000, moderately priced at six pence in Britain and eight *annas* in India, sold out, necessitating a second printing in 1905 (Perry 2008). Magazines as diverse as the *Scottish Guardian*, *The Englishman*, and *Indian Witness* praised the book, noting that the hundred or so illustrations of Himalayan scenes by missionary photographers were even more attractive than its narrative on

the true “light of Asia” (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News* 1897, 25). Such comments signaled that this book resonated with a variety of readers who thrilled to colorful travels in distant lands (Allen 2000, 92–107). Graham’s next publication, the *Missionary Expansion of the Reformed Churches*, published in 1898, received praise as a “lucid and comprehensive survey in moderate compass of missionary effort the world over” but lacked the exotic and visual ingredients of his first effort (*The Pioneer* 1898, February 8: NCC). Over the next few decades, not only Graham’s writings but his public addresses delivered on furlough tours captivated Scottish audiences at venues that ranged from Dundee, Falkirk, and Motherwell all the way to the northern isles of Shetland, where Edinburgh missionaries had journeyed a century ago to preach to remote seafaring peoples, the contact zone of an earlier, domestic era in Scottish Presbyterian history.<sup>2</sup>

### Kalimpong and the “Three Closed Lands”

“On the north-eastern frontier of our Indian Empire lie three lands within which the European missionary may not preach, and it is to the confines of these—Tibet, Bhutan, and Nepal—we are to go” (Graham 1897, 11). Readers of *The Three Closed Lands* could imagine Graham’s mission field through the persona of a Guild traveler who journeyed for thousands of miles via steamer, rail, and horseback until she reached distant Kalimpong, situated on top of a 4,000-foot high ridge (figure 1). The hamlet lay in the shadow of picturesque Mount Kanchenjunga, against peaks loftier and stranger than any in Scotland, but emerging as a landscape whose new urban landmarks resonated with Scottish meaning. The Guild visitor began her perambulations with the elegant prospect of a church tower that rendered an unfamiliar setting “pleasantly suggestive of some parish kirk in the home land” (Graham 1897, 24). That building was the Macfarlane Memorial Church. Graham described how at the church inauguration in 1890, the Auld Kirk flag that flew over the Himalayas was lent by a parishioner, George Watt Christison, the Scottish co-founder of the Darjeeling Tea Company. Dr. Herdman of Melrose, a former Convener of the Foreign Mission, presided over the inauguration, with the domestic church represented by a Scottish visitor, Mr. Waddell of Jedburgh, who was the clan head of another Scot stationed at Darjeeling, the Himalayan scholar and army doctor Laurence Waddell, who later acted as a cultural expert for the Younghusband mission that waged war on Tibet. Beyond the church lay the recently opened Charteris Hospital and the preaching

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2 Accounts of speeches Graham delivered during his 1895–97 furlough and advertisements for meetings where he was the star speaker appeared in Scottish newspapers such as the *Falkirk Herald*, September 25, 1895; *Motherwell Times*, September 4, 1896; *Dundee Courier*, April 3, 1897; and the *Shetland Times*, April 18, 1896; accessed January 30, 2016, British Newspaper Archive (BNA); <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>.



Figure 1: Missionary carried up mountains by porters; c.1890.

house, the Scottish Universities' Mission house, and a teacher-training institute recently moved from Darjeeling to Kalimpong. Inside the majestic gothic church, the Guild traveler might attend a service in Tibetan, Nepali, or English, while she gazed upon walls whose texts declared God's love in Christ (John iii.16) in ten vernacular languages (Manuel 1914, 66–68). The photographic illustrations to *The Three Closed Lands*, reproduced from snapshots taken by fellow missionaries, provided local color through sights such as the North Indian migrant barber shaving his customers by the wayside, another migrant, the Marwari merchant at his accounts, itinerant Tibetan musicians, Nepalese farmers plowing rice-fields, and a Lepcha headman with his family.

Two decades before Graham's arrival, the Church of Scotland Foreign Mission had established its Eastern Himalayan outposts under the Rev. William Macfarlane, formerly of Drumbuie, St Andrews, and Glasgow, who arrived in India as a missionary in 1865. After a few years in Bihar, Macfarlane moved to the Darjeeling region of the Bengal Presidency when he surmised that such a frontier location would be more rewarding than his previous Gaya field, whose powerful high-caste landlords showed open hostility to his missionary work. He became acquainted with a Darjeeling planter, Captain Jorden, who had sponsored several Lepcha and Nepali students at the Gaya orphanage school, with a view to employing them as plantation clerks. By the 1860s, Darjeeling was known not just as a salubrious British-Indian hill station, the simulacrum of European temperate zones where white colonizers might recuperate away from tropical

summers, but as a promising venue for the cultivation of a globally desired beverage, tea, cultivated on largely European-owned plantations.

Captain Jorden's assurance of support from the influential planter community of Darjeeling was an important factor behind Macfarlane's relocation, given the hostility from local elites he had faced at his previous outpost (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News* 1895, 146: CSMA). But when he realized that his new congregation consisted primarily of European planters and their migrant workers from Nepal, he decided to expand into the neighboring Kalimpong locality where there resided a larger population of indigenous Rong or Lepchas. The latter seemed promising subjects for Christian conversion since they "differ(ed) from the Hindoos in having a simpler social system, free from the institutions of caste, in having no powerful priesthood, and in being far less bound by traditional religion" (*Home and Foreign Missionary Record* 1879, December 1: CSMA). However, this proselytization objective was gradually supplemented, if not overshadowed by the educational, health, and child rescue efforts, which resonated most strongly with locals because they often served as their first points of transcultural contact.

In 1863, the British colonial state first encountered Kalimpong as a tiny, inconsequential hamlet that had belonged to Bhutan when Sir Ashley Eden was sent there as its special envoy (Pemberton 1864). His diplomatic efforts failed to avert the tensions that erupted into skirmishes that pitted Bhutanese royal guards armed with matchlocks and bows against a modern military force. In the wake of the British victory, the Treaty of Sinchula awarded the British the hamlet of Kalimpong and adjacent lands. Marfarlane's colleagues described for Scottish readers a pretty, bucolic village where patches of native cultivation alternated with clumps of trees in a seemingly English vista. The Grahams' Kalimpong had expanded from that tiny frontier village with just a few huts into a bustling town where mobile people from Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan, Sikkim, and China made daily contact with ideas, goods, and individuals that circulated from British-ruled Indian territories as they encountered the British and European missionaries, officials, and travelers who sojourned and settled there.

During his first year at the Mission, Graham supervised five local preachers whose activities extended over four stations—Kalimpong, Sitong, Mangwa, and Sunathong (*The Christian Express* 1890, January 1: NCC). By 1891, the area had 696 local Christians supported by seven catechists (*Darjeeling Mission Local Supplement*, 1891, 1: CSMA). Once a week, Graham and those catechists were a conspicuous sight as they preached to the hundreds of people who traveled to the town to patronize the Kalimpong market. After a few years, their efforts received solid support from a medical dispensary where locals who came to be healed then might stay to pray. At that lively weekly market manifestation of Kalimpong's contact zone, Graham's fictional visitor would as easily encounter Tibetan nomads selling wool as Lepcha and Nepali cultivators purveying locally grown cardamoms. She would find familiar displays of factory goods from Manchester, Birmingham, and Germany, sold by Marwari wholesalers-cum-moneylenders who themselves



purchased Himalayan staples to resell elsewhere at considerable profits. She would survey the vendors and customers who thronged shops for local country liquors distilled in peasant homes from millet and *mahua* plants. Given the strong temperance beliefs that characterized the typical Presbyterian, she would certainly shun those liquors in favor of a rival stall that brewed Tibetan butter tea, the preferred beverage for numerous traders from Tibet, Bhutan, and Sikkim, as well as the occasional Chinese traveler. Back at the church, the visitor might already have met Mrs. Korb, a wool merchant's wife who played the harmonium and conducted the boys' choir. At the market she could watch the latter's husband conducting his import business, the basis of which was the wool purchases he made from itinerant Tibetan traders selling at the Kalimpong market (Graham 1897, 34–52). For first-timers from Tibet, this was their initial contact with Europeans and the dazzling products of modernity, such as the copper dishes and other factory products that would be purchased at Kalimpong before traveling in mule panniers to elite customers at Lhasa and elsewhere.

## Mission and local contact

For Graham and his colleagues, roadside preaching was a cherished strategy that appealed strongly to an older generation of missionaries as well as to domestic supporters in Scotland. However, it was becoming increasingly evident to missionary groups around the world that rather than preaching, education and health formed the best approaches for a strong local presence. This followed the distinctive Presbyterian approach to mission evolved in the rugged, isolated habitats of the Scottish Highlands, where a population with strong communal identities had received access to education through domestic missionaries and became empowered by their local leaders' participation in the country's church hierarchy (Semple 2003, 116). Cognizant of how gospel, literacy, and local support had marched hand in hand in the far reaches of their country, Scottish missionaries in the Himalayas resolved that "(while) the primary aim was to teach in the bazaars on Sundays, and villages and wherever people may hear, in the vernacular language," they would also "teach (natives) to read and write in their own language, as a valuable secondary agency" (*Home and Foreign Missionary Record*, 1872, January 1: CSMA). Those Presbyterians were not alone in this resolution. Across late nineteenth-century British India, missionaries of all denominations pragmatically began to focus on education and medicine as the best methods to make lasting contact with locals. In this, they ran counter to the beliefs of their metropolitan superiors, who still nurtured roseate views about roadside preaching as a hallowed apostolic tradition. This divergence of local missionaries from the center may be viewed as a creative response to the transculturation of their intended subjects since "subjugated peoples cannot readily control what emanates from the dominant culture, (but) they do determine to

varying extents what they absorb into their own, and what they use it for” (Pratt 1991, 6).

These Scottish missionaries in the Eastern Himalayas rapidly became aware of how desperately modern educational investment was needed. Across those sparsely populated mountain environs, there was little infrastructure for formal schooling, other than the monastic knowledge provided to future Buddhist lamas (Dewan 1991, 65–66). After the Woods Dispatch of 1854 made it incumbent upon British authorities in India to provide facilities for primary schooling, a government school was established at Darjeeling in 1856. A decade after its foundation, the school struggled with only thirty-six pupils on its rolls, the sons of East India Company native *sepoy* soldiers and a few traders’ sons, the only locals who could afford fees that ranged from one to four *annas* a month. Eventually, the school bifurcated into two institutions with differing objectives and constituencies. One was a Bhutia Boarding School that educated select Tibetan-speaking boys in surveying and other skills useful for the imperial state. The other was a *Zilla* (district) school for the type of Anglo-vernacular education (English and Hindi) that had become the norm in British India’s establishment, named the Darjeeling High School (Dewan 1991, 84–96).

Across the hill-station spaces of Kalimpong, Kurseong, and Darjeeling, European missionary educational forays were multipronged in character. They included an abortive English Baptist venture to educate Lepcha male converts, as well as expensive boarding schools such as Loreto Convent and St Paul’s School that attracted domiciled European boys and girls sent to escape the tropical plains. In contrast to such elite institutions that resembled British public schools, the Scottish Presbyterians confined their schooling efforts to more subaltern groups. This focus was undoubtedly connected to the colonial state entrusting the region’s primary schools to the supervision of the Rev. Macfarlane (Hunter 1874, 194). This state policy to farm out primary education was not unusual for such peripheral regions, where the colonial state saved on money and personnel when it devolved its civil responsibilities to non-state actors such as planters and missionaries. The Scottish Presbyterian missionaries who had benefited from the excellent state education system of their homeland displayed a considerable commitment to educating the subaltern locals with whom they came in contact. Their connections with the locality’s European population, especially the planters, was helpful in this regard. Aside from the public funds the state granted them toward primary education, the Mission successfully obtained stipends to the extent of Rs 60 a month from the managers of nine plantations, the majority of whom were Scotsmen, to fund fifty-five schools in thirty-eight villages around tea tracts (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1898, 48: CSMA).

In the Kalimpong area, the first primary school, named the Church of Scotland Mission School, was established in 1873. Three years later, another school was started at the Lepcha-dominated village of Sitong, under the charge of a local teacher-convert named Dyongshi. By 1889, Kalimpong’s



Figure 2 (left): Rev. William Macfarlane and Darjeeling converts, c.1870s. From top left to bottom right: William Macfarlane, Kartik Singh, Rev. Dyongshi Sada, Sukham Limboo.

Figure 3 (right): Rev. Gangaprasad Pradhan in his robes as the first Himalayan ordained clergyman, c.1900s.

rural parishes had nine schools, with 274 students on the rolls, only ninety-one of whom were Christians, with a handful of girls among them. Several schools were open in the evenings so that students could attend after working in the fields (Dewan 1991, 108–112). Most village teachers were Christians. They received stipends of Rs 7–8 pm to teach basic subjects from Hindi (or Urdu in Roman script) primers, making themselves understood to students using colloquial Bengali, Nepali, or Lepcha (Hunter 1874, 194).

Finding a critical mass of teachers for these schools would have been impossible without the contribution of the Darjeeling Normal School where, from the earliest days, Macfarlane presciently trained local boys as teachers and catechists (figure 2). The Normal School was conducted on Bell-Lancastrian lines, that era's predominant schooling model where a single teacher managed numerous students of disparate ages and abilities, assisted by older pupil-teachers who taught the younger ones. The Normal School enrolled around thirty students a year from the Bhutia, Lepcha, and Nepali communities. The government's provision of scholarships was an additional facility that allowed students such as Gangaprasad Pradhan, Sukhman Limbu, and Dyongshi to access Macfarlane's training and leave behind humble laboring and peasant livelihoods to become gainfully employed teachers, catechists, and translators (figure 3). This became a new type of urban-centered mobility in the contact zone that

effectively demonstrated to other locals the potential gains from missionary encounter and educational effort. The Rev. and Miss Macfarlane retained sole charge of teacher training until the arrival of two more missionaries, Archibald Turnbull and W.S. Sutherland, enabled the Mission to branch out, particularly into the preparation of vernacular texts in collaboration with local converts, and the provision of better educational facilities.

After 1886, when the Scottish Universities Mission offered additional support of some 2,000 pounds, the Normal School moved to Kalimpong to function as the revamped Scottish Universities Mission Institute (SUMI), a teacher-training institute with an attached school. The former attracted students from far and wide, and SUMI graduates formed the core of the personnel who staffed the region's educational institutions, which catered to non-elite locals. The best-known of them was to be an itinerant Tibetan Christian from the Western Himalayas, Gergan Tharchin, today one of the most researched subjects among scholars of transnational cultural encounters (The Tharchin Collection: Columbia University Library). Tharchin graduated from SUMI to a job as a Tibetan instructor, but when he became a Mission press employee it was his inspirational contact with Graham's world of print that impelled him to publish the world's first Tibetan newspaper. From 1925, this was his labor of love, a transcultural duty to his adopted motherland of Tibet undertaken on an obsolete printing machine that was his employer's gift.

Another set of Mission interventions sought to promote female education and provide training in vocational, marketable skills and crafts. Missionary inspiration came from the Scottish parishes, where the former had had their own upbringing, and where subaltern women (and men) had received much better opportunities for basic schooling than was possible in prosperous neighboring England. Partly, this project gained strength from gendered expectations that the future wives and mothers who made up local congregations required re-forming, especially as potential help-meets for Mission-trained young men. At the urging of Miss Macfarlane, who had started a Zenana section for the Mission, a girls' school was established at Darjeeling in 1873, with twenty-four girls enrolled as boarders and day scholars. There were eighty-four girls on the 1897 rolls, of whom thirty-one were boarders. Despite a government grant-in-aid of Rs 50 a month, the school's fees were fairly high, between Rs 2-10 a month. In a few cases families paid them, but the majority of students who hailed from modest backgrounds were funded through contributions from Scottish parishes. Newsletter articles reported on these female students for the benefit of such sponsors: "They do their own cooking and housework, wear their own dress (with a uniform colour at school) and eat in their own way. Four have to be on duty for a week at a time on one of the five duties—morning or afternoon cooking, tidying and keeping in order schoolrooms, dormitories, and teachers rooms" (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1897, 38-41; CSMA). Instruction was carried out in Hindi, Bengali, and English and they studied geography, grammar, and arithmetic.



Figure 4: Girls' School and Industries Hostel, Kalimpong, c.1900s.

One difference from other schools lay in the fact that prizes for these female students were awarded solely for prowess in knitting, sewing, conduct, and cooking, a clear elevation of gendered domestic skills over literacy and numeracy. It is hard to speculate what portion of such graduates employed these skills for careers outside the household, since missionary records chose to stress only that they made ideal helpmeets for male teachers and catechists of the region. In 1890, Katharine Graham started a small girls school at the Kalimpong Mission compound that later became the Kalimpong Girls School (figure 4). At the outset, she was assisted by a Miss Higginson sent from the Church of Scotland's Calcutta branch, along with a youthful Bengali Christian woman teacher, Buddhimaya. By 1889, as the school expanded to thirty-one girls, Christians and Hindus, the Women's Guild added a trained teacher from Scotland, Miss Lily Waugh, to head a boarding wing (Dewan 1991, 119).

Another missionary intervention took the form of vocational, skills-based training at the Mission Lace School, where Katharine Graham enlisted European teachers to teach lace-making techniques to local women. Once lace-making classes took off, the Mission offered training to men and women in other income-generating handicrafts such as carpentry, Tibetan-rug and handbag weaving, block-printing, and embroidery. These classes laid the foundation for the Kalimpong Arts and Crafts Centre, whose products were showcased at Sales of Work that took place in Calcutta, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Bombay, and London. In 1911, these lace-makers received gratifying attention when newspapers reported

that a distinguished Scottish aristocrat, the Marchioness of Tullibardine, gifted a Brussels lace handkerchief they made to Queen Mary (*The Times of India*, February 20, 1911). The Grahams' networking connections garnered for this vocational program a level of success that eluded the usual small enterprise, and circulated its handcrafted products far and wide. In 1931, thousands of Scottish people read an Edinburgh minister's eloquent account of a sunset over Mount Kanchenjunga, Graham's blowing of a Tibetan trumpet, and Kalimpong lace being made to adorn the robes worn at the Moderator's installation (*The Scotsman*, March 2, 1931). An even larger audience yearned after such lace when newspapers reported that John Graham, the new Moderator, so delighted Queen Alexandra with his gift of a lace tablecloth when he called at the royal residence of Balmoral in the Highlands that she placed several more orders (*The Scotsman*, September 21, 1931).

Beyond Scotland, metropolitan consumers who sought a more exotic product than lace could purchase Himalayan-styled artisanal goods from Kalimpong at the famed Liberty store on Regent Street, London that specialized in Oriental-style home décor (Fleming 2004, 246). Kalimpong Arts and Crafts products attracted the attention of connoisseurs such as Harry Peach, whose Dryad Handicrafts was the largest supplier for the interwar Anglo-American world. At showrooms in Leicester and London, his Dryad firm held missionary exhibitions that displayed hand-woven clothing and other crafts from Kalimpong (The Arts and Crafts Story/Dryad Handicrafts). Whether at Sales of Work or high-street showrooms, this was a recurring variety of transcultural encounter that revolved around an emergent global consumer's imperium where ordinary people used such products of empire in their homes as an everyday form of connection with distant worlds (Hoganson 2007). Sadly, changing fashions and inaccessible raw materials led to the demise of the lace craft, but the textiles and woodwork that the Kalimpong Arts and Crafts pioneered are still found in European museums and local shops, as past and present testimony to the material dimensions of the contact zone as it operated between local artisans and missionary patrons (figure 5).

Health provisioning was a critical aspect of the Scottish missionaries' activities that gained strength as it tapped metropolitan and imperial networks of philanthropy and biomedical expertise. Alex McKay considers Western medical technologies a powerful "tool" (he uses Daniel Headrick's classic term) for missionaries to gain a strong footing in Himalayan society, which developed alongside a British imperial presence expanding into those borderlands (McKay 2007, 21). From the 1870s onward, medicine became a key conversion strategy as the advent of bacteriology-based treatments rendered the Western healer's efficacy far more potent than those of her indigenous rivals, which was not always the case for earlier generations of missionaries (Arnold 1985, Fitzgerald 2001). During the early years of the Mission, Macfarlane's health services during the cholera epidemic of 1876 brought him into close contact with Kalimpong locals



Figure 5: Lace class, Kalimpong Arts and Crafts, undated.

who previously were so mistrustful that they would not let him through the door. Rosemary Fitzgerald mentions the “double cure,” the twofold healing of the body and the soul, as a popular concept among late nineteenth-century missionaries. Only seven medical missionaries were located in India during 1858, but this figure climbed to twenty-eight in 1882, 140 in 1885, and escalated further in the early twentieth century (Fitzgerald 1997).

Shortly after her arrival at Kalimpong, Katharine Graham started a small dispensary on the mission grounds, staffed by a local nurse and medical auxiliary. Before this, local patients had to travel all the way to Darjeeling to attend its already overburdened Victoria Memorial Dispensary or Lewis Sanatorium. After missionary print publications featured the Kalimpong medical facility as a worthy cause to support, the Women’s Guild took on the task of upgrading the dispensary to a twenty-five-bed hospital, named after the Rev. Charteris. The Bengal government agreed to bear half the building costs (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1894, Letter from Rev. Charteris: CSMA). Guild branches eagerly raised ten pounds a year to fund hospital beds that would be named after their Scottish sponsors. The planter George Christison laid the hospital’s foundation stone just a few years after his presence at the Macfarlane Church inauguration, another affirmation of the close ties between the Mission and the planter community. The hospital awaited the arrival of Dr. Charles Frederic Ponder, another Darjeeling tea planter who had forsaken his prior occupation and enrolled at Edinburgh’s medical school in order to fulfill the Mission’s requirement for a European health professional. On Dr. Ponder’s arrival, the Rev. Charteris dispatched a public address to the missionary newsletter

where he discoursed on the nurturing links between Kalimpong and Scotland, embodied in the person of the Rev. Graham, who represented the Young Men's Guild, and Dr. Ponder, the new representative of the Women's Guild (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1893, 26: CSMA). Unlike schools, there existed indigenous healing options, but the powerful attraction of Western biomedicine meant that in a single month, Dr. Ponder and his sister, Nurse Ponder, treated 1,588 patients at the dispensary even before the hospital formally opened (Manuel 1914, 134–137). The Ponders started pharmacy classes to train local boys as compounders, and later nursing classes that enrolled local girls and the Homes' female students (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1894, 11: CSMA). As with teacher training and vocational skills, locals took advantage of such opportunities to contact and acquire "useful" modernity (McKay 2007, 40). Despite the limited nature of such opportunities, they proved crucial to social mobility, given the daunting challenges that subaltern and non-elites groups from such borderlands faced if they even managed to aspire to seeking out better education and training in cities such as Calcutta. Neither missionary education nor Western biomedicine directly produced mass conversions on the large scale that missionaries would have preferred, but they were crucial to local acceptance and mobility patterns. Advertisements posted in Scottish newspapers such as the *Aberdeen Journal* and *The Scotsman* to recruit teachers and nurses for SUMI and the Charteris hospital continued well into the twentieth century. A mix of political and cultural circumstances gradually ushered in a transition from imperial to local personnel (except at the highest ranks), many of the latter being familial descendants of early Mission graduates.

Philanthropy augmented the scope of this biomedical enterprise as colonial, imperial, and diasporic networks from India, Scotland, Canada, and Australia connected, through legacies, sponsorships, and at times, activism, to the contact zone of Kalimpong, where compatriots labored. A notable legacy was that of the late Miss Charlotte Anderson of Woodside, Fife, who left money in her will to the Kalimpong Medical Mission (*Dundee Courier*, February 12, 1907: BNA). After the Ponders retired, the Edinburgh medicos Dr. William Roy Macdonald and nurse Jeanie Campbell found themselves treating Kalimpong patients in hospital beds marked with the names of Scottish localities, such as Pollokshields, Plesance, Perth, Wippen et al., that had sponsored those beds. The first hospital compounder, Dingbu, owed his education to a sponsorship from the St Stephen's Guild of Edinburgh, and then his salary to one from the Young Men's Guild of Calcutta. At SUMI, a "new special supporter," the Sunday School of St Andrew's Church, Montreal, funded the schooling of a Darjeeling local, Samsun (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1897, 30: CSMA). Its minister, the Rev. J. Edgar Hill, a Scottish migrant from Dundee, connected his Montreal congregation with the Young Men's and Women's Guilds of Scotland, whose actions inspired Canadian brethren to assist Himalayan men, women, and children in institutions such as SUMI, and later, the Homes (Anon. 1882,



175). A new connection with South Australia began in 1911 in the person of the hospital's first woman doctor, Dr. Laura Fowler Hope, a graduate of the University of Adelaide (Hope Correspondence). Such far-flung networks became crucial to Kalimpong as a transcultural contact zone.

## An uncrowned king of Kalimpong

The missionary dominance of Kalimpong's social spaces was particularly marked in comparison to Darjeeling, the summer capital of Bengal and a tea industry hub where British official and planter landmarks, such as the Bengal Governor's summer residence and the Planter's Club, were more prominent than its manses. William McGovern, a flamboyant American traveler on his way to Tibet in disguise and allegedly the inspiration for the filmic Indiana Jones, remarked that "The senior missionaries form the local aristocracy, overawing even the British-Indian officials; and Dr. Graham, the head of the mission, is the uncrowned king of Kalimpong, the arbiter and dispenser of justice even to those not inside the Christian fold" (McGovern 1924, 21–22). In *The Three Closed Lands*, Graham dispatched his fictional Guild visitor to visit the Daling estate manager and Lepcha Buddhist chief Tenduk and his Bhutia wife. Raja Tenduk, the reader was informed, was a powerful landowner recently honored for his services to the British state vis-à-vis Bhutan (Graham 1897, 49–50). The polite tone of this encounter with a local chief was an ecumenical gesture rare in the genre of missionary writing, a sign of Graham's evolving eclecticism, which became most visible in his civic activities in the locality.

John Graham's towering stature in the contact zone might seem to stem from his missionary rank and charismatic personality, but in reality, owed much to his transcultural alliances with non-European and non-Christian neighbors. One such ally was the cloth merchant, banker, and contractor Ramchandra Mintri, whose father and uncle arrived in the Himalayas during the 1850s as migrant traders from Churu in Rajasthan (personal communication, Benu Mintri, March 2013). Mintri's conservative Marwari community usually restricted charitable activities to religious and caste kin, but a mutually beneficial association with Graham allowed both to transcend sectarian ties. This association started with a local campaign to endow a Victoria Memorial, where Graham supplemented Mintri's generous monetary contribution with humble one-anna contributions solicited from ordinary citizens (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1900, 200: CSMA). The Memorial took the form of the late Queen-Empress Victoria's bust placed within a fountain enclosure carved and painted by Sikkim lamas in Tibetan and Newar-inspired motifs designed by the Calcutta School of Art Principal Ernest Havell, a vocal champion of local artisanal crafts. At the inauguration of the Memorial by Sir John Woodburn, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, he and Graham departed from standard protocol when they made their ceremonial remarks in Hindustani, a

deferential gesture toward the local citizens and the vernacular civic spirit which made the Memorial possible (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1902, 359: CSMA). Mintri had already funded a Coronation dispensary near the Kalimpong Bazaar at a cost of Rs 2,500 that acted as a field extension of the Charteris hospital (Manuel 1914, 148). Later, he donated a water system to the Homes. Another Memorial donor, Raja Gongzim Ugyen Dorji, Bhutan's representative at Kalimpong and a major landowner, became a financial benefactor of the hospital and the Homes and instrumental in creating a long-standing relationship for Graham with Bhutanese noble families (Dorji 2008; Tashi 2015). Until recently, the latter sent their sons to the Homes, an intriguing choice given its subaltern character compared to the prestige of other European-style public schools in India.

In 1890, the Kalimpong Mela was held for the first time as a popular annual event that would continue for many decades, and later lend its name to the post-colonial town's public grounds. It originated in former farm boy Graham's awareness of the need to showcase the improvement possibilities for small cultivators, crofters in his Scottish parlance. Unlike the Darjeeling area, where plantation interests reigned supreme, the land rights of small cultivators received legal protection around Kalimpong when the British government prohibited plantation tea cultivation. Meant to showcase and encourage indigenous crofters' achievements, the Mela expanded into a massive agri-horticultural show whose highlights included a Tibetan mule and Bhutia pony fair, a children's Bible school, sports competitions, handicraft and music events, and agricultural and animal husbandry prizes. Hundreds of people flocked to it every December (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1899, 109: CSMA). Three years after the Mela started, Julien Adrian Hiliare Louis, a Polish Catholic traveler to the Himalayas and a Royal Geographical Society member, marveled at the tremendous bustle as participants prepared to compete for prizes in myriad categories, from the best Himalayan costume, to cattle, cloth, cheese, or tea, and to learn about up-to-date silk-reeling equipment, agricultural implements, and sugarcane cultivation. Louis found it noteworthy that Graham translated the District Commissioner's inaugural speech from English into the Nepali vernacular, increasingly the local lingua franca (Louis 1894, 48–50).

The wide scope of Graham's civic activities and his alliances with local elites does not imply that he lost sight of enduring Mission ambitions to penetrate the three closed lands and win over Himalayan converts over those vast territories from its Kalimpong base. Graham was thrilled when his parish members decided to dispatch a Kalimpong Mission into Bhutan, seeking to create their own contact zone there. On the model of the Scottish Guilds that sent Graham to Kalimpong, those local congregations voted to pay Rs 12–18 a month to support their Bhutan missionary, a considerable commitment for peasant households (*The Christian Express*, June 1, 1891, 87, and August 1, 1892, 124: NCC). Sukhman, a Normal School graduate, volunteered to lead the Bhutan contingent, which meant that

he relinquished a comfortable catechist salary of Rs 30 a month for a bare subsistence. His untimely death temporarily derailed this plan, but Bhutan did become Kalimpong's thirteenth parish (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1895, 1: CSMA).

For the moment, the other closed lands, Nepal and Tibet, remained alluringly elusive. Graham and his colleagues, beholden to official patronage, respected the British government's sensitivity to the Tibetan state's fear of Christianity, but evinced sympathy for the flamboyant missionary maverick Annie Taylor who made several well-publicized attempts to enter and preach in Tibet. Interestingly, in the same Scottish Presbyterian missionary newsletter that described her exploits, the Revs. Sutherland and Macara wrote how they were briefly imprisoned in Tibet. On their vacation, they had traveled from Kalimpong into Sikkim, Nepal, and Bhutan. Deliberately or otherwise—it remained unclear—they intruded into that portion of Tibet “that comes down like a wedge between Sikkim and Bhutan” and successfully ventured as far as the trading post of Yatung, where Chinese soldiers intercepted them and escorted them back into India (*The Christian Express*, October 1, 1894, 154–155: NCC). This adventure seems inspired as much by high spirits and a thirst for borderland exploration as by the crusading zeal that Annie Taylor epitomized, but its publication shows the expansive tenor of missionary dreams that they shared on this occasion with readers, even as they perforce adhered to colonial regulations. While mystical Tibet remained a major target for gathering heathen souls, the Mission newsletter testified triumphantly that Nepali converts voluntarily journeyed back to their homeland to spread the Word (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1893, 22: CSMA).

In 1914, another book appeared about the Guild mission to the Himalayas, *The Gladdening River*. The author was Rev. D.G. Manuel, a distinguished clerical historian who wrote it to mark the Foreign Mission's semi-jubilee year (*Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, 1913, October 7: BNA). Describing the Guild mission as a “river whose streams made glad,” his book arose from research conducted during Manuel's Kalimpong visits in 1905 and 1914, the *Life and Work* magazine archives, and lengthy conversations with Graham. Both books, *The Three Closed Lands* and *The Gladdening River*, opened with lengthy forewords from Governors of Bengal—Sir Charles Alfred Elliott in the first, Baron Carmichael of Skirling in the second. These prestigious pedigrees were indicative, firstly, of the solid approbation that this frontier missionary venture enjoyed from Victorian Britain's official establishment, and secondly, of an expanding network of elite and middle-class British and colonial supporters, over and beyond older core audiences linked to clerical networks. There were other reasons, too, why Graham's ventures, especially his new enterprise at Kalimpong, earned such support from official opinion. Termed by Manuel the “Great Overflow,” Graham's ambitious project of the St Andrew's Colonial Homes, where he intended to school “poor white” children in Scottish Christian virtues, was a timely solution to a pressing social problem that afflicted British India.

## The poor whites of empire

When British India's public forums highlighted the particular social problem of so-called "poor whites," the reportage was along on the lines of this *Times of India* article which dramatically bemoaned: "One of the cruellest sights in Calcutta is the blue eyed tawny haired child, clad in dirty dhoti or tattered breeks, begging in Hindustani around the bazaar or other public places" (*The Times of India*, March 4, 1910). In such a fashion, English-language newspapers and government bodies expressed concern about the "poor white" problem, and the increasing incidence of pauperism among domiciled Europeans and Eurasians (Andrews 2005; Arnold 1979, 1983; Hubel 2004; Mizutani 2011). Privately, there was much shaking of heads among imperial social reformers, missionaries, administrators, and educationists over the fate of mixed-race children in India, the unacknowledged but numerous offspring of British tea planters, civil servants, army personnel, and businessmen who had entered into (usually illicit) liaisons with "native" women. Late Victorian moral scruples about inter-racial sexualities meant that those children were denied the normal educational channels for domiciled Europeans. Mixed-race children were a constant reminder of racial miscegenation and a mockery of the frail morality of the ruling race. Ostracized by respectable Indians and British, most mixed-race children ended up as "poor whites" on city streets. Newspapers and commentators portrayed this as an acute problem that threatened existing social and racial hierarchies.

Official and non-official responses took two forms, punitive and reformative. Punitive state measures included laws such as the European Vagrancy Act XXI of 1869 to prevent "destitute persons of European extraction" wandering throughout India (Theobald 1870, 336–338). Reforming measures targeted specific categories of "poor whites" for rescue, typically children and young people, as they created commissions to investigate the problem and suggest educational and employment solutions (Anon. 1892). One such solution took the form of the St Andrew's Colonial Homes, where the pure air of the temperate Himalayas would assist in schooling "poor white" children into a useful workforce instead of their feared degeneration into the ranks of the urban proletariat.

In 1900, the Mission newsletter announced the establishment of such a children's home at Kalimpong, where Eurasian and European children would be suitably trained for emigration to British colonies (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1900, 67: CSMA). Readers were told of "the sad condition of many children among the poor white and Eurasian population of India, through poverty and unfavorable social surroundings" (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1900, 118: CSMA). True to his belief in the power of print, Graham released the first issue of the biannual *St Andrew's Colonial Homes Magazine*, where he photographed the first children along with their new matron, a missionary widow named Margaret Cattrell-Jones. In the same issue, a tea planter, a Calcutta

merchant, and a barrister, a respectable galaxy of middle-class opinion in British India, wrote approvingly of this. Graham expressed his confidence that in future, the Homes would be entirely supported by friends in India, even as he launched publicity efforts to reach audiences beyond its shores. (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1900, 20: CSMA). By the second issue, Graham announced that the Homes magazine already had 10,000 subscribers (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1900, 261: CSMA).

From the late nineteenth century onward, British reformers discredited the grim Dickensian orphanage and workhouse model in favor of cottage homes (Webb 1902). Graham implemented such a modern child-rescue solution on a hundred acres of land granted by the Bengal government, atop the picturesque Deolo hill that overlooked Kalimpong. His inspirations came from England, where Thomas Barnardo established cottages at Ilford, as well as from Scotland, where William Quarrier ran his orphan homes on the outskirts of Glasgow (Murdoch 2006; Magnusson 2006). Following their examples, Graham placed child recruits in quasi-family cottages in the charge of a housemother and an aunty assistant, where they were to receive training in useful trades, domestic skills, and Christian piety. The objective was to provide a basic general and industrial education. Once the children reached a certain age, boys would be trained as farm workers, girls as housekeepers and children's nurses.

The Victorian ideas of social improvement, as well as of industrial and spiritual uplift that had characterized Graham's own Scottish upbringing were translated and transmuted into his new Himalayan enterprise. In contrast to India, where upper-class locals were criticized for their aversion to manual labor and British colonizers for over-reliance on their servants, the white settler colonies seemed best for the sturdy self-reliance that Graham wished to inculcate. A much vaunted absence of domestic servants at the Homes cottages meant that the children had to perform all chores, from cleaning to cooking, something unheard of in any European-style institution or even in a middle-class Indian household (*The Times of India*, February 5, 1908). Philanthropic and church networks mobilized a constant supply of employees from Britain and its white settler colonies to staff the Homes. This was necessary since Eurasians and domiciled Europeans were not deemed acceptable (until the decolonization era). Graham issued regular advertisements in newspapers such as the *Aberdeen Journal*, the *Dundee Courier*, the *Scotsman*, and even the *Times of India* to hire teachers and housemothers willing to travel to the Homes and work on either a stipendiary or voluntary basis. The first housemother had worked for Barnardo at Ilford, while another had done a stint at the Edinburgh children's hospital, the first of many Scottish volunteers who supplemented the ranks of the paid recruits (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1900, 189: CSMA). In one year, the children's numbers rose from two to twenty-four under Mrs. Cattrell-Jones and her assistants, the cottage housemothers

and aunts.<sup>3</sup> Admirers compared “the practical training and the thorough grounding in discipline given at the Homes with the unpractical training, purely literary, and the utter lack of discipline in British Board schools and Indian government institutions” (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1901, 178: CSMA).

Since the 1860s, metropolitan reformers sought to rescue British slum children through repatriation to labor-short Dominions, such as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (Langfield 2004). Graham expressed his hope that his English idol, Dr. Barnardo would assist in helping the Homes children migrate to the colonies, since he and Quarrier had been engaged in such activities for a while (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1900, 141–2: CSMA).<sup>4</sup> However, in the case of slum children from London and Glasgow, the whiteness of their blood was not in question. Unlike Quarrier and Barnardo, who dealt with the human consequences of industrial capitalism and urban poverty in the metropolis, Graham sought to rescue children “in (whose) veins there runs blood that calls for a higher end but ending up as jetsam and flotsam of Indian cities [...] credited with the vices of both races and the virtues of neither” (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News* 1902, 322: CSMA). Graham hoped that on the Australian outback or the Canadian prairie, where there was insufficient European labor, these Himalayan borderlands children might acquire value after receiving suitable training. Graham’s child recruits were not yet truly white, in deportment or character, or even appearance, but they could be schooled into “whiteness” and “Britishness” by an exclusively British staff who would train them in basic literacy as well as in useful trades. The Colonial part of the Homes name denoted a hopeful destination, as well as the values of self-sufficiency and independence that Graham hoped to inculcate (figure 6).

Throughout the nineteenth century, colonial entrepreneurs with connections to India and Australia advocated sending poor whites from one colony to the other, to the benefit of both. Starting in 1828, Charles Prinsep, who was from an influential colonial family with myriad business and official dealings in Eastern India that branched into Western Australia, lobbied the Governor-General, Sir William Bentinck, to adopt such a policy, and continued to do so for several decades. During the 1830s, the East India Company government decided against this, partly due to opposition from British fathers, and its own conviction that those children still had a place in India. Rural Australian landowners had asked for Indian indentured labor, but city residents staunchly opposed this. Weighty opposition to Indian emigration came from British policymakers such as Sir James Stephen, the head of the Colonial Office, who regarded the colonies as

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3 “St Andrew’s Colonial Homes.” *Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1901, 178; Eastern Himalayan Mission Papers, Reel 26.

4 “St Andrew’s Colonial Homes.” *Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News*, 1900: 141–2, Eastern Himalayan Mission Papers, Reel 26.



Figure 6: Rev. John Anderson Graham with staff, children and teachers from the Homes and Mission, c.1930s.

an asylum for England's surplus numbers. Despite setbacks, Prinsep continued to lobby for Indian labor immigration (Allbrook 2002). Old India hands such as Sir Edward Coventry Braddon, the Agent-General for Tasmania, joined him in advocating Australia as the ideal retirement locale for Anglo-Indians (British men working in India), particularly as their children would do well there (Braddon 1892–93). However, while colonial landowners campaigned for policies that might bring certain categories of British Indian migrants to the Antipodes, provincial legislatures began to enact exclusion laws whose objective was to reserve Australia for European migrants.

Australia's provincial laws culminated in 1901 with the infamous Commonwealth Immigration Restriction Act. Between 1901 and 1973 immigration to Australia became governed by the White Australia policy, which prevented non-Europeans from entering Australia for residence except under special circumstances. Nonetheless, taking inspiration from another British colony, Natal, the Act was not absolute in its racial definition. Rather, it granted absolute discretion for immigration officials to deny entry to migrants deemed undesirable through instruments such as the Dictation Test (Jupp 1995). In the era of White Australia, such racialized regimes faced a policy dilemma—either they continued to be grossly under-populated in terms of Northern European settlers or they relaxed their definitions of whiteness on a case by case basis. Marilyn Lake examines how in the new global histories of race of the late nineteenth century, the “temperate zone” was reconceptualized, defensively so, as

white man's country. The British colonies of America, Australia, and South Africa were portrayed in historico-geographical terms as an extension of Europe, albeit one where the white race was besieged. Lake argues that White Australian immigration policies were conceived in the context of and in response to such global histories, rather than domestic concerns in isolation. Following global debates in the United States, South America, and elsewhere over white men under siege by non-white races, Australia's federal fathers arrived at a transnational identification of whiteness and sought to safeguard it (Lake 2004). In the light of such newly transnational conceptions, it seemed to Graham and his supporters that the lighter-skinned members of British India's "poor whites" might very well earn a place within the strictures of the White Australia policy, if they were suitably identified and trained at a young age. Thanks to the discretion offered to immigration officials to apply the Dictation Test, those Homes children whose physiognomy and demeanor successfully conformed to the ideas of whiteness, were able to enter the country as sought-after laboring migrants. We know from recent research and public history initiatives that many such cases slipped through the net of racialized immigration policies.

### Kim and his Kalimpong kin

In 1901, Rudyard Kipling's novel *Kim* came to the public eye with a bang through its serial publication in *McClure's Magazine*, followed by the book edition by Macmillan & Company. Kipling's *Kim* received glowing reviews all over the English-speaking world in print forums as diverse as the *British Medical Journal*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *The Journal of Education*, *The Australasian*, *The Argus*, *The Camperdown Chronicle*, and *The Sewanee Review*. Just one year after the novel's publication, John Graham adroitly linked his Homes' children to this worldwide bestseller with the evocative phrase "Kim and his kin" that he devised for publicity materials (*Darjeeling Kalimpong and Sikkim News* 1902, 322-324: CSMA). He used the phrase to refer to the mixed-race children he had assembled in Kalimpong for the first time in the Mission newsletter of 1902, where he appealed for readers to support the new Homes. Such an evocation of the fictional Kim's real-life kin was repeatedly resurrected in print and on the radio, all the way from India to Britain to the United States to New Zealand. That unforgettable phrase effectively connected the Kalimpong Homes to the global audience who had thrilled to the orphan's "fascinating story of India" (*New York Times*, September 28, 1901). Aware of Kipling's insistence that Kim was unimpeachably white in his heredity, at least some readers understood enough of the novel's imperial setting to recognize that his soldier father might well have begotten children on other, non-white mothers, as did the fathers of many children whom Graham sought to rescue at the Homes. Ironically, Graham's own employer, the Foreign



Mission of the Church of Scotland, long remained ambivalent toward the Homes' children and what they represented. While established pillars of the Presbyterian religious establishment such as the Young Men's Guild and the Edinburgh cleric Archibald Charteris quickly pledged support for Graham's new institution, the Church of Scotland's official establishment pursued a policy of public silence on it. Influential lay supporters of the Foreign Mission such as the Glasgow businessman James Paterson warned Graham that he should not let the Homes' claims interfere with his special obligation to advance the task of proselytization. Graham's biographer, James Minto, declared that such attitudes stemmed out of a combination of pious embarrassment about illicit sex and misgivings about the Homes' financial viability (Minto 1974, 56–59). Bernard Brooks, later the first Anglo-Indian to become Homes Principal, wrote that Graham fruitlessly pleaded for three years for the Foreign Mission authorities to lend its name to the Homes (Brooks 2014, 21). In all likelihood, in addition to moralistic qualms about British India's "poor waifs," the Foreign Mission feared the diversion of resources from the conversion and outreach toward local, native populations that to its mind formed the key components of missionary activity.

Certainly, the case might be made that the Homes did cause a diversion of funds from other Mission activities, given the thousands of pounds and rupees that Graham managed to raise in the name of Kim's kin. Shortly after the foundation of the Homes, a committee started work in Britain, chaired by Sir William Muir, the Chancellor of Edinburgh University, that aimed to raise a thousand pounds toward this "admirable object" (*The Pioneer*, Nov 4, 1901: BNA). Church workers organized annual Sales of Work in different British and Indian cities, to benefit the official missionary charities. From the 1910s, many of those Sales instead targeted funds to support the St Andrew's Colonial Homes and its associated organizations at Kalimpong. For instance, in August 1911, a Sale of Work was held at a Dundee church to support the Monzievard and Strowan bed at the Kalimpong hospital (*Dundee Courier*, August 31, 1911: BNA). That same year, a public meeting was held to promote the Kalimpong Homes, whose speakers included the Homes' principal, James Simpson, and a staff member who was visiting Scotland on leave, Miss Campbell (*Belshill Speaker*, October 13, 1911: BNA). Beginning in 1914, annual meetings were held for supporters and subscribers to the Homes, initially at Edinburgh and Glasgow, then at London, and eventually further afield. It is possible that a fair proportion of such philanthropic funds that reached the Homes might have originated from people who were not regular donors to other missionary causes.

Graham never failed to remind imperial audiences that the Kims at his Homes were victims who bore the burden of parental sins, not their own, and deserved sympathy and assistance from the wider reaches of the British Empire. For instance, numerous children at the Homes hailed from poor Anglo-Indian families living in Calcutta, but a substantial

majority arrived from the plantations of Assam and Darjeeling, the illicit offspring of white planter men and the laboring women, the managers and workers for the “empire’s gardens” that produced one of Britain’s key global commodities (Sharma 2011). Those “tea garden children” became less prominent as the years went by, both in Homes enrollments and in the institution’s public image. There is a fair amount of truth to the local lore that Graham’s urge to found the Homes lay less in the urge to ameliorate the lives of mixed-race slum children and more in the blue-eyed children he glimpsed in the workers’ quarters of tea plantations on visits to white neighbors and planter friends in the Eastern Himalayas. While large numbers of Assam, Darjeeling, and Dooars’ planters openly avowed their stalwart support of the Homes, personal familial contact with the children’s pasts was seldom acknowledged for fear of scandal. The Homes was remembered in a number of wills, such as that of David Waddell Lyle, a retired Assam planter, the residue of whose estate was bequeathed to the Homes (*The Scotsman*, April 22, 1919). But it remained unclear whether he had a familial connection that inspired the legacy, or whether such a legacy arose from a general philanthropic instinct to support a cause dear to the planter’s heart.

Personal connections among Raj personnel to the Homes were shrouded in secrecy, not only due to the illicit nature of the Indian liaisons that birthed many of its children, but due to the secret fathers’ connections to legitimate kin across Britain. We can speculate that since public announcements only mentioned that the Homes served needy children of European descent, supporters who lacked direct knowledge of British India’s sexual and social mores, may not have realized that it housed large numbers of illegitimate children. Indeed, recent works of scholarship that have relied on particular archives in Britain took these children at face value as the poor Anglo-Indian children that the majority of the public statements declared them to be (Mizutani 2011). The term “poor Anglo-Indians” did describe a majority of the Homes children, but for many of them, their pasts, presents, and futures were more complex than that, as we are gradually coming to understand. Recent insights into the complicated “tense and tender ties” that connected the Homes to plantation liaisons and, subsequently, to imperial networks of migration, have arisen through the unconventional channels of oral histories and family accounts that have emerged into the public realm as past prejudices and active participants die away (McCabe 2014, May 2013, Sharma 2016). Well into the twenty-first century, Kalimpong sees an annual wave of global visitors, as the descendants of Homes children journey there from the former reaches of the British Empire to excavate and recover their personal histories of the contact zone.

## Figures

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