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THE  
CALCUTTA CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

No. 45.—February, 1836.

\* \* The entire profits arising from the Sale of this Publication will be devoted to the CALCUTTA CHRISTIAN TRACT AND BOOK SOCIETY.

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\* \* Communications, it is requested, may be addressed to "The Editors of the CALCUTTA CHRISTIAN OBSERVER," care of Messrs. THACKER AND Co.

## FUNDAMENTAL RULES.

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I. That the CALCUTTA CHRISTIAN OBSERVER be established on those evangelical principles, in which the leading Reformers of the 16th century were agreed.

II. That no piece, advocating the peculiarities of a particular denomination, shall in any case be inserted in the work.

III. That the Editors, who are of different religious denominations, shall be at liberty, without offence to the contributors, to modify or reject all communications which may appear contrary to the above Rules.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Progress of English Education, &c. No. VI., is partly set up; but, from various circumstances, could not be completed in time for the present number. It shall have a prominent place next month.

Reviews of Mr. Mundy's Book and Sermon, and of Messrs. Reid and Matheson's Journey in America, are in preparation.

The Review of Dr. Burn's Sermons is in type, but necessarily postponed.

We have received two poetical pieces by 'Cinsurensis,' and shall have much pleasure in giving them early insertion.

The paper on Slavery is well written; but scarcely possesses sufficient local interest to warrant its introduction into our pages. Probably, with the author's permission, we may make some extracts from it on a future occasion.

Foster's Sermons, No. 2, next month; and also L. on Temperance Societies, if he will permit us to make a few slight alterations.

Mr. Mason's valuable paper "on the Xavens," was received too late for insertion in this No. We shall gratify our readers with it next month.

The Title-page and Index of the Vol. for 1835, are supplied with this No.

THE  
CALCUTTA CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

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February, 1836.

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I.—*Polygamy of the Kulin Bráhmans.*

Of the varied castes into which the aborigines of India are divided, that of the bráhman stands pre-eminent. According to the Gentu code, (a heterogeneous mass of law, love, and physics,) men are emanations of the deity. Whilst from the more ignoble members of Brahma all other tribes exuded, the bráhman, springing into existence from his mouth, claims the homage of mankind, and with complacency receives the appellations of God.

Until a change of dynasty partially removed this illusion, the bráhman could not, without derogation to his honor, engage in the common avocations of men: and although this evil age (कलियोग) annually tearing from him his shreds of divinity, discovers without remorse the frailties of his humanity; still he sways an iron sceptre over the consciences, persons, and property of the lower castes\*, some of whom seek his blessing by drinking the water in which he has laved his feet, and others by still more disgusting practices†.

Such an elevation of one mortal above another, might be considered the acme of pride; but we have not yet reached the climax: above the Bansha bráhman rises the Khetriya, and over him the Kulin—the proudest of the proud—who, if not disgusted by the

\* Seven years ago a fire broke out in a bazar, zillá Murshedábád, and destroyed two cows, the property of a poor man. The bráhmans asserted that this calamity was the punishment of a crime in a former birth, and compelled him to distribute the produce of his remaining effects among them, to eat his food mingled with the excrements of the cow, and to wander as a beggar in a state of nudity, a girdle of rope on his loins and a chain of iron round his neck excepted. From these wanderings he has not returned, except by transmigration he may have appeared in a new birth.

† We have seen a man lick from the dust the phlegm which a bráhman had expectorated.

servility of parasites, may live as a prince not among beggars, but among princes of his own tribe.

How niggardly soever his habits ;—how despicable soever his literary attainments, and contemptible his manners ;—how filthy soever his person, and disgusting his costume ;—how rapacious soever his disposition, and mean his conduct, to be a Kulin (charity with a vengeance which can cover such a multitude of sins!) is to be divine. To be regarded with veneration, and flattered by adulation ; to be privileged with a home in the bosom of every bráhman family ; aye, and to be bribed with money for consenting to eat of the bounty of his fellow bráhman, are the usurped prerogatives of the Kulin. His visits are welcomed, his stay solicited, his departure regretted, as the removal of a divine being, whose presence confers the *summum bonum* of temporal and eternal blessings ; at which time he is pressed to accept of cooking and other utensils of brass, or more valuable metal, according to the abilities of his host ; and quits his temporary abode with a bonus to supply the expenses of his journey.

Fulsome adulation has been injurious to the best of men ; it is a tree so corrupt as to poison the morals of him who feeds on it. Pride and insolence, a dissolute life, effeminacy and habits of indolence, a contempt of all useful pursuits, all honorable attainments, together with an aptitude for fraud, theft, revenge, and murder are the certain diseases produced by its fruit. Muscular strength, fortitude, and courage, together with the powers of thinking, and capacity for research, are all blighted by its noxious shade. The moral condition of the Kulin in the present day affords sufficient proof of all, and more than all this to convince the most incredulous\*.

Notwithstanding his divine origin, as he eats, sleeps, and dies like other men, we may suppose him to possess the dispositions, appetites, and passions incident to human nature ; to be attracted, at least in some period of his life, by connubial happiness ; and when married, to seek a settled home, that he may confer on his offspring an education suited to their rank : but, in tracing the path of the divine Kulin, such a supposition would mislead us. Though originally restricted to two wives, with one of whom only he should cohabit, unless she be sterile, he now defies all moral restraints, and multiplies his wives more rapidly than he numbers the years of his life† ; aye, and has

\* We believe that a reference to the records of the criminal courts would show, that Brahmattar lands, by supporting the bráhmans in superstition and indolence, have produced more dacoitís than wretchedness and want.

† Braja Bandopádhyá, who lived at Janái Baksá, married 43 wives : one of them was the daughter of Rupa Adhikári, at Beldánga, zillá Murshedábád.

been known at the verge of death, when his friends were bearing him to his long home, anxious lest the ebb of life should bear him beyond their reach ere they could lave his body in the sacred stream, to have married two wives on the last evening of his existence\*.

One of the least evils arising from this practice is, that other bráhmans are compelled to purchase their wives; and bráhman daughters, as other cattle in the market, are vended, according to their beauty, youth, and connexions, at from 200 to 400 rupees a head.

From the Kula Shástra alone (an unorthodox work†), we learn the origin of the Kulin.

Ballál Sena, a rájá, by descent a súdra, and by birth illegitimate, in the 63rd year of his age, (about A. D. 904,) appears to have assembled around him the most reputed of his subjects for wisdom and morality; and to have dignified those who possessed decision, meekness, learning, character, love of pilgrimage, aversion to bribes, devotion, love of retirement, and liberality, with the appellation of Kulin, (how unlike the thing now called a Kulin!) thus strewing the walks of literature, science, and morality with the attractions of honor and wealth.

Whatever were the reasons for his conduct, whether we suppose the learning of the age to have been a mere gossamer of sophistry; and morality, by a continuous ebb, to have left the exhalations of a putrid marsh, to poison the intellectual atmosphere, until the energies of the sovereign were required to rescue his people from crime and barbarity: or whether, taking for our guide the fabled traditions of the times, we admit, that whilst the rest of mankind were sunk in ignorance, India was the only country exalted by wisdom; and that Ballál Sena was nobly ambitious to elevate his subjects still higher in moral excellence: whatever the circumstances of the age, or the motives of the sovereign, the measure commends itself as calculated to found

Káli Thákur, who resided at Murágáchá, near Dharmada, married 60 wives.

Srídhár Cháturjya, who dwelt at Setgáchya Begune, married 60 wives, one of them the daughter of Káli Siddhantha, at Akrá Bishnupur near Daihát.

A Kulin at Ulá, near Sántipur, married 100 wives.

From such examples, Mahomet with his haram appears merely as a satellite to the Kulin.

\* Rám Lochan married 60 wives. In his last sickness his friends, (unable from the distance to carry him in one day to the river,) tarried for the night at the village of Singha. There he married two daughters of Rám Prasád Bandhyopádyáya, an inhabitant of Kánchoní, and died the next morning.

† None of the books denominated Hindu Shástras make mention of the Kulin.

an empire of knowledge on the ruins of ignorance, give stability by equitable laws to the throne, and encircle so wise a ruler with a halo of glory, which malevolence could not obscure, and which future generations should venerate.

All must regret that the advanced age of Ballál Sena did not permit him to complete his noble design. Had he lived to disrobe of their father's honors those Kulin sons, whom neither paternal example nor the sovereign favour could stimulate to morality; and to remand individuals so unworthy of their father's distinctions back to poverty and neglect; he would at its first setting in have arrested a tide of arrogance and wickedness, which without opposition has rolled on through subsequent ages.

In its career of spoliation, ambition laughs at honesty and shame, and halts not till it has torn the laurel from the brows of the last competitor: that of the Kulin, however, having torn from man every resemblance of equality, and scaling the heavens, usurped the attributes of God, had no further conquests to make, but merely to maintain the position in which the death of Ballál Sena had left it—a task not difficult, for the division of the people into castes was hereditary, and the Kulin, once exalted, had the customs, habits, prejudices of a thousand years in favour of his retaining that supremacy with which he outrages common sense.

To pursue the gradations through which Kulin polygamy obtained its present abominable excess, would neither interest nor profit. Human nature, unbridled, rapidly advances in the path of crime; and the Bráhman and Kulin mutually stimulated—this by covetousness and lust, that by fame—would agree to trample down every obstacle to the attainment of their wishes. The Kulin, denuded of moral sensibilities, had much to gain by multiplying his wives; and the Bráhman, inflated with the pride of exalting his family, forgot the solitudes of a father when by giving his daughter to the *nominal* embraces of a Kulin\*, he inclosed her in an iron cage of necessity, dammed up the streams of domestic comfort, and consigned her to solitude worse than that of widowhood; a prey to passions, designed by the beneficent Creator to make her an affectionate wife, and the happy mother of a contented family; but which by this unnatural custom, as fires smothered up, consumed by slow degrees her constitution, or breaking out into flames, constrained her to

\* Rám Sankar Nyayabhusan, resident at Gow Maye, married Tárámani, daughter of Síba Bhattácharjya, at Panuhát near Katwá. Some neighbours (one of whom was Bhágabat Nandan), more curious than delicate to learn the nature of a Kulin's conversation with his new bride, secretly assembled near his sleeping apartment, and heard him refuse her admission to his bed unless she could bring him a present of money.

fly to illicit intercourse while under the paternal roof, or to the abode and degradation of a prostitute\*.

Were a census taken of that unhappy class of beings just alluded to, it would perhaps be ascertained, that the majority is composed of Hindu females, not by nature more frail, nor by disposition more disposed to go astray, than others; but whose calamity has been to be wedded in infancy to infants like themselves, and whose husbands died before they had attained the age of manhood; and who, being bound by their shástras to remain in widowhood, never tasted domestic happiness. After allowing for the disparity of numbers between the Kulin and other tribes, were a second census taken, may we not suppose that the majority obtained would be made up of Kulin wives?

We cease therefore to wonder, when a Kulin's wife, unless a Kulin born, becomes a mother, that her offspring is regarded as illegitimate; and fear that a mere tithe of such children arrive at manhood. Neglect, not to say wilful murder, can put a speedy termination to their existence. That the destruction of such infants, however frequent, escapes detection may be accounted for, by the reputed sanctity of a bráhman's house, and the seclusion of bráhmanís from the rest of mankind. The pregnancy of a bráhmaní reaches not the ear of a Musalmán neighbour, till after parturition; but this, if dishonorable, is of course never announced. Should a whisper breathe reproach upon a bráhman, a Hindu's bosom is the sacred deposit of such scandal—we may as easily extract water from a flint as elicit the secret from him:—veneration for the bráhman hermetically seals his lips; and did it not do so, his caste, his reputation, his livelihood, his family, his home would all be placed in jeopardy by the disclosure. Thus a fountain of iniquity is opened, the streams of which, though concealed from the eye of others, are imbibed more or less by the whole Hindu race, and demoralize them till, “horribile dictu,” they brutalize the father, debase the mother, mock the bride, prostitute the daughter, and murder the infant†.

\* A Kulin who lived at Jainá Balka, married at Nabadwípa, the beautiful daughter of Prajápátí Thákur. As a preliminary to the nuptial bed, he demanded from her a sum of money, which she could not give, and the next morning he departed. Disappointed in having married a covetous wretch instead of an affectionate husband, she eloped from her father's house, and at Bânsberí, alias Bânsbághán, alias Bânstallá galí, amassed by crime a considerable property. With this, (10 years after her marriage,) she attracted the miser, and (he consenting to live with her) they retired to Benares.

Thus he spurned from his affections the chaste virgin, because poor; and embraced her when a harlot, because rich.

† Three years ago an infant not 10 days old was taken up by men cutting indigo: as the waters were rapidly increasing, in a few hours the

Accommodating the language of a celebrated author, we may say of such a custom :—It is licentious, gross, and corrupted ; it binds the Kulin to the frailer being, whilst she is the object of desire—it relieves him, when she is most the subject of pity—it gives all to brutal sense, and nothing to generous and gentle affection. He who can abandon the deluded woman and the helpless offspring is worse than the birds of prey : for of them the males remain till the nestlings can take wing. Above all, it is contrary to pure morality, which assigns woman to man as the partner of his labour, the soother of his evil, his helpmate in peril, his friend in affliction ;—not as the toy of his looser hours, or as a flower, which, once cropped, he may throw aside at pleasure.

Did we suppose, because infanticide once abounded, that the Hindu female did not possess in common with the human race maternal affection, we might with the same propriety imagine her body to be impervious to pain, because in the grief of widowhood she became a Satí. Could we assume that the daughter of a bráhman might be happy with the appellation of wife, without enjoying the affection of her husband, we should perceive no reason for the jealous conduct exercised over her, by her father, husband, and sons. In the *Hitopadesha*, the frailties of woman are dilated upon to a disgusting degree, in language, which none but a libidinous Hindu ever conceived, and the description concludes with this injunction, “ Therefore a woman must never be trusted alone :—in infancy, she must be guarded by her father ; after marriage, by her husband ; and in widowhood, by her sons.”

And if this be the case with Hindu females, (and who, better able to judge of their frailties than the author of the *Hitopadesha*.) how cruel is such a custom, how unnatural the restraint which binds the wife of a Kulin to perpetual celibacy, and insults her with the rite, while it tears from her the blessings of matrimony !

As in proportion to the elevation of light, the radii of its beams are elongated ; and as according to the height of a rock, will be the projection of its shade ; so in proportion to the dignity and influence of those whose habits are vicious or virtuous, will be the extent of the blessing or injury of their example on the mass of mankind. Thus the proud eminence, from which the Kulins look down upon the rest of mankind, scatters the pollution of

child had been drowned, but for this interposition. A hue and cry were set up, and the mother tracked, until it was discovered to be the illegitimate son of a bráhman by a súdra female, when all further inquiry was at an end. Had the mother been a bráhmaní, its death might have been effected without suspicion within doors. The child is now in an orphan asylum.

their polygamy over every family of the Hindu race. What does it avail the Hindus, that adultery and fornication are forbidden by their shástras? that they are enjoined to regard the wife of another with the same chastity of mind as that which they feel towards their mother? or that it is written, "The man who visits his neighbour's wife is as guilty as though at every step he killed a cow?" Alas! who can see such scarecrows, amidst the dazzling effulgence of Krishna, and the splendour of the Kulin with a hundred wives! When priests who minister at the altar are thus guilty, can we wonder if the worshippers be polluted? Where, we ask, is the Hindu who regards such crimes as morally evil? As among the Spartans detection of theft, not the act, was the crime, so among the Hindus (but especially the bráhmans) detection is the crime, and when circumstances promise secrecy, passion is indulged without remorse\*. We therefore do not hesitate to pronounce the polygamy of the Kulins to be as baneful to all classes of Hindus as their lewd orgies, and the filthy exhibitions of their images.

It has been said with propriety, that a nation is what its women are. If elevated, the nation rises; if debased, it sinks. "Take this," said a Spartan mother, as on the morning of battle she presented her son with a shield, "and return with it, or upon it." And surely seldom has a braver nation been borne on the annals of history than the Spartan. A virtuous female scorns the caresses of the polygamist, and effeminacy never obtains, till the rights and dignity of woman are trampled in the dust. When therefore we look at the Hindu women, initiated in no science—not even taught the elements of reading, but instructed from infancy amidst the grossest impurity; shall we wonder at their frailty, or that they are guarded with such jealousy because prone to go astray? Can we marvel that domestic comfort so seldom attracts the husband, or if it even do, that his affections encircle his children, but never centre in the wife of his bosom? whom unseen he marries, with whom without love he cohabits, for whom in sickness he has no sympathy, and whose remains when dead he consumes (with his funeral torch in one hand and his huqah in the other), perhaps without a sigh? But why should he regret her death more than the loss of an article of furniture, to replace which nothing except money is required; she has been a mother, but not a wife; a servant, not the guide of his children.

\* A person who has perhaps annually a thousand applicants for medicine asserts, that a nameless disease is confessed without hesitation, and that the majority of those who seek relief from it are bráhmans. Taking this as a criterion, and supposing the caste of bráhmans to be in proportion of 1 to 5, it follows, that the bráhmans are five times more wicked as a caste than the other tribes; that is, for one of the other tribes, five bráhmans visit houses of ill fame.

Whence this tyranny over all that is least able to resist—this apathy to all that is affectionate and lovely in woman—which has dried up the milk of human kindness, poisoned the fountain of affection, profaned the rites of marriage, incarcerated the smiling and unoffending daughter of the bráhman, chained the chaste virgin to a voluptuous or covetous monster, and polluted the Hindu race? The answer is—Kulin polygamy. Talk we of the gentle, kind, compassionate Hindu, who abhors blood, and fears to destroy life by treading upon an ant, when he can deliberately calculate upon his honor at the expense of his daughter's happiness?—then haste we for pity to the tyrant, for mercy to the furies.

Most governments to a certain extent give authority (but certainly not absolute) to the husband over the wife, and to the father over his children during their minority; yet still, as women and children are protected by the laws, both father and husband are amenable to justice; and a government, to be just, must break the arm of oppression, whether lifted up against man or woman, whether the wound has been inflicted from ages or but from yesterday. To argue, because oppression is a usage of long standing, that it becomes a delicate matter to interpose the arm of power to destroy it, is to advocate the continuance of every abuse which from antiquity has been practised under the sun. Let us however suppose a case. A father informs one of his sons that, from an ancient usage, it is necessary for the honor of his family to deprive him of all participation in the paternal inheritance, to marry him to a girl whom he never loved, who is at full liberty, if she please, never to live with him, and to dispose of him as a slave. Would any one say, "It is a delicate matter to interfere at all with usages of a long standing;" or that a proposed reform was "of a complicated nature, involving some invasion of the principles of caste, and the regulation of the most important affair of domestic life—the connubial tie?" What government, we ask, would tolerate such a usage? What magistrate, if applied to, would not snap asunder such fetters, and bid the son go free? What judge, though he admitted the authority of the father to dispose of his property as he pleased, would not annul such a profanation of marriage, disabuse the parent of his folly, and authorise the son to use his own discretion, either to marry or remain in celibacy? We therefore ask, By what authority has the daughter of a bráhman been deprived of liberty, as dear to her as to her brother? Is the woman farther removed from the sympathies of humanity than the man? Is a daughter less entitled to the protection of the law than a son? Is it because she is weaker, or less clamorous for her rights? or because confined, her complaints and moanings do not cross the threshold of her prison? Then is she

more the object of sympathy, and better deserves the protection of the law. "When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war:" oppression dares not meet its equal; its victims are the helpless. If weakness is not to be protected, what constitutes the duty of Government? We have at once leaped from the 19th century back to the feudal ages, when might constituted right. Is it because the Hindu female is more frail than the other sex, that she is to be abandoned to the unprincipled? This has not been proved; and we presume never can be. On the contrary, we believe that for one woman that goes astray, twenty, yea fifty, of the other sex are guilty.

Had the wise and beneficent Creator decreed that subversion of the laws of nature which Kulin polygamy has produced among the bráhmans, better had woman been born without intellect; for then, endowed only with instinct, she had neither felt nor mourned her disgrace, and whilst toiling, as the ox at the plough, she had been unconscious of her degradation, and had never sighed for the privileges of woman.

By legislating on this point, we cannot conceive how Government would interfere with the religious rites of the Hindu, more than when it abolished infanticide and the sati. This was supposed to atone for the sins of the family, and raise the deceased to heaven—that to appease the anger of the gods: but Kulin polygamy has its origin in no religious rite. No shástras enjoin it, no authorities impose it. It is no atonement, no peace-offering, no festival, no part of their religion; but a foul excrescence, if possible more hateful than the system of idolatry on which it grows;—a cancer consuming the life of morality,—a vampire feeding on the chastity of woman.

Except the parties concerned, what Hindu would not hail as a blessing the law which should prohibit a custom, whose savour is too rank to be longer tolerated by some even among the Kulins themselves? Surely such a law would call forth the gratitude of the whole Hindu tribes.

If the subject were by petition regularly brought to the notice of our rulers by the natives themselves, and the evils of the system fairly but respectfully stated, to suppose that they would dismiss the case without consideration, lest they should interfere with usages of long standing, is to libel their morality. We can as easily assume that the Honorable the East India Company would consent to embroider on their standard, in conjunction with the lamb, the crescent of the Musalmán, and the linga of Sib.

Formerly, it was not deemed politic to invest the natives with judicial authority: latterly, however, a current of opinion has set in, which will ere long probably divide the administration of justice between the European and Asiatic. This is not

the place, nor are we the persons either suited or disposed, to offer advice on so important a measure to our exalted rulers; we will only observe, that the native whom Government may distinguish by investing with power, either as a magistrate, *ánín*, or revenue officer, will we trust be known, not merely as the opulent *rájá* or *zamindár* or *bábu*, residing either in the presidency or at a *sadar* station, reputed for the liberality of his benefactions; but as the landlord of a thousand tenants:—for undoubtedly the impositions, exactions, rack-rents, and presents for festivals, marriage feasts and funeral rites, which too frequently swell the tide which rolls into the exchequer of an influential native; together with the almost uncontrolled authority given to *diwáns*, *gomasthás*, *cum multis aliis*, to extort the last mite of unjust claims from a naked famishing peasantry, wherever they exist, will better portray the character of a native gentleman, and the suitableness or the contrary of his disposition to hold the reins of authority, and wield the sword of justice, than affability of manners, gentlemanly deportment, profuse extravagance at festivals, and princely donations. Such a one may dig a tank for the refreshment of pilgrims, and yet dam up the dykes of a tract of country;—may construct a bridge across a *nallá* for the accommodation of travellers, and yet stop up the foot-paths of his miserable tenants. Happy indeed it is for the community, that among opulent natives there is here and there an exception to the general grasping conduct of Asiatics; but an exception proves the general rule, and no more shows that because one *rájá* may be benevolent, therefore all hate oppression, than that “one swallow makes a summer.”

Doubtless Government have the best opportunities of sifting both the public and private characters of those whom it designs to employ as the arbiters of justice; but so long as corruption so extensively prevails among the native community, can we disguise our fears lest a reliance on their probity should be abused: especially would we deprecate the law which should arm with authority persons whose daughters have been given in marriage to *Kulins*. Surely he who can stretch as a victim on the altar of the bubble fame the happiness of his daughter, and who can feel complacency in an act which blights her reputation, attracts her to crime, or renders her life a burden, will seldom be moved by the groans of the oppressed. Should therefore Government, from respect to ancient usage, hesitate to abolish the polygamy of the *Kulin*, (but which when duly brought before them we are not prepared to expect,) we invoke them by all that is sacred in marriage, by all that is due to woman and ennobling in man, to discountenance the custom, and refuse to all, who have connected their families with *Kulins*, places of trust, honor, and emolument.

H.

II.—*Harmony of Natural Science and Revealed Truth.*

To the Editors of the Calcutta Christian Observer.

GENTLEMEN,

It was with the deepest interest that I perused the valuable paper which appeared in your last No. entitled "The connection between Geology and Natural Theology, by Prof. Hitchcock." I notice with pleasure that you propose to pursue the subject, by exhibiting the harmonious relation which subsists between Geology and Divine Revelation; and I trust you will soon be able to carry into effect your intention. In the mean time, permit me to call the notice of your readers to a most interesting and instructive volume, entitled "An Argument to prove the Truth of the Christian Revelation," lately published by the Earl of Rosse. It is full of close, and, in almost all cases, very satisfactory reasoning; and may with advantage be perused by all men of education, especially such as are unhappily inclined to question the authority of the Christian Scriptures. I will not borrow largely, even from the scientific part of the volume, as I trust many of your readers will peruse the whole for themselves. I will merely transcribe one passage, extracted from that part of his work in which the author is exhibiting how beautifully the account of the creation, as given by Moses, harmonizes in all its parts with the conclusions on the subject to which we are brought by the elaborate calculations and recent discoveries of the most celebrated men of science. In pursuing this argument, he points out the positive evidence in favour of a primitive revelation given to man, from the fact demonstrated or acknowledged by La Place, Cuvier, Humboldt, &c. that the earth was originally a fluid mass. In discussing this subject, he proceeds in the following strain:—

"In the first place, let us ascertain whether there really was a primitive revelation made to man.

"La Place says, as I have already mentioned, that the earth was originally formed in a fluid state; that it was a fluid of varying density; that the most dense materials of which this fluid was composed were situated at the centre, and the rest in order above them, according to their respective densities; that such of these materials as became hard, became so in the order in which they were arranged; and thus the water, being the lightest, remained at the surface. According, therefore, to this account, our globe, at its first formation, was entirely covered with a sea of waters.

"Let us then compare this with what Moses says on the same subject. Moses represents the waters in the beginning as covering the face of the earth. 'Darkness,' he says, 'was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. God said, Let there be a firmament,' that is, an airy expanse, 'in the midst of the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters that were above the firmament. And God called the firmament heaven.' 'And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered

together in one place, and let the dry land appear.' Thus no description can be more explicit than this, that, according to Moses, in the beginning the surface of our globe was at first an entire sea; nothing visible but the waters, until the third day, when the dry land was ordered to appear.

"The question then is, How did Moses obtain a knowledge of this extraordinary fact? Observe, it is a fact that preceded the formation of man—a fact, therefore, that could not have been known by the sight or observation of any man—a fact that could not have been transmitted from one generation to another, as a state of things to which any human being had been a witness. How then did Moses obtain a knowledge of it? There are but two possible ways in which it could be known to any man. One is by scientific research, as it was ascertained by La Place and Cuvier, and other modern men of science; the other is, by a revelation from a Superior Being. Let people turn it in their thoughts, and reason upon it as they may, a fact like this, of what occurred *previous* to the *existence of man*, could not possibly be known to *man* but by one of the ways which I have mentioned. Not all the sceptics and infidels on the earth could point out any mode by which this ante-creation fact could be known to any human being except by one or other of these two ways. This, then, is the rock upon which I take my stand in this argument, certain that in standing on it I cannot be shaken. I ask, then, did Moses obtain the knowledge of this fact by scientific research, or was it by Divine revelation? I cannot suppose that there is any man who will ascribe it to scientific research. No one will maintain that the sciences were in such a state in the time of Moses, nor for numerous centuries after his time, as would by their light enable him to discover such a fact. He must, therefore, have derived his knowledge of it from Divine revelation. The conclusion is irresistible. The researches and knowledge which establish it at the present day were not only unmade and unthought of in his time, but were unmade and unthought of till near our own time. It is, therefore, clear as any demonstration in geometry, that his knowledge of it must have been by revelation. Whether that revelation was made to Moses himself, or to Adam, or to some other person at or previous to the time when Moses wrote, makes no difference in that part of the argument. To whomever it was made, it was still a Divine revelation: and therefore, this most important fact is established incontestably, that God did make, in this instance, a revelation to man. Thus the objection of those who deny or doubt of a revelation having been ever made to man, because they are of opinion that the reason of man was, from the beginning, sufficient for his instruction, is completely overthrown by the fact which is thus undeniably established.

"It may perhaps be asked, What then was the object of this revelation?—of what consequence was it to man to be told, that in the beginning, the sea formed the whole surface of our globe?—of what use could it be to man originally to know this fact? To this I reply, that, in the first place, the question for us is, whether such a Divine revelation was made, not why it pleased the Deity to make it. It might have been made for reasons in some respects transcending our limited view of things. But the following reasons may, perhaps, be alleged without presumption as some of the grounds for such a Divine communication: that this globe was made by God for an habitation for man, and that God caused the dry land to appear out of the waters, to render it habitable for him, and that it was God that made man, are all most important truths, constituting the first foundations of all religion; and therefore there could be no more necessary, no more worthy, subject of revelation. As God made us, we are bound to obey him, to be grateful to him, and to give him thanks; for to Him we are indebted not only for our existence, but for every other good which we possess.

“ It was not, therefore, a barren fact which was communicated in this revelation ; it was not an idle or merely an interesting curiosity which it proposed to gratify : it was a pregnant truth, of all others, perhaps, the most fit to be made a subject of a Divine revelation. And instead of its appearing, as some might lightly think it, one not of sufficient consequence for such a special communication, it is really of such a nature as in itself to carry on the face of it evidence of its Divine origin ; so much so, that if man might presume to say what should be the first communication made to man by the Deity, it is that with which the first chapter of the book of Genesis commences.

“ The case then is this. That book describes a particular state of things, which, at the time when it was written, could only have been known by a Divine revelation. It describes the world to have originally existed in a state totally dissimilar from the present : it describes it as having been originally all covered with sea, and no land any where appearing. What could be more improbable than this ? It was such an improbable description, that the philosophers of Greece and Rome totally discredited it. Knowing, that as far back as the records of any history which they deemed authentic related, the world had been always described as having the same appearance as at present—the same mountains, the same rivers, the same continents and islands, the same seas—they thence concluded that it had never been otherwise from all eternity. Nor would any thing, seemingly so improbable, ever have occurred to the imagination of any man in those remote ages, as that it was formed in a liquid state. One great importance then of this early revelation is, that it disclosed a fact most improbable at the time, but which, after a long succession of centuries, science and research would prove to be true. Therefore this revelation bore within itself the remote proof of its own veracity—a proof which establishes itself decisively to be a revelation from the Deity ; a proof which was destined to be hid for such a lapse of ages, but which finally, that is in our time, was to be established with such irresistible evidence, that no reasonable man can now deny or doubt that there was such an ancient revelation made by God to man.

“ Here, then, I say is a fact which overthrows the reasoning of all the sceptics for a number of past centuries. It proves that an early communication had been made by the Deity to man, from which an obvious inference arises of the probability of subsequent Divine communications. The evidence of prophecies may be objected to by some persons in various ways : the evidence of miracles also may in various ways be objected to : but here is an evidence of a Divine communication, which cannot possibly be objected to or controverted in any way. A fact is related in confessedly the oldest book now extant on earth ; a book of the authenticity of which there can be no question. It relates what occurred before the creation of man : it relates what, at the time when it was written, and for a number of centuries after, no man could have a knowledge of, except by a Divine revelation. The truth of what it thus relates, recent discoveries have incontrovertibly established. In what more satisfactory way, then, can we conceive that the Deity could have proved his having made a revelation than this, for the conviction of the present generation, and of all generations to come ?”

I feel persuaded, that every candid reader must acknowledge the soundness of the reasoning, and the justness of the conclusion, contained in the above striking extract. To my own mind it affords complete demonstration. It leads me to adore the goodness of God, who, in an age when the evidence of miracles is no longer afforded, presents to us in the discoveries of science,

“our enemies themselves, in many cases being judges,” a new and constantly accumulating series of proofs in favour of his blessed word. May every lover of Nature recollect, that Revelation also springs from the same blessed Source; and while he admires and investigates the *works*, may he with appropriate diligence investigate—may he love, read, and study—the *word*, of the Great Jehovah.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours very Sincerely,

SPECTATOR.

CALCUTTA, }  
Jan. 14, 1836. }

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### III.—*The Temperance Question.*

The Temperance question is one of the highest importance—a question that demands from every Christian and Philanthropist the most serious and dispassionate consideration.

The mere fact that a Society, springing up in the wilds of America a few years ago, should, like one of the magnificent rivers of the new world, steal silently from its birth-place, till it should arrest the attention of the thousands that crowd its banks, not merely for its grandeur, but utility—this alone should excite inquiry.

When we stand on the banks of such “sea-like streams” as the Hudson or Niger, the Ganges or Plata, a desire to know how, and from whence, their first waters sprung, naturally arises in the mind. Men have spent much of their time and talents in such enterprizes, not without the merited applause of their fellow creatures. When Bruce drank the waters of the Nile at the gurgling fountain head, and Lander solved the problem of the Niger’s course, they were esteemed men of enterprize, and were rewarded with merited honors; they had however in their own bosoms, a satisfaction higher even than the praise of men could confer—the highest that human enterprize under Divine direction can obtain,—the satisfaction of successful enquiry.

When we see a Society opposed in its principles to one of the prevalent, most powerful, and most seductive vices of mankind, springing up in the silence of an American forest, conveying its principles and effects alike into the lowliest hamlet and house of legislation, into the rudest forms of society and the most polished circles; obtaining the approbation of the pious and sceptical, the man of letters and the illiterate; and like those rivers to which we have referred mixing with the ocean, washing distant shores, again commingling with other waters, and winning their way into the interior of islands and continents, causing verdure to spring up where steri-

lity had appeared, and beauty to supplant arid deformity ;—witnessing such scenes, we should be led to inquire what was the origin, and what the principles of that Society which has arrested the impetuous passions of men, and laid them under an interdict, to promote the happiness and well-being of society ? Trusting from the occasional papers that have appeared in these pages, that it is the desire of some in this land to be better acquainted with the principles of Temperance Societies, we shall endeavour to point out the principal objections urged against them, with such answers as may open up a source for more cogent and lucid trains of thought :—then exhibit the principles, and the present aspect of the Society ;—speak of the past practical good which it has effected, and the wide field of promise which it yet unfolds to the mind's eye of the Christian and Philanthropist.

In attempting to form a calm and conscientious opinion on a subject like the Temperance question, it is well to lay down certain rules by which we may be regulated in our discussions. It is also of importance to define the terms which we intend to employ in the course of the inquiry, lest the harmony of the discussion be interrupted by a misapplication of the meaning of words.

We should bear in remembrance that we bring to this discussion all our early prejudices and impressions, which, to say the least, it is to be feared are not favourable to the principles of the Temperance Society : it should of course be our endeavour so far to dispossess ourselves of the influence of those early feelings, as to be enabled to act upon our convictions, though they should be materially opposed to preconceived notions.

We think too that the Society, the merits of which we desire to discuss, from its nature and importance, demands in the controversialists a peculiar forbearance towards each other, and as a matter of course, peculiar sobriety in all our discussions.

With these prefatory remarks we desire to give a definition of what we conceive a Temperance Society either is or ought to be. We understand it to be an association of persons of *moral integrity*, who are deeply impressed with the injurious nature of ardent spirits when taken for other than medicinal purposes, and who, acting under these impressions, and exercising mutual confidence in each other, have entered into a pledge to desist from their unmedicinal use ; and further, that they will use every legitimate means to dissuade others from the practice.

If this definition of a Temperance Society be correct, it is a Society for the suppression of vice in one of its most monstrous forms, as well as a Society which stretches forth the hand of benevolence to ameliorate those miseries which inebriety entails on mankind.

If this be the true moral character and beneficial influence of such Societies, we might expect that they would be hailed by the Philanthropist and Christian, as one of those instruments which the intelligence and enlarged benevolence of the age (under the direction of the Divine Spirit) had raised up for the moral reformation and spiritual happiness of the world. This, however, is not the case; for many eminent Christians and other highly virtuous men, do not give Temperance Societies their cordial support, and to sustain their opposing views, have advanced many arguments which deserve our most serious consideration and respect. These arguments, when satisfactorily answered, (which we are sanguine enough to believe can be done,) will only serve to place the principles and claims of the Society on such a basis as will render it impregnable to all future attacks, until Temperance Societies, with all similar institutions, shall be superseded by the entire moral reformation of the world.

The opposition with which Temperance Societies have met should not be matter of discouragement to its friends, but rather act as a powerful stimulus to the advocacy of their principles. We should remember that almost all those institutions, which are conspicuous for their utility, were at the outset strenuously opposed by some of the most energetic and virtuous men of the day, and this from conscientious motives. It is pleasing to think, that the opposition offered to such institutions was made by persons of a superior order, because the triumph when obtained is more complete, and once obtained, leaves nothing for minds of an inferior cast to attempt. Such we believe are many of the persons opposed to Temperance Societies; they are men of mind, men of energy, and what is more, men of high moral integrity; their objections, therefore, coming at the very outset of the Society's existence, must either subvert or establish its principles. Confident as we are of success, we hail their opposition with gladness. Our language is, let us have bold, uncompromising, and conscientious opponents, rather than half-hearted friends.

Before we proceed to consider the objections at large, it may not be improper to state our views as to what we understand by Temperance.

In reference to spirituous liquors, we conceive, in order to be consistent and beneficial, that the abstinence must be entire.

Foreign wines, possessing as they do a very considerable portion of alcohol, must be included, considering as we do that their exclusion cannot be defended, except on the ground of pampering the taste, and succumbing to the opinions of those in the higher walks of life\*.

\* This of course must be subject to medical advice; we allude only to persons in full health.

However much some advocates of Temperance Societies may oppose this view, we believe if the Society exists, and flourishes, this principle, and this alone must, and will be acted upon. If not, where is the line to be drawn? It must be by a general, desperate, and uncompromising measure with such a foe that it will ever be exterminated—or its influence diminished.

It shall now be our endeavour to consider the objections which are urged with no inconsiderable degree of ingenuity and force against Temperance Societies.

The first, and we conceive the most important, is, “That Christianity can produce the effects contemplated by Temperance Societies *without the intervention of such agency.*”

Now it is very evident that this objection, if carried out, may be urged against nearly, if not all, the Societies which the benevolence of the age has produced. It might with a great appearance of truth be said, that Christianity would cause the principles of truth to prevail without the aid of man’s instrumentality beyond the simple preaching of the Gospel, and therefore, what need of Societies such as the Tract and other similar institutions? they are obtrusive and unnecessary. Such a mode of arguing would be considered highly utopian, and meet with its merited punishment.

But here we present to you a Society whose benevolence is universal, and whose principles are unsectarian—whose object is to effect a great moral good; and all this to be accomplished under the influence of Christian principles; and yet we are told, that Christianity can accomplish all these objects without our intervention: but as Christianity generally works by means, we merely put the question, May not Temperance Societies be one of those agents which it is employing to effect its glorious purposes?

This objection would appear to imply, that Temperance Societies are opposed to Christianity. It devolves, however, upon those who oppose them to prove, that they have not originated with Christianity; which, while they continue to breathe its spirit, produce its uniform effects, and are supported by its best and warmest friends, appears to be no ordinary task. May we not rather infer from their rise, progress, and influence, that they are a part of that Divine impulse by which the Great Head of the Church is stirring up the slumbering energies of his people to effect the reformation of a fallen world? But while they are thus based on Christian principle, and produce its beneficial effects, they enlist under their banners many who are decidedly opposed to its doctrines, who by this act are led to acknowledge the practical utility of a system, the theory of which they are disposed to contradict. It is very evident, that if you were to put it to them on the ground of Christian

principle, many such would reject your demands; but when you seek their aid on the ground of that benevolence which is the offspring of Christianity, you immediately enlist their best sympathies and most active exertions in the cause of suffering humanity. We do not of course say that Christianity in its simple form could *not* effect temperance in its largest extent; but it remains to be proved, that Temperance Societies are not one form of Christian benevolence, brought to bear in a remarkable manner on one of the greatest banes of the world.

Another and most singular objection to these institutions is *their novelty*. As though those who have been aroused to see the evils which intemperance is producing were responsible either for the supineness of those who have gone before them, or the inertness of those with whom they are surrounded. We believe that every thing, to have a beginning, must be new, and therefore we think it would be as prudent to say that a man could be neither wise nor useful because he was young, as that Temperance Societies are neither rational or beneficial, because they are novel. Our opponents reply, We admit that some good has been done; but we ascribe it entirely to the novelty of the object, or the agitation of the question; and we think when that novelty has passed away, and the question has become familiar to the minds of men, the Society will sink into disrepute, and become inefficient. From what data such a conclusion is drawn, it is not for us even to imagine; for on every principle of nature, reason, and religion, so far at least as our observation serves us, we think that it is generally admitted, when an object is vigorous and healthy in its early stages, there is some probability of its arriving at maturity. When a Society, which is opposed to one of the ruling passions of the mind, and one of the most prevalent and influential sins of mankind, receives such patronage, and is blessed with such signal success in its very outset, it is probable that when its principles shall be more generally known, and the influence of its consistent members more extensively felt, that it will not lose its support, nor its hold on the sympathies of men. As we cannot augur death from a vigorous constitution, nor defeat from triumph, no more can we infer the annihilation of Temperance Societies from their unparalleled success and present prosperity.

Still urging their objections, our opponents say, *If your principles be so excellent, why not apply them to every description of intemperance?* We do not object to this. It is our most earnest desire. But you will remember, that you have told us in a former objection that the doctrine is new, and the Society in its infancy—why then require that, which is in its infancy, to attempt an object which it will demand the powers

of manhood to accomplish? We believe it is not deemed a mark of wisdom in a military commander, in carrying on a siege against a powerful foe, to rush into the midst of the danger, especially if his forces be comparatively weak; but rather to undermine this part, to attack the other, to cut off the supplies in a third, and so compel his enemy to a complete surrender. It is deemed proper and wise, that he should watch that part which will prove most potent in the hands of his foes. This is precisely the present position of Temperance Societies. They have commenced an attack on the general intemperance of the world; in the onset they have attacked that which they consider the most productive of evil influence, in the hope that if they can succeed in overcoming this, the others will more easily be supplanted. It may be fairly inferred, that those who have been so sensitively alive to one species of intemperance, will not be backward to bring their principles to operate generally. Besides, it comes with but an ill grace from those who will not co-operate with us in one department, to charge us with neglecting all the rest. Strength in numbers and influence is all we need: come with us, therefore, and by the force of union we shall soon extirpate every species of intemperance from the world.

Some who appear to go with us to a very considerable extent, say they fear that while Temperance Societies *have done much good, they have done much harm*; because many, who have signed the protest, have not acted up to their profession; they are mere hypocrites, having joined the Society from a love of ostentation. This charge we fear will apply to nearly every state in society; would that it were less the case! But why should that which is general in its nature be brought to bear with all its force on this particular object? Is a man more an hypocrite, because while he subscribes to the Bible Society, he is not a true Christian? are all the upright members of such a Society to be censured, because of the delinquency of a few, or are attempts at doing good to be nullified, because some do not remain firm to their principles? If this principle be carried out, we think it will lead to the formation of an exclusively Evangelical Society on every subject, and leave the moral reformation of the world to a few self-elected individuals.

But it is replied, It is the test which constitutes the grand distinction between this and the Societies to which you allude. If we take away the test to oblige tender consciences, still moral integrity, which is the grand bond of union, will remain pledged against intemperance of every description.

Surely we should not be considered worthy of censure in attempting to make men sober. If even the principle were utterly to fail in producing the desired effects, the effort at least is

praise-worthy. If it had never been tried, it would have been doubtful; but we are told, "Dimidium facti qui cœpit habet."

When these defaulters are mere exceptions to the general rule, it is hardly fair to bring that to bear on Temperance Societies, which might and is brought by our enemies against the faith of Christ itself, saying, Because some who profess to be Christians are inconsistent, therefore Christianity is itself a fiction. We need hardly say, that any Christian would consider this an inference unjustly drawn, and so glaringly illogical, as to carry its negative on its very front.

It is objected further, that signing a test is a reflection on our moral integrity. If a man be a Christian, it is said, a test is useless; and if he is not, it will have no influence over him. We confess, we see no force in this remark, for it does not interfere with the profession of his faith; it is merely entering his vote against a crying evil, and giving his sanction and influence to endeavour to extirpate a bad practice from the earth. It may touch his pride, but we think cannot impugn his sincerity.

The other view of the subject displays a vast want of charity: it would assume that there are none but real Christians, on whom the morality of our faith has any influence, which we think is negatived by the daily transactions of the commercial world. As, however, this appears to be a stumbling-block to tender consciences, let them suggest some other mode, and not oppose the Society on a ground which may be modified or improved. We think that men would be as effectually pledged by giving their names to a Society, or a limited subscription, or by the simplest form, which would involve their approbation of the Society's object.

Our opponents continue to urge a further objection to the Society, by saying, *that all the creatures of God are good*; and further, *that the Saviour encouraged the making and drinking of wine*. The answer which we would render to the inference drawn from the sanction which the Scriptures give to the use of wines is, that it completely begs the question. It is assumed, that the wines used in olden time were similar to those used now, which every Biblical scholar must be aware was not the case; and that fermented wines are always spoken of in the Old Testament as a great bane. As it respects the Saviour's sanction, the answer which applies to the one, if it does apply, will apply to the other, with this addition, that from the short space of time which elapsed in its production, it could not be a fermented liquor, but merely a simple cooling beverage—a kind of *sharbat*. Still it is replied, all the creatures of God are good, and ought to be used by his creatures. This is true; but ardent spirits are not a creature of God, but of the devil: for it is by the destruction of the life-giving principle in that from which

alcohol is produced, that, that which is highly nutritious in its original state becomes a malignant poison.

It may be answered, Although a thing may have poisonous qualities, yet it may be a creature of God. Admitted; but it would not be a creature of God *for good*, if taken in other quantities than those in which poisons are usually administered.

Two more remarks, and we have done on this head.

*First*, we are asked, How are we to know when to take it medicinally? As you would know when to take a glass of rhubarb and water. Remove the idea of its being a palatable beverage, and the difficulty will be partially removed. It is to be feared, it is much oftener its palatable qualities, than its medicinal properties, that induce even temperate people to take it.

*Secondly*. It is asked, What is intemperance in temperate people? Taking wines or spirits, when they are not needed. How often, when we call on a friend, or are in company, do we take a glass or two of wine or spirits when we do not need them. How often, at the close of the day, is it done to drive away the cares of business, &c. In both these cases, with many others which might be enumerated, it is evident that we had no need of its influence to fit us for duty or enjoyment.

Thus have we endeavoured, however feebly, to answer some of the most prominent objections urged against the Society. We leave them with you. If we have failed to convince, we have the satisfaction which arises from well-intentioned effort, however feebly executed. We have sincerely and plainly expressed our personal sentiments on what we think to be a highly interesting and important subject—a subject which ere long must hold a prominent place in every man's creed, and be a prominent part of every man's practice; for the spreading influence of Temperance is great, and is even *now* felt both in the Church and the world—in the finance of the spirit-dealer and the exchequer—in the family circles, physical system, and mental habits of numbers who were formerly the votaries of intemperance. What then shall be its influence when all lands shall conspire to expel from the earth, that which is the exciter of the worst passions, and the stimulator to the worst deeds, that disfigure a ruined world?

Φίλος.

[The consideration of the Temperance Question having been revived in the above communication, we shall hereafter insert the additional paper on the same subject by L. as under these circumstances he has requested.—ED.]

IV.—*Vindication of the System pursued by the General Assembly's Missionaries.* By the Rev. W. S. Mackay.

In the last No. of the OBSERVER appeared two papers on the subject of Christian Education, one signed L., and the other written by the Rev. Mr. BUYERS of BANA'RAS. They form part of a series of attacks on the manner in which the General Assembly's Indian Mission is conducted, which have been elicited by the speech of Mr. Duff, and on which I wish to offer a few remarks, with the view of pointing out certain mistakes into which nearly all have fallen in regard to that Mission, and, (as it appears to me,) in regard to the whole bearing of a most important question. It is to be lamented that the discussion, with one or two honorable exceptions, has been carried on in that spirit of special pleading, which supposes that one plan of operations can only be exalted at the expense of another. But it is not by pitting preaching against teaching, by numbering of converts, or by contending for systems, each saying to his neighbour, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou," that we are to arrive at the truth. The apostolic precept is, "Let each be fully persuaded in his own mind;" and though Mr. Duff, in his eagerness to shoot well, may have sent some arrows beyond, and some beside the mark, to this I can bear testimony, that no one rejoices more cordially in the success of his neighbours, or sympathizes more deeply in their trials and discouragements. He feels, as we should all feel, that "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." In regard to Preaching in particular, he holds, with his colleagues, that it is the most direct and powerful weapon of the ministerial panoply: and it is chiefly with the view of bringing it into play with increased and enlarged efficacy, that we have chosen our station on the Missionary field\*. Our hopes and expectations in so doing I shall endeavour to explain in another part of this paper. TIME, that builds as well as destroys, will show whether they are vain; in the meanwhile we shall continue to plant and water, and look to God for the increase.

The paper of L. which I shall notice first, seems to have been written under strong feelings of irritation; so strong indeed, as not only to render his reasoning confused and inconsistent, but to draw from him certain hasty and incautious statements, which, I trust, in his calmer moments, he regrets.

After premising that it is far from his intention to depreciate Education, or the argument drawn from the Christian evidences, he goes on to say, that "*all the hue and cry about the necessity of Education is useless noise, and perhaps worse,*" (the chari-

\* See Mr. Duff's speech, p. 18.

table *perhaps* being afterwards expressly withdrawn;) and concludes a labored attack on the usefulness of the Evidences, in the course of which he insists that the Bible is all over Evidence, with the assertion, that "*in dealing with the Heathen it is not at all necessary to touch on them*" in any way whatever. Does L. forget, that our Lord and his apostles did think it necessary to *touch on* them, as he expresses it; nay more, that they often laid on them the main stress of the Christian cause? Can he not see how they not only prepare the way for the entrance of the gospel, but are themselves truly and literally a part of the gospel; and that for both reasons, they are worthy of high honour and regard? It is true that many good men are not always ready to give a systematic answer, to every one that asketh a reason for the hope that is in them. They believe that the Bible is true, as they believe that the earth is round; not because they can prove it, but because they are persuaded that it has been proved, that the proof lies at their door, and that they may easily, if they choose, convince themselves of its truth. But this, even in those who have the inward witness, is culpable indolence, rather than an example for imitation; and in circumstances like ours, surrounded as we are by a population who have no such received faith, and whose opinions and prejudices are all the other way, we surely cannot be far wrong, if we follow the example of our Lord, and appeal in proof of his religion to the miracles which he wrought, and to the prophecies which went before him. I may observe, that the line of argument forced upon me here is extraordinary, considering that both parties are Christians; but I must take the ford as I find it.

I willingly concede to L. that Education is not *necessary* to conversion; neither is the Bible, nor the ministry, nor the preaching of the gospel, for the Spirit often works without them all: but it does not follow that it is *useless* or *worse* to teach "the wisdom that is from above," or "to train up a child in the way in which he should go," seeing that the Scriptures themselves encourage us to hope, that "when he is old, he will not depart from it." Now one great object of the Assembly's School is to give its pupils a full fair explanation of the word of God in all its largeness, in the hope that the Spirit from above will be given with it: so that L.'s arguments are best answered in his own words;

"Convinced am I, that the word of God has such power in itself, that no man, after having had it once fairly explained to him, will continue to be the same being as he was before. He may not indeed become converted: but never will he be able to obliterate the remarks that may have been left on his heart by the falling down upon him of the sword of God's Spirit."

The letter of Mr. BUYERS is distinguished by its modesty, and that calm dispassionate statement of opinion, which, whe-

ther right or wrong, always commands respect. But even his good sense has not preserved him from the error to which I have already alluded. He will have Preaching not only to be the chief, as all agree, but, to use his own words, "almost the only means of conversion;" and he endeavours to establish this position by a formal attack upon other means, visiting with his especial censure the General Assembly's School in Calcutta. Without objecting at present to his classification, I may observe, that he, like many others, attributes too much to the mere preaching of the word, and too little to the circumstances which accompanied and preceded it. At the two periods to which, I presume, he alludes,—the Christian era, and the era of the Reformation,—mighty preparations had been made, in the providence of God, for the entrance and spread of the Gospel. The coming of their Deliverer was the hope and the faith of the Jewish nation, long before he appeared. The minds of men were prepared for a change, which had already become the theme of the poets at the court of Augustus, and was spoken of through all the East. The higher classes of society were given to literature and philosophy; and the old superstitions were in their dotage. And when the Word was preached, it was in far other guise than now; it came with power, with miracles, with the gift of tongues, with faith that counted all things loss and dross for Christ; and it was manifest to human sense, that the Spirit of God enlightened the minds, and spoke from the lips of the preachers. Thus, ere the seed was sown, the ground had been turned up to receive it. Again, the Reformation was, instrumentally at least, brought in by Writing rather than Preaching. It commenced, as is well known, in the *schools and universities*, and strangely enough seems to have been influenced in no slight degree by the re-discovery of the classics. It proceeded very slowly. Wickliffe came too soon, but he prepared; John Huss and Jerome came too soon, but they prepared; Luther came when "the pear was ripe," and succeeded. His sentiments spread like wild-fire; but surely not by the living voice in any pre-eminent degree. The Gospel was preached through the press; and it was in this way chiefly that he and his illustrious contemporaries influenced the public mind to the profession of Protestant Christianity. Indeed, I think that Mr. BUYERS greatly undervalues the efficiency of religious works. My experience at least leads me to the conclusion, that many among the educated classes owe their most powerful and permanent serious impressions to the perusal of books on practical piety, wherein, when the living voice is hushed for ever, the faithful man of God, "being dead, yet speaketh." Even if the writings of the Apostle were not so weighty and powerful as his living voice, we are not to look upon the last as "almost the only way" of being useful.

Before preaching can be efficient, we must have preachers, we must have an audience disposed to listen, and we must have a more or less complete medium of communication. The object of the General Assembly's Missionaries, is to secure all the three in the shortest time, and with the greatest efficiency; and if their scheme, in humble dependence on the Divine blessing, be founded on the usual calculation of probabilities, and followed up in the spirit of the Gospel, its success or failure will go far to show, whether it is to be classed among the 'direct' or 'indirect' means of conversion. It is yet merely in its infancy, and is proceeding, I may say it without boasting, far more rapidly than its projectors contemplated. Mr. BUYERS objects only to that part of it, which has reference to schools, and, as I shall endeavour to show, without due consideration. The distinction which he makes between the different kinds of schools, is not very accurate or well preserved; and besides, it is hard to conceive why we should be eager for the salvation of heathen men and women, but, like the disciples formerly, keep out, or at least leave out, heathen children. One who has himself been converted from idolatry, is surely on that account the better, rather than the worse, qualified for being a useful preacher. It may be true that we are to look for more fruit from Christian children; but this only proves, that while the one is done, the other should not be left undone: neither will it, when we have opportunity.

But Mr. BUYERS' chief objection to schools in general, is, that religion cannot be profitably taught in them, for the following reason, (which, he must observe, notwithstanding his exception, applies as much to a boarding-school as to any other,) viz. "that it comes in the following order, Arithmetic, Geography, Mathematics and Christianity." The mere juxtaposition is equally puerile, as if you were to describe a mother teaching her child to pray, thus;—"washing, dressing, prayers, breakfast:" but in so far as it has a tendency to degrade religion to the level of a mere routine study, it is worthy of consideration. The fact is undeniable; but it proves no more against the practice, than the corresponding fact against the practice of going to church, or family prayer. All, so far as human agency is concerned, depends upon the teacher. He it is, who, in other sciences, by his own enthusiasm, can clothe the most barren details with life and interest, give in many instances a factitious importance to his subject, and impress it on the minds of his pupils in characters that can never be effaced. And if in this most sublime and interesting science of them all, the teacher be full of zeal, be earnest in prayer, what hinders that the Spirit should speak from his lips, and write his words on the hearts and consciences of

his pupils? Mr. BUYERS meets this, I must say unworthily, by the *argumentum ad hominem*: "Mr. Duft's school is a failure, and its success in making converts is next to nothing." He might as well judge of a language by its alphabet, or of a building by its foundation. The Assembly's Mission has been in operation barely five years, and, even if success is to be estimated solely by the number of converts, has been tolerably successful. On turning with some curiosity to the last report of the Banáras Mission, which has been longer established and had more labor bestowed on it, almost, if not altogether, in the direct way of preaching, I was surprised to find the following statement by Mr. BUYERS himself, "With respect to the results of our labors, we have still to lament the want of direct fruit;" from which it appears that they have not yet made one convert. I adduce this to show how unfair such criteria are; certainly not in disparagement of the zeal, judgment, or talents of Mr. BUYERS, for whom, from intimate personal acquaintance, I have the highest esteem and respect; and as certainly not in disparagement of the direct publication of the word. May my right hand forget its cunning, when I forget that the chief duty, the glory of the Christian Ministry, is "to preach CHRIST CRUCIFIED, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to all who believe, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

I am unwilling, for his own sake, to follow Mr. BUYERS into his comparison between our pupils, the students of the Hindu College, and the bráhmans of Banáras. Let him answer the following simple question: Is it wrong to teach that Hinduism is false, and Christianity true? If not, the sneer is unmeaning; if it be, on him lies the *onus probandi*. It is quite possible that he may have seen at Banáras several boys, who had attended the Assembly's School, living in the public profession of Hinduism: but surely that is no nine days' wonder. Did he never see, or hear of, not school boys, but baptized Christian men, equally guilty? and shall we therefore not baptize? We have never found any difficulty in destroying that "immense conglomeration of different systems known by the name of Hinduism," and in the way which Mr. BUYERS recommends, that is, by teaching them a purer system of religious truth, which takes hold on their consciences and common sense. Can it be possible that he has never read the speech which he criticises? for there this very point is insisted on at great length, and with uncommon clearness and force of argument. I shall return to this subject immediately, but, before leaving the objections altogether, I have to notice the only one of weight which remains. It is, that Missionaries should not leave their own peculiar duties in order "to teach children to read, write,

and cast accounts." This is only true when the task is unnecessary, or when they can have it done by others; no one need be afraid that they will cling to it from choice. Here if you wish little children to learn the word of God, there are no pious parents, no good Samaritans, to aid you in your heavenly work; you must put your own shoulders to the wheel, and teach them from their A B C upwards. Of course you leave the drudgery to others, as soon as they can be procured, and reserve for yourself all that is peculiarly Christian: and I for one have no sympathy with the over-squeamishness which would decline, or the hypercriticism which would condemn, such useful labor. The apostle wrought with his own hands for a livelihood. Was *that* the peculiar duty of a minister? does it not rather prove that we are to think nothing too low for us, which tends to spread abroad the Gospel of Christ more speedily, whether it be writing books, learning languages, or teaching children? Once grant that it is right to teach the Bible, and the rest follows of course.

I once intended to notice here the animadversions of the FRIEND OF INDIA and the ENGLISHMAN on the speech of Mr. Duff; want of space however forbids, and I shall choose another channel. But I cannot pass from the subject without expressing my indignation at the attack made on him at a late public meeting, by one, whom common sense, if not common gratitude, should have kept silent. It is to be hoped that his conduct will render those who take the lead on such occasions more chary of pushing forward prematurely, youths whose knowledge and experience are far too limited to entitle them to the attention of the Christian public.

It is now time to take higher ground,—that ground on which Mr. Duff has established himself, and from which in the main he can never be dislodged. I have to show that the system followed by the General Assembly's Missionaries is, in all its departments, *within* the sphere of Missionary labour; that it is most direct in its results, and theoretically capable of influencing in a high degree the evangelization of India by the preaching of the word of God. Whether or not, it will be in the end successful depends on that Spirit, which, like the wind, cometh as it listeth, yet is never far from the voice of prayer.

(*To be continued.*)

*V.—Origin and present State of the Nizámat College at Murshídábád.*

[In the pursuance of our wish to make the OBSERVER, as far as possible, a complete journal of Native Education, we have solicited from various correspondents brief accounts of institutions for this object, hitherto but little known. Among these, is the Nizámat Madrissa or College at Murshídábád, of which we have been lately favoured with the following short but interesting statement.]

The Madrissa of His Highness the Nizam was instituted by Government in 1824. It was designed to relieve the members of the Nizam family, from the expence of private tutors ; but more especially to insure them a good moral education. To render it more generally useful, other youths, not connected with the family, were gradually admitted, and an allowance of from six to ten rupees a month was allotted to some who were expected to persevere in a course of Arabic and Persian for seven years.

Maulaví Faizlurahmán, a man of integrity and erudition, was appointed first Mudarras, with eight professors. During the first two years, 500 students were in regular attendance ; after which, their number diminished to 100, but never sunk below that standard. Twelve young men have been honored with certificates of proficiency, and an additional twelve having passed through the accustomed routine of oriental literature, are expecting the same reward of merit.

It must be a source of regret, that an Institution, supported by the highest native authorities, and patronized by the Government, has not produced that moral effect on the inhabitants of Murshídábád which the friends of education might have anticipated.

In 1833, two young men, who had been educated at the Hindu College, were sent up from Calcutta to form an English class. One died shortly after his arrival, and the other carried on the duties by himself. Though a person of good attainments, the circumstance of his being a Hindu, so excited national antipathy, that he could not obtain the esteem of the Musalmáns (for whose sole benefit the Madrissa was originally established), and consequently, in May last, he resigned.

The establishment is now under the general superintendance of Mr. Jones ; the English department entirely so, in which he has the aid of two native assistants. At his appointment, the English class, in number about 30, (which consisted entirely of Hindus,) increased in one week to 80, and was composed both of Hindus and Musalmáns. Observing their prejudices, he divided them into classes : the first consisted of Sáhíbzádas, the second of Mahammadans, and the third of Hindus. This arrangement gave general satisfaction.

Two causes, namely, illness and the festivals, materially reduced the English class during the months of September and October. It has, however, since rallied: 85 are now on the muster roll, and the number steadily advances.

It is pleasing to observe, that as they progress in English, their sectarian differences appear to decrease. In the first class, which is large, Mahammadans and Hindus now promiscuously assemble, and read together with as much good will as if they were all of the self-same caste.

The number of students in English consists of 55 Musalmáns and 35 Hindus. The first class read Marshman's Brief Survey of History, the English Reader, No. IV., and Grammar of History. They have commenced Arithmetic and Geography, and translate from Hindustání and Bangálí into English.

The students in the Arabic and Persian are 112: the first class read "Baizáví," "Hidáya" and "Sharah Viqáya," in Arabic; "Allámí," "Bahár Dánish," "Niġmat khán ALÍ," with all the first authors, in Persian. They also study Arithmetic and Geometry in Arabic.

A.

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[From the gentleman at the head of this promising Seminary we have lately seen a letter, in which he gives the following candid testimony in favour of Hindustání books in the Roman character.]

"I have just received from Calcutta a few copies of the first and second parts of the Romanized 'English and Hindustání Student's Assistant.' The Musalmáns can read it, apparently, with as much facility as if it were written in the Persian character. The small supply I had has been very greedily purchased; so that I think I may shortly have occasion to send down for a larger quantity of Anglo-Hindustání books. The effect this first trial had has tended greatly to take away that prejudice which I must confess I had to the new system; and I shall do all I can to introduce it here, since I think it may be productive of much good."

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## VI.—*The Lawfulness of Christians attending Fashionable Amusements.*

To the Editors of the Calcutta Christian Observer.

The present condition of the Christian world, the coldness of its members, their want of holiness, integrity, union, charity, and self-denial, is a constant theme of triumph to the enemies of Christ, and of bitter regret and deep humiliation to his riends. Many causes may be mentioned for this low state of he Church, but the two principal ones are, I think, its outward

prosperity, ease, and credit; and next, the tests by which it has pleased the evangelical world to try all those who wish to enter its body. On this unscriptural invention of "an outward and visible sign of an inward spiritual grace," which the very tendency of the test is rather to check than encourage; or in other words, on the question whether either reason or revelation forbid mixing with the world, and partaking of worldly amusements with sobriety and moderation, (for the word of God commands moderation in all things,) I wish to say a few words; and though my opinions will probably widely differ from yours, I trust you will not on that account alone reject my communication.

Surely all professed Christians are agreed in considering the Bible to be the rule of our opinions, our conduct; the standard by which we are to try ourselves, and, if need be, others also: but where, I ask, can any text be found from Genesis to the Revelations to sanction the opinion that those amusements usually designated "worldly" by the evangelical class are displeasing to God? The scriptures indeed abound in awful warnings to those who "living in pleasure are dead while they live;" to those who "loving the world and the things of the world, the love of the Father cannot be in them." But what is this world—of what nature are these feelings? Surely the worldly affections, desires, and cares with which the real Christian must sustain a constant warfare, assault him with no more violence in the ball-room, than in the senate, at the bar, in the fireside circle, at the Missionary meeting. Unless an act be expressly forbidden by the word of God, from which there is no appeal, we have no right to pronounce it sinful in itself, though finding it injurious to ourselves, *we* are bound to renounce it. Still less ought we to make it a test by which to try the religious state of the professed disciples of Jesus.

True it is, that every real Christian is ever most anxious to avoid any thing that has a tendency to cherish those feelings against which he is ever striving; but have balls, have concerts, has the theatre more, or indeed so much, evil in them as many amusements and employments against which the prohibition of the Christian world has not gone forth? Let us examine a few of the reasons usually brought forward in support of these opinions.

With respect to the theatre, conducted as it is generally, the objections both moral and religious are most reasonable and satisfactory; but these objections, in my opinion, would not in the least apply to theatrical entertainments conducted with modesty and decorum. As a Christian may innocently delight in the perusal of some great work of dramatic art, so I think he may enjoy the visible representation of the scenes which have charmed him; but

as I think no Christian can take pleasure in the study of either vicious or blasphemous books, so I think no Christian can take pleasure in the theatre as at present constituted ; as a general attendant at least, for as God has not forbidden the act, so we should not condemn any good man who on selected occasions gratifies his taste and imagination by what is so eminently calculated to delight both.

One objection usually brought forward against public amusements is, that they excite the mind, and unfit it for religious exercises. It will, I believe, be allowed, that whatever is a novelty, or whatever is the most agreeable thing we allow ourselves, has this tendency. In a gay family, young people usually consider a ball or an opera in this light ; in a serious family, they would look forward to a dinner party, to an excursion, or to the May meetings with much the same feelings. In a family where new books were rare, I once saw a young girl so excited by the present of one, that she could not sleep all night ; and I have known more than one young person, after attending an animated debate in Parliament, absolutely ill with the excitement. But would any one in consequence pronounce books sinful, or make an eleventh commandment against attending the House of Commons ? At any rate this reason can hardly apply to grown-up men and women, who must be strangely constituted indeed if they find excitement in a ball room. Tell a man hot from the House of Commons, or from his counting-house where he has been directing operations by which he risks his whole fortune, that it is a sin to join in any public amusement lest its excitement should unfit him for the exercises of devotion, and he would laugh at the idea ; and I believe even the youngest among us have unavoidable cares, and hopes, and desires, to which the addition of a ball or a play would be but as a drop in the bucket.

It is often said, “ How can religious people be dancing about in such a dying world as this ? Only think of being summoned away in the middle of a ball ! ” Can any thing be more absurd ? If a man be in an unconverted state ; it signifies little where he dies, or whether he dances at a ball, or sits still at home ; and if he be really a child of God, can it be seriously thought that his salvation is affected by keeping time with his feet to music ? Unless the heart be entirely changed, worldliness will exist, and will shew itself, whether on the race course, or at the opera, at a Bible meeting, or at the household hearth. If any of these things be allowed to dissipate the mind, or unfit us for the service of God or man, to us they are not innocent. The place, the act, are alike blameable, alike to be avoided. The Quaker lady who calls the purchase of a gold chain a vain and sinful expense, will spend twice the sum on cobweb

muslin, and rich silks; and those who in order to enter the evangelical circle must assume its badges, find for themselves and their children many an amusement, not more innocent, nor less worldly than those diversions they have renounced.

Again, the sin of these amusements is sometimes said to consist in the association to which they lead with irreligious persons. Man must always be wiser than his Maker; but it was unerring power, love, and wisdom which declared, that the tares and the wheat *must* both grow *together* till the harvest, and that no attempt to separate them could succeed. "Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners?" was the cry of the Pharisees of the past times; and in these days the disciples of Christ would hardly dare to follow him to so gay a scene as the marriage of Cana in Galilee. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and he will not the less fail to recognise us as such, because in submission to his will, "in the midst of," (not apart from,) "a crooked and perverse generation, we shine as lights of the world." Let us not deceive ourselves by fancying these new invented laws are at least harmless. The effects of no falsehood can be innocent, and it is false to assert that any such test as is now in use can be found in the Bible. Religion is now indeed become an easy yoke and light burden. The question is not, when we would judge of others, "Is he a good father, husband, master? Does he shew his love to Christ by our Saviour's own test, benevolence to man? Is he true, upright, humble? Does he restrain his temper, does he govern his speech by the law of love?" No, this the Bible asks; but *we* make far more important enquiries. "Does he go to balls? Was he ever seen at the theatre?" For one exhortation from our spiritual guides to root out worldliness from the heart; for one warning that pride, vanity, ambition, levity, envy, are to be found as much in the most retired hermitage as in the gayest palace; for one such reference to "the weightier matters of the law," we have exhortations without number to abstain from the ball room, and the card table; to avoid the opera, and attend the Missionary meeting; to pay our "tithe of mint, anise and cummin." "Surely in vain do they worship me; teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."

I feel no doubt that one great cause of the present low state and worldly spirit of the Christian Church is this very preference of the shadow to the substance. It is easy to wear the badge, and adopt the language, of a party; and many a man whose heart has been touched, but not changed by religion, has considered himself to have renounced the world when he has made the sacrifice of his former recreations, and ceased his attendance on what are absurdly termed "worldly" amusements: but the *world*, as the Bible speaks of it, is not so easily

driven out, and reigns undisturbed and unsuspected in many a heart under another name. A second bad effect of these most unscriptural notions may be seen in the conduct and feelings of young converts while still under control. They are told it is a sin, when in compliance with their parents' desire they attend "these scenes of iniquity." Perhaps they are forced to obey, their young minds become accustomed to act against the dictates of conscience, and this I firmly believe often lays the foundation of that want of uprightness which in after life may be seen in so many of the professed servants of God. To prevent the mind becoming used to the breach of the commands of God, while the outward conduct is under the control of others, is perhaps one cause why Christianity is so much more a religion of motives than actions, and its precepts directed rather to the thoughts and intents of the heart, than to the external act; but *our* blind guides, straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel, make the pure and perfect liberty of the Gospel of none effect through their tradition.

Again, it is so often asserted, though alike unsupported by Revelation and reason, that no child of God can be happy while in the midst of these denounced scenes of gaiety, that I have seen more than one young person, after engaging in such a scene with all the buoyant spirits of youth, and, I will add, with the secure cheerfulness which should ever be the portion of the real Christian, bitterly reproach themselves afterwards for this very enjoyment, and almost doubt if they were indeed one of the "children of the kingdom." On one such occasion, where an attempt was made to disturb the conscience of a youthful servant of God by one who had often "with lies made the heart of the righteous sad, whom the Lord had not made sad," the reply was, "I have turned to the law and to the testimony; they do not speak thus, and I shall not lose my peace." I must not omit to mention the direct tendency of *this* new commandment to cause offences against the law of love. On what is the censorious spirit of the present race of religious professors employed? Is it not on, "What! a clergyman at a ball?" "Dear! I thought Mrs. —— was very religious, and she went the other day to Lady ——'s concert." "He did seem for a time to be an advanced Christian, but I understand he went last week to see Kean in Shylock." Where are these sins alluded to in that word which is to be "the lamp to our feet, and the light to our paths," by which alone we are to be judged? Happily the Christian can say, "It is a very small matter to me to be judged by you or by man's judgment. He that judgeth me is the Lord;" and it is well if we do not too often forget the God "who searcheth the hearts, and trieth the reins of the children of men," in our endeavours to square

our conduct by "the traditions of men, by the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Oh how it must grieve the Spirit of God to witness the zeal, the earnestness with which we defend and propagate the laws we have devised, and prefer such "weak and beggarly elements" to "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

This is not a light question—not to be put aside with the observation, "No man can be a Christian who makes a fuss about sacrificing such trifles;" and most true it is, no one can be a Christian; no one can have seen and tasted how gracious the Lord is, who would scruple to renounce for His sake all that the world can offer of pleasure and enjoyment. Nay, a real Christian will ever be ready to sacrifice his tastes, his amusements, all but the truth, rather than offend the ill-informed conscience of his "weak brother;" but for the honor of his God he will not hold his peace. He remembers the curse of those who dare to add anything to the word of life; he trembles when he can discern all around him tokens of the latter days, and when the mountains are beginning to sound with the coming of the Lord, to see that party names, party badges, party politics, are allowed to decide not only what we think of others, (that is of little consequence,) but what we think of ourselves. "Let us not be found," says our wise and Christian philosopher, Dr. Johnson, "let us not be found, when our Master calls for us, tearing the lace off our waistcoats, but the spirit of contention from our hearts and lives. Alas, the man who cannot get to heaven in a green coat, will not be found there in a grey." Oh how in one moment, when our Master does come, will vanish away all the distinctions, and terms, and laws invented by the Pharisees of the present day. The house of "many mansions" will not be monopolised by high church or low church—by the frequenters, or the contemners of the ball room. To one class, and to one only, among whatever sects or parties its members may have been divided on earth, will that everlasting home be open; to those who, forgetting or disregarding the words of man's wisdom, have taken their stand on the scriptures of truth alone; and formed, guided, and governed by them, are ever ready for the advent of Him, whose judgment alone they fear; ready at the theatre, ready in the ball room, ready in the house of God, ready on the bed of death, to say with joy and confidence, "Come, Oh Lord Jesus, come quickly."

PHILALETHES.

[PHILALETHES writes with spirit and ability on a subject of far more weight, than it appears to have at first sight. We agree with him, that it is injudicious to bring forward prominently, mere abstinence from amusements as a *test* of Christian character, particularly while addressing the young. A change far more radical is necessary to prove that the heart is given to Christ. But in regard to

the probability, that men, earnestly seeking for salvation, will frequent the theatre or the ball-room, and the propriety of their appearance there, we differ widely from our Correspondent. It requires but a little advance in Christian experience to estimate these things at their true value. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Behold, old things are passed away, and *all things* have become new unto him." Almost every Christian writer, ancient and modern, concurs in pronouncing these amusements worldly, seductive, and inconsistent with sober religious principles. Were they all Pharisees? We believe, notwithstanding a few incautious expressions, that this is far from the meaning of PHILALETHES. He wishes to guard against extremes; and so do we. We hope some of our Correspondents will favour us with a reply, founded on the basis of Scripture, to which he justly refers it.—Ed.]

VII.—*Notices regarding Hindu Festivals, occurring in different Months.—No. 2. February.*

FEB. 15.—*Sibarátri.*

The Hindu system is very different from the Christian in the number and appointed times of its religious festivals. The Christian has one day in seven set apart for rest from labour and the worship of God; and the experience of all ages and countries has shewn this distribution of time to be the most perfect, and answering best the ends of such an institution.

The Hindus have no particular day of rest, but keep numerous festivals, which frequently last several days consecutively, and are held at the most irregular distances of time; so that often weeks together pass by without any; whilst at other periods, nearly a whole month is occupied by a series of holidays, which follow each other in rapid succession. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that such an arrangement cannot be beneficial to the people. It is injurious to their health, and tends to create the idle and dissipated habits so prevalent among the natives.

The only festival in this whole month, is *Sibarátri* (or the night of *Sib*). It is held on the 14th day of the decrease of the moon, which falls on the 15th February. It is celebrated in honour of *Sib* the destroyer, the third person of the Hindu triad. On the 13th the worshippers eat only once, and on the 14th they fast entirely, abstaining even from the use of water. The worship is performed at night, once at every watch; and is accompanied with singing, dancing, music, and feasting. Those who have a permanent image of the god in their possession, worship that; and such as have none, make one for the occasion.

All Hindus are very particular in keeping this festival, and if practicable attend to it regularly every year. If this however is found impossible, they endeavour at least to do it once in their lives; else all the religious merit they may have acquired by

other acts of devotion and penance is vain and nugatory. The following saying among the Hindus shows the importance they attach to *Sibarátri*. They say that there are four things which far surpass in excellence all others of their kind, viz. the *Ganges* among the pilgrimages, the *sacrifice of a horse* among the offerings, *Sib* among the gods, and *Sibarátri* among the festivals.

The benefits accruing from the performance of the worship of *Sib* on this night are, deliverance from hell and admittance into *Sib's* heaven; (for every principal God has a heaven of his own.) This heaven, the *Sri Bhágabat* says, is 16,000 miles from the earth on Mount *Kailás*. The god resides with his wife *Párbatí*, in a palace of gold, adorned with jewels of all kinds, and surrounded with forests, gardens, trees with all kinds of fruits, and flowers of every fragrance. The *Kalpa* tree grows here, from which a person may obtain not only every kind of fruit, but all other things he may desire. There is also a flower named *Parijatá*, whose fragrance is most sweet, and extends 200 miles in all directions. The inhabitants of this heaven, are *Sib's* sons *Kártik* and *Ganes*, and those of his disciples who have attained beatitude. The time is spent in festivities, sensual enjoyments, and abominations of all kinds.

To prove the transcendency of the merit of celebrating *Sibarátri*, the Hindus relate the following story, taken from the *Puránas*:

“A hunter of very low caste, and addicted to every kind of sin and wickedness, was once on this night overtaken by the darkness in a forest before he could reach his dwelling; and to protect himself from the wild beasts, ascended a wood-apple tree (*Bel*), whose leaf is always used in the worship of *Sib*. Underneath was a stone *linga*, the emblem of the god. During the night, the hunter happened by accident to strike off with his foot one of the leaves, which fell on the *linga* below. In the morning he proceeded home, and lived many years afterwards, one of the greatest miscreants ever seen in the country. On his death, the servants of *Yama* (the Hindu *Pluto*) took immediate possession of his soul, as being the lawful property of their infernal master. When leading it along to the lower regions, they were met by a number of *Sib's* delegates, who laid claim to the prize as belonging to their lord. Not being able to agree, a scuffle ensued, in which *Yama's* servants having had the disadvantage, the victorious party conveyed the soul to *Sib's* heaven, where it was admitted to all the privileges and enjoyments of the place.

“*Yama*, having heard of the loss of a subject whom he had fully reckoned upon, proceeded to *Sib*, and angrily inquired into the reasons of the injustice done to him. *Sib* granted that the hunter had during all his life been a most reprobate cha-

acter, and so far, certainly, had become liable to the punishment of hell; but added, that once, on *Sibarátri*, he having dropt a leaf of the wood-apple tree on the *linga*, this act, though unconsciously performed, was yet so deserving, that all his sins had been removed, and that, besides, such a transcendent degree of religious merit had been acquired, that in consequence he had become entitled to all the bliss of heaven. *Yama* acknowledged the propriety and justice of *Sib's* decision, and retired to his own dominions."

It must be plain to every one, that it would be vain to expect true morality in a people who hold notions like those set forth in this story, where a whole life spent in the commission of crime, is represented as so trifling a matter, that a leaf thrown by accident on an idol is sufficient, not only to remove all guilt, but to entitle the criminal to eternal happiness. How different are the doctrines of the Bible! There we see that sin is "that abominable thing which God hateth;" and that, instead of being so light a matter in his sight, it was necessary that his own Son should suffer and die to atone for it. There we see, that unless a man becomes a new creature, and is renewed after the blessed image of God in righteousness and true holiness, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

O! that all those who possess the word of truth, felt thankful for the privilege they enjoy, and would but remember in love the millions around them, who are still in darkness and the shadow of death!

L.

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### VIII.—Case of Mahammadan Superstition.

To the Editors of the Calcutta Christian Observer.

GENTLEMEN,

The following instance of Musalmán superstition may possibly not be unacceptable for insertion in your valuable periodical; and as I can from ocular testimony vouch for its entire correctness, it may serve to exhibit in a pitiable but interesting light the gross condition, as to moral sense and feeling, in which the boasted worshippers of the one true God, under the dictation of the arch-impostor Mahammad, are so lamentably sunk. The clear fact, that not even a just knowledge of the spiritual nature and unity of the Deity will avail to satisfy the moral want and to renovate the moral character of mankind, unless accompanied by a revelation of some economy by which sin may be pardoned, divine grace communicated, communion with God opened, and a holy impulse given to the inward springs of conscience and the affections—this single fact is a satisfactory corroboration of the actual necessity, as well as the desirableness of such a Revelation. And when the characters proper to it are found eminently attaching to the Christian system, what reasonable doubt can remain as to its divine origin and authenticity? But if, *a priori*, this system should be expected therefore to be attended with the desired results upon the purity and

moral elevation of man, his happiness here and his hope of happiness hereafter, the ascertained historical *fact*, that such results *have* followed its dissemination and reception, goes to fix the absolute certitude that *Christianity is from God*, and is His duly appointed and effectual instrument for restoring His lapsed human creatures to "knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness." The daily contact with blindness and superstition and moral degradation in this country has doubtless a tendency to dull the keenness of the first sensations of wonder, commiseration, and zeal experienced by every true Christian, and especially by those whose object in visiting India is to impart the blessed Gospel of the Lord Jesus to perishing fellow-sinners and fellow-mortals. Instances like the following have therefore a valuable effect, in reviving the strong impressions of the misery and degradation in which all are without distinction involved, until they have come under the power of Christianity; and in stimulating to increased zeal, energy, and effort in the charitable work of evangelists, those to whom "this grace is given, that they should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

About a quarter of a mile from Chinsurah, on the Húglí road, a Musalmán *faqír*, named Maharam Sháh, whose father had been also a *faqír*, had established himself for the performance of a long fast of 40 days during and after the Ramzán. He had wished, according to the ordinary mode, to undergo this austerity within the mosque at Húglí; but being of the Shíáhs, or followers of Ali, reckoned heretics by the orthodox Mahammadans, the Sunnis or followers of Omar, he had not been permitted entrance. He therefore, in order to withdraw himself from the eyes of men, which is deemed essential to the strictness and merit of this rigorous service, had caused to be dug for him a little off the high road, in a private garden belonging to a devout *darzi* or tailor, a spot of ground five yards long and three wide, to the depth of seven feet. Over this bambu rafters were laid, covered with *darmás*, on which the earth was laid to the height of a foot or more. Within, the space was partitioned by *darmás* into three compartments, the most distant of a small width, for the purposes of nature; the central for prayer and perusal of the Qorán; the third for his slight refection and the necessary ablutions.

When I saw the place, the man had been 10 or 11 days within it. For his admission a narrow space had been left uncovered, which after his entrance had been closed with earth, except a small opening about six inches over, for the supply of air and the introduction of his daily repast. Directly under this opening, was a stand for a small *chírág* or wick lamp, to enable him to see and reach forward his hand for the supply, consisting of two small plantains and half a seer of milk, taken each evening after the going down of the sun, and which, we were assured by the *darzi*, was his whole nourishment during the entire period of the 40 days. For the first three days, he told us, even this was not received. The *faqír* had taken a few *cloves* with him on his entrance, a single *one* of which daily, with as much water as would cover it in the hollow of his hand, was the whole amount of what he had swallowed; on the fourth day, however, he accepted the plantains and milk, and has continued to do so daily since. In receiving them he does not allow his face to be seen; although I watched close, at the introduction of the supply, to catch a glimpse of his person, I could perceive only his arm stretched from behind the first partition. He was covered with a woollen *chaddar* or cloth. When we called out to ascertain if he were really there, he answered by a simple affirmative, beyond which we could not succeed in eliciting a syllable. The garden was situated between two tanks. The grave of this living entombed, (for such too was its external appearance,) was dug to the level of the water, and below it, so that the water

speedily found entrance, and stood an inch or two above the floor ; over which, however, had providently been erected a stage of bambus and dar-más, a few inches in height, and upon which this poor wretch sat to his devotions. In the inner or prayer compartment was a lamp constantly burning. In addressing him, the darzí and others called him, *Murshí* or spiritual teacher, and *Khudáwand* or Lord, a term of the highest respect, and even veneration. It appears that by the injunction of his own initiator or spiritual preceptor at *Dháká* when yet a boy, he was engaged in the present austerity, now performed for the *fourth* time of *seven* originally directed. The first entombment took place when he was but 11 years of age, and from which he barely escaped with life, having been obliged to be lifted out of the cave, and restored by gradual supplies of milk and *snails*. He was now thought to be about 25 or 26 years old. The expense of the excavation was borne by charitable contributions from the surrounding Musalmáns, and the daily milk and plantains were supplied by the darzí, on whose homestead the austerity was practised, and who thereby thinks to perform a charitable and meritorious act, entitling him to divine favour and human repute ; as the faqír himself was conceived to be in process of acquiring high supernatural powers, as well as extraordinary merit with the Deity. This is the first instance of the kind known in this neighbourhood ; and being myself little versed in the opinions or practices of Musalmáns, having bent my chief attention to the Hindu system, language and people, I am not able to say how far it may be either a general or frequently practised austerity\*. It is at all events a lamentable exhibition of human blindness and weakness, and an equally manifest argument of the natural want to man of *some form of religion*. Truly 'God made man upright,' with direct and elevated mind and affections ; but since his dismal fall from equal intelligence and rectitude, he has yet 'sought out many inventions' for supplying this natural want, and reconciling himself to God and to his own conscience. How thankful ought Christians to be for the glorious light from Heaven, which has beamed so brightly upon their darkness, and for the equal and concomitant grace, which has poured its holy influence into the souls of all such as truly "walk in and by that light !" May it speedily spread over the still dark land of India, until Mahammadan and Hindu blindness, superstition, vice, and misery are exchanged for the truth, comfort, purity, and hopes of the blessed Gospel of God and the Saviour !

It is often made a matter of extreme astonishment to such as have little acquaintance with the nature of the human mind, that the votaries of a false or corrupted religion should so very much exceed, in devotion, zeal, exertion, and self-denial, the professors of a true one. The Musalmán, the Hindu, the half-civilized or untutored demi-savage of the various forms of paganism, and the ignorant professor of a corrupted and superstitious Christianity, as exhibited in the zealous papist, manifest similar earnestness and self-mortification in their austerities and other performances of a blind devotion. How is it that so many enlightened *protestant* Christians are so cold, heartless, and undevout ? make so few or no personal sacrifices, refuse even the slight exertion necessary for ordinary attendance upon public or religious ordinances, or for private exercises of prayer and reading of the Scriptures ? The answer is plain—the ignorant devotee of a blind superstition or perverted revelation, imagines his personal *services*, his self-denial and bodily exercises, to be in themselves meritorious, and the actual means of his salvation, and acceptance with the Deity. To perform even a rigorous penance, to practise the extremest austerities, to go through the most tedious round of prayers, genuflections,

\* We understand that this religious austerity, denominated by the Musalmáns *Ranzán ká Chillá*, (or "Forty days,") is by no means unfrequently practised.—E.

ablutions, fastings and recitations—all this is tolerable under the belief, *actually in the mind*, that eternal happiness is thereby secured; and *all* is far easier than to subdue pride, to coerce passion, to mortify appetite, to forgive enemies, to purify the heart, to practise honesty and charity, and universal good will, and to perform all the duties of morality and true piety. The enlightened professor of a pure Christianity is aware of the utter worthlessness of all merely external services, the perfect unavailability to his acceptance with God of all bodily or even mental exercises, 'that profit little' or nothing, except as they may and do become actual *means* to a far higher end of greatly more difficult attainment. He therefore practises *not* what he knows would indeed be "labour in vain." He rejects all superstitious austerities; for the same reason he equally neglects the reasonable performances of a pure but still external Christianity; because, conscious that he *does not, will not* bring his *heart* into them, he *knows* they will be rejected of that God who must be "worshipped in spirit and in truth," and on whom no grave or mortified or regular exterior can impose, or avail with him as a substitute for the "*new creature*, without which circumcision and uncircumcision," outward rites of every kind, or their abandonment, are alike *nothing*; for the true "kingdom of God," he is well assured, "is not meat and drink," or aught else of a merely external nature; but "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Thence such general neglect of Christian ordinances and worship, or such heartlessness and irregularity in attendance upon them. The multitudes, thus equally cold and guilty, endeavour, it may be, to satisfy themselves with their deeds of supposed virtue, honesty, and charity, though indeed forgetful of "faith and the love of God." Some few, it is to be feared, seek a more miserable refuge still in an unbelief more wished for than confident; and others endeavour to stifle inward uneasiness by the promise of a futural repentance, ever uncertain and always progressively more difficult and more unlikely; while vast multitudes have only the vague consolation of *hoping* God will be more *merciful* than *just*, more indulgent than holy, more weak than wise or powerful. From all such "blindness and hardness of heart and contempt of his word and commandment, good Lord, deliver us!"

CINSURENSIS.

### IX.—*Power of the Gospel, illustrated in the Conversion of three Political Partisans.*

Some two or three years ago, there was high political excitement in South Carolina, U. S. Parties were arrayed against each other—and many persons went armed. I recollect well (says a correspondent of the *Western Luminary*) the cases of three gentlemen, who lived not very far from each other, and who were brought to bow at the feet of the Redeemer about the same time. Two were lawyers, and the third a rich planter. In giving an account of what the Lord had done for them, one remarked: "I had a quarrel with a certain gentleman, and had made up my mind, that the first time I should see him, I would spit in his face; but oh! sir, as soon as it pleased God to reveal his love in my heart, the first thing I did was to pray for that man; and meeting him a few days afterwards, I went up to him, and gave him *both hands*, in token of cordial reconciliation." Another said: "I was about sending to Charleston for a brace of pistols, I thought I should have occasion for them; but now," added he, "I would be willing to kiss the dust upon the feet of the Union men, if they would come to Christ!" The third gentleman remarked: "Sir, you don't know the state of political excitement amongst us here. Why, sir, I felt myself as if I could just seize my gun, and go out to the road, and shoot down my own brother, if he belonged to the other party. Now I can take them *all* in my arms, and say, God bless every one of them!" What a blessed religion ours is!

## Missionary and Religious Intelligence.

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### 1.—ANNUAL EXAMINATIONS OF NATIVE FEMALE SCHOOLS.

The annual examination of the children educated in the Native Female Schools in connection with the CALCUTTA LADIES' SOCIETY was held in the Town Hall, on Wednesday January 6th, and was very respectably and numerously attended.

In these schools are about 350 children, but the children of the upper classes only, in number 57, had been removed from the Central School, Cornwallis Square, and the Mirzápúr School, for the convenience of examination, which was conducted by the Rev. Messrs. Sandys and Piffard. The *first class* of 16 girls read the 7th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles with fluency, and answered the questions which the examiners put to them so as to evince that they had acquired a considerable knowledge of the Bible History. The *second class* read and answered questions on the 3rd chapter of St. John's gospel. The *third class* read the 8th chapter of St. Matthew, and the *fourth* the History of Joseph. The manner in which the girls in these three classes answered the questions put to them was also very satisfactory.

A *sale of fancy articles* for the benefit of the Ladies' Society was held immediately after the examination, when the sum of 1500 rupees was realized. There were also received for sales on account of the female schools at Haurah and Alipur 580 rupees, and for the Indian Orphan Refuge 260 rupees. The sum total realized was therefore about 2340 Rs.

On Monday January 18th, the annual examination of the LADIES' ASSOCIATION Female School was held in the school room, Circular Road. In this school about 50 children, chiefly Musalmán, receive daily instruction under Native Christian teachers. The first class read the gospel of St. Matthew; the 2nd and 3rd read abridged Bible Histories, and repeated Catechism and Hymns. This school is supported by contributions of one rupee per mensem.

May the great Head of the Church shed abroad the influences of the Holy Spirit, that the instruction imparted to these native female children may be the means of their conversion; and that the females of this country, being raised from their present degraded condition, may enjoy the privileges of the gospel of peace, adorn the doctrines of Christianity by a holy life, and look forward with joy to the attainment of the eternal glories of the kingdom of heaven. S.

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### 2.—CALCUTTA BIBLE ASSOCIATION.

The Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Calcutta Bible Association was held in the Town Hall on Friday evening, the 15th January, 1839,—the Venerable Archdeacon Dealtry, President, in the Chair.

The Annual Report having been read by the Bible Secretary, it was moved by the Rev. Dr. Parish, seconded by Bábú Krishna Mohana Banerjeá, and resolved unanimously,

I. That the Report now read be approved, and that it be printed for the information of the friends of the Association.

Moved by the Rev. W. Yates, seconded by the Rev. Mr. Boaz, and resolved unanimously,

V. o

II. That this meeting views with satisfaction the circumstance, that during the past year the Association have been enabled to extend their operations much beyond the limits originally contemplated; and sincerely hopes that the Association may become increasingly useful in communicating the volume of divine inspiration, wherever there may be a probability of its being attentively perused.

Moved by C. W. Smith, Esq. seconded by Wale Byrn, Esq. and resolved unanimously,

III. That this Meeting earnestly invites the friendly co-operation, and the contributions, of all Christians, who are anxious to promote the circulation of the word of God in these lands, in order that the Association may not be subjected to the painful necessity of circumscribing its operations.

Moved by Bábú Mohesh Chandra Ghos, seconded by — Banister, Esq. and unanimously resolved,

IV. That this Meeting records its conviction, that the Sacred Scriptures, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, are the grand means for accomplishing the purpose of God in the salvation of a lost world.

Moved by the Rev. Mr. Boyes, seconded by the Rev. W. Greenwood, and unanimously resolved,

V. That the thanks of the Meeting be presented to the Committee and Office-bearers for their attention to the interests of the Association during the past year, and that the following gentlemen be the Committee and Office-bearers for the ensuing year.

*President.*—The Venerable Archdeacon Dealtry, L. L. B.

*Committee.*—Messrs. J. Richardson, W. Ryland, W. Balston, D. W. Madge, A. W. Hunt, P. Lindeman, T. W. Smyth, G. E. Henwood, M. D' Rozario, J. Muller, and Bábú Krishna Mohana Banerjá.

Rev. T. Sandys, Bible Secretary.

M. W. Woollaston, Esq. Minute Secretary.

C. N. Cooke, Esq. Cash Secretary.

*Treasurer.*—J. N. Vant Hart, Esq.

Moved by the Rev. T. Sandys, seconded by W. Ryland, Esq. and unanimously resolved,

VI. That the thanks of the Meeting be presented to the gentlemen in charge of the Town Hall, for the use of the Hall on the present occasion.

Moved by the Rev. Mr. Boaz, seconded by W. Money, Esq. and resolved unanimously,

VII. That the thanks of the Meeting be presented to the Chairman for his conduct in the Chair.

The Chairman replied. A collection was then made, and a Doxology sung, after which the Meeting was dissolved.

The following gentlemen addressed the Meeting.

The Rev. Mr. Boaz, in rising to second the second Resolution, proposed by Rev. W. Yates, said—

The last speaker had borne us by his eloquence into fields of science, and made those sciences tributary to this great cause; he would be far from saying that he had not at the same time forced the subject upon their attention in a practical manner, yet there was one practical question which he desired by God's blessing to urge upon them. That question was—*What has been done in connection with the Bible cause?* There were periods in the history of individuals when it was important for them to reflect awhile, and ask, *What have I done for God?* There were periods in the history of the Church when this was necessary; hence have we days set apart for especial retrospection, and we can testify that those days were good. That which is conducive to individual benefit and the good of the Church, may not be unprofitable for Societies—for the Bible Society. Let us to-night then stand still and ask, *What has been done?*

Many of us can remember the early days of this Society, when its history was almost a fiction. We heard of the sylvan scenery and simple inhabitants of Polynesia—of the ancient mythology of India—of the rude sons of Africa—and the aborigines of the new world. We heard of them but to believe, that we had but to wait our

desires over seas and continents for them to fall down and worship Jesus. Has this been the case? No. Why, why has not the whole earth become a temple of praise to Him? It is to be feared that these efforts were based too much upon *excitement*, and required a continual supply of almost marvellous stories and fictions to keep them alive. Such aliment cannot always be provided: like the manna it has ceased to descend, and we begin to look at things in their true colours as sober men. This is good. It is to be hoped that future exertion will be based upon *true piety*, which is the only sure foundation. This is light, not evanescent as the lightning's flash, just passing through the darkness to display to us the fearful scenes around us, and leave us a prey to all the unhappiness which reflection can induce—no; it is a light, clear and brilliant, which shall steadily increase in brightness and power, until the whole world shall feel its cheering influence. When our exertions have this for their source, then may we expect an enlarged blessing.

He was far from saying, although entertaining these views, that nothing had been done. What has been done then? If we wish to have a lucid answer to the question, let us ask islanders of the Southern Pacific, and they would tell us that peace had taken the place of discord, social happiness had obtained where every cruelty had before prevailed, and that religion had cast its suavities over the whole civil and political frame of that society, which had been marked by every feature of the native wretchedness of man. Let us ask the debased sons of Africa, those that had been looked upon as a connecting link between the rational and brute creation, and they would tell us that religion had raised them to the elevation of men and Christians, and that these wandering children had obtained "a local habitation and a name," as well as the inspiration of that hope which is bright with immortality. Ask the slaves of the West, and they will tell you, that the Bible has removed their fetters, and made them free; nor in this land has it been without its trophies: though they may have been fewer in number and less bright in their appearance than those of other countries, yet have they still *been* trophies. Has nothing then been done? Yes. Satan has been despoiled of his prey—souls have been converted and saved, and new gems planted in the crown of our Mediator and Friend. And is this nothing? Yes; we hear the first notes of the Millennium. He had no sympathy with those who would throw the labor of the past into the shade, and look with gloomy forebodings on the future. If however, we put the question, again, What has been done? we shall have for an answer, but little. This would be the feeling of the Church, if she felt as she ought, when she looked at the means at her disposal, and the work to be accomplished—when she remembered that she had the promise of the Spirit, the aid of omnipotent grace, the presence of Jesus, and the approbation of Jehovah. She might well say, when looking around her, "How little have I done." "May I henceforth *feel more deeply and act more promptly.*" When, Sir, I heard the resolution express pleasure at the enlarged measure of the Society's operations, I was ashamed—I could have wept. What, Sir, shall we feel pleasure in the fact that we have dispersed in the past year, a few hundred copies of the Sacred Scriptures in this great city? I think not. Are there not hundreds of British and American seamen entering this port every year, many of them without a copy of the Bible; hundreds of Roman Catholics, to whom it is a prohibited book; and of natives, how many thousands, who are altogether destitute of the word of life. Let us not boast or be satisfied, until we have put a copy of the Bible into the hands of all who can read and will accept it. Again, if we put the question, we shall have for an answer from many quarters, *Nothing* has been done. From the interior of injured Africa, from the vast lands of South America, from the western continents, from the islands of the seas, and from many parts of this densely populated country, the answer would be, "Nothing has been done." The spirits of the dying, as they enter the eternal world, may with truth say, "No man cared for my soul;" and as the realities of that state broke upon their vision, we might suppose them looking down and saying to us, "Go to our brethren." "Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it quickly." It is our duty to work, God's to bless. If we are faithful to our trust, he will not withhold his benediction. If we distribute the Bible in the spirit of prayer, we need not fear the captivating errors of the Romish Church, the aristocratical and inert piety of many, the unlovely and uncharitable sentiments of modern Corinthians, nor the strongly entrenched superstitions of those around us: from *these combined* we have nothing to fear. If God be for us, who can be against us? If we distribute this word, it is great and must prevail; and though in our efforts we may meet with difficulties both from within and without, the consistent praying Church of Christ, who in obedience to her Lord's command gives to a perishing world the bread of life, shall appear "bright as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners."

In rising to propose the third resolution, C. W. Smith, Esq. said,

My dear Christian Friends,

I esteem it a high privilege to meet you upon the present occasion, to celebrate the 13th Anniversary of the Calcutta Bible Association, to consider the operations of the past year, and to adopt fresh measures for that on which we are now entering.

When I consider the object for which the Association was formed, and which connects it with upwards of two thousand Societies of a similar nature in the four quarters of the globe; that it is a work of universal and pure Christian benevolence, without a limit, embracing equally the wants of all Christian communities and all heathen nations; I do again declare my joy in being privileged, however humbly, to assist in the furtherance of such an object. In the Report which has been perused this evening, we do not want evidence that the distribution of the Scriptures is going on steadily, and with increasing tokens of the Divine blessing resting on it, by the spread of true religion to the different portions of this vast empire.

Opposition we of course expected: it has been and will be made; the votaries of idolatry are not slow to discern that the very existence of their cause is threatened: but we have only to persevere, and, under the Divine blessing, we shall overcome the already faltering resistance which is offered to the benign and enlightening influence of the Holy Scriptures. The field of labour is indeed of mighty extent, our means are limited, and the labourers through whose medium the Scriptures are circulated, are confessedly few in number.

Do we then want encouragement: Surely as members of a Bible Society, we need to go no further for encouragement, than to trace from its small beginning the Parent Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, to its present elevated position in the Christian world. There, the hand of the Almighty is plainly to be seen, bringing to pass things which appeared impossible.

Let us emulate the example of our brethren in the West, and animated with a Redeemer's love, let us think nothing impossible which Christian Benevolence prompts us to undertake. To the friends of the Bible Association we would say, Assist us with your prayers, your efforts, and your contributions, and let your assistance be commensurate with the exigency, remembering that he who soweth plentifully shall reap abundantly.

On rising to second the third Resolution, Mr. Byrn observed,

That if the Christian acted up to his duty, he would act up to the spirit and letter of the Resolution. If there was one duty more than another that was obligatory upon the Christian, it was the duty of dispensing the word of God; for the command that enjoined, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"—the injunction, "Freely ye have received, freely give;" were equally as obligatory as every precept of religion to which Christians paid implicit obedience. In what a pitiable state would Christians be, if those who had been their instructors in Christ, had been as indifferent to their spiritual interests, as they are generally found to be with respect to others. It was perhaps a principle of human nature, that the possession of advantages led Christians to under-estimate their value; when a thing was in prospect, there was a great anxiety and care in regard to it: the possession of it was followed by comparative indifference. With feelings of complacency of this kind, the Christian was disposed to view his advantages and privileges. Such were disposed to recognize and act up to many of the obligations that devolved upon them; but their advantages and their privileges, which elevated them so greatly above their heathen fellow-creatures, did not induce them in a spirit of humility to act up to the sentiment of the great Apostle of the Gentiles when he was addressing the Athenians—men led away by the same feeling of vanity and superiority, for God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth.

With regard to the difficulty which prejudices in this country opposed to the reception of the Bible, as stated in the Report, Mr. Byrn thought that this must be expected, but ought to be no ground for discouragement. As the waters wear the stones, as repeated strokes upon the hardest metal will make it malleable; so perseverance in this cause will accomplish the object in view.

Mr. Byrn proceeded to remark, that the Bible had done all the good now seen in this world. All the good done in India, was done through the Bible. It was the Christian, the friend of Bible Associations, that first commenced the work of improvement and education in this country; and these efforts were followed up by the labours of others, who do not recognize their obligations as Christians. According to the means at their disposal, much had been done by these Societies; and as these means increased, there was every reason to hope, that much more would be effected.

On rising to second the fourth Resolution, the Rev. W. Greenwood said,

I rise to second the Resolution which has just been proposed to you.

Our good friends who have performed the duties of the past year, I am sure, richly merit the thanks which it is now proposed to offer to them: and I feel con-

ident that those thanks will be as freely and as generously awarded to them as they are deserved. But I would suggest to them for their encouragement, and for the encouragement of those who may succeed them in their labours, that however pleasing it may be to secure the thanks of our Christian brethren, and to stand high in their good opinion, a much nobler reward awaits them than mortals can give, even the approbation of Him in whose favour is life. For, as Christians, we should ever recollect, that even the Almighty himself is not unmindful of the work of faith and labour of love; but will render an ample recompence for whatever is done for the furtherance of his cause, and the promotion of his glory.

I will only add my fervent prayer, that the Divine blessing may rest upon this and every similar institution, that both they who sow and they who reap may rejoice together.

### 3.—CHRISTIAN INSTITUTION, KIDDERPUR.

The annual examination of the pupils of the above institution was held in the school room at Kidderpur, on the 17th November last. It may not be improper to state, that the object of this institution is to take the children of Native Christians from the demoralizing scenes connected with their homes, and endeavour, under the Divine blessing, to implant in their minds those principles which shall have a moral influence on their transactions with their fellow men, be the earnest of their new birth, and evidence of their title for heaven. The object is one of the highest importance, one which demands our liveliest sympathies and most fervent prayers. The examination was highly creditable to the respected superintendants, Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, and not less to the diligence of many of the *youth*, especially when we remember that they have been but a short time under instruction; the girls, we believe, only ten months. The boys were examined in the Scriptures, in the English and Bangálí languages, geography and several other branches of useful knowledge; the girls were examined in Bangálí, on religious subjects, and in several departments of knowledge which may be brought to bear on their domestic usefulness in future life. With the whole of the subjects they displayed a very considerable acquaintance.

There were some features of this examination which gave us sincere pleasure; there was no attempt at display, the knowledge which the children manifested with the Holy Scriptures, with their own language, promptly translating English into Bangálí and vice versa, the practical tendency of all their studies, with its evident adaptation to the circumstances in which they were likely to move, together with the cheerful and healthy appearance of the children, made us think, that, though humble in its aspect, it was likely to prove a great blessing to that class of society in which these children would move. Some of them have, we believe, given indications of real piety, which is the strongest recommendation of the school, and the highest source of encouragement to the teacher. The institution, though primarily designed for the children of Native Christians, is open to the offspring of the heathen, many of whom attend. Several were present on this occasion from neighbouring schools under the superintendance of the Rev. Mr. Piffard, whose acquaintance with the Scriptures reflect great credit on the zeal and perseverance of their devoted teacher. There are in the institution 33 boys and 17 girls, boarded, clothed, and educated by the Bengal Auxiliary Missionary Society and the Ladies' Female Society. There were present, Rev. Messrs. Boaz, Hæberlin, Gogerly, Leechman, Macqueen, Messrs. Hough and Woollaston, and other friends to native improvement. We wish our friends all possible success in their work in the new year on which they have entered. B.

## Shipping Intelligence.

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DEC.

## ARRIVALS.

4. Syed Khan, (Schooner,) J. McKinnon, from China 7th, and Singapore 17th November.
5. Symcoonheen, (Brig,) Che Lean, from Mergue 4th November.  
 — Bombay Packet, J. Garnock, from Bombay 25th October.  
*Passengers.*—Mrs. Woollaston, Mr. Henry Woollaston, Masters Henry Woollaston and Edwin Woollaston.
- Hero, (Barque,) R. J. Morris, from Moulmein 23rd November.  
*Passengers.*—Mr. J. Darwood, Merchant, Messrs. Gibson, Maycock, Giddons, Cockburn and McCann, belonging to the Hospital Department.
9. Lady Grant, (Barque,) W. Jeffrey, from China 7th, and Singapore 19th Nov.  
*Passenger.*—Mr. F. Norris, Mariner.  
 — Duke of Bedford, W. A. Bowen, from London 4th, and Portsmouth 11th August.  
*Passengers.*—Mrs. Skipwith, Mrs. Handyside, Mrs. Atkinson, Mrs. Wilson, and Mrs. W. Wilson; Misses Turner, Robison, E. Kennedy, H. Kennedy, and Atkinson; F. Skipwith, Esq. Civil Service; Lieut.-Col. Ward, Bengal Cavalry; Dr. Handyside, Medical Service; Lieut. Pineau, B. N. I.; B. Wyburn, Esq. Barrister; Mr. W. Wilson, and Mr. H. Fandon, Merchants; Mr. A. Onslow, and Mr. A. Kennedy, Cadets; Mr. A. Walker, Mr. Lemarchand, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. H. J. Wilson, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Thomas Atkinson, Mr. B. Cooper, and Mr. Luke Burkie.
10. Red Rover, W. Clifton, from China 13th, and Singapore 20th November.  
 — Comtafait, (China Junk,) from Mergue 4th November.
12. Hope, (Amr.) W. Fleming, from Philadelphia 22nd July, and Madeira 29th Aug
13. Euphrates, A. Hanny, from Liverpool 10th August.
15. Lord Hungerford, Fergusson, from Portsmouth 30th July.  
*Passengers from London.*—Mrs. Oldfield, Mrs. Caulfield, Mrs. Russel, Mrs. Garden, Mrs. Prinsep; Miss Russel, Miss Bennet, Miss Young, Miss Hawkins; Mr. Oldfield, Civil Service; Col. Caulfield, Bengal Native Cavalry; Col. Perse, H. M.'s 16th Lancers; Captain Hicks, Bengal Native Infantry; Lt.-Col. Oldfield and Lt. Kennaway, Bengal Native Cavalry; Mr. Prinsep and Mr. Bell, Merchants; Mr. Hurford, Veterinary Surgeon; Messrs. Larkins, W. Larkins, Caulfield, Campbell and Hicks, Cadets; Master and Miss Oldfield; Miss Prinsep, and Master Caulfield.
- Dalla Merchant, (Barque,) H. M. Potter, from Rangoon 26th November.  
*Passengers.*—Stephen Aratoon, Esq. Jacob Aviet, Esq. Aga Shaik Mahomed, Esq. and Aga Jaffer, Esq.
17. Broxbornebury, A. Chapman, from London (no date), Portsmouth 9th Aug. and Cape of Good Hope 16th October.  
*Passengers from London.*—Mrs. Mackenzie and infant; Mrs. Baddeley; Misses Smith, Andrews, E. Costley, C. Costley, Mackenzie, Rose, and Stuart; Lieut.-Col. G. W. Mackenzie; R. B. Garret, Esq. Civil Service, Messrs. H. Starchy, R. Franklin, T. Blackwood, and G. W. Duncan; 50 H. C. E. I. Recruits, three women, and one child. *From the Cape of Good Hope.*—Mrs. Cragie, Mrs. Campbell; Misses E. Cragie, M. Cragie, and Judge; Lieut.-Col. Cragie; Charles Smith, Esq. Civil Service; Major Barlow.
- Diana, (Barque,) J. Hawkins, from Liverpool 22nd July.
- Adelaide, A. Steel, from Hobart Town 11th October.  
*Passengers.*—Mrs. H. Stewart, Mrs. Robertson and two children; three Misses Bells; four Master Bells; Captain Woodburn, Madras Army.
- Washington, (American,) H. J. C. Taylor, from Philadelphia 3rd August.  
*Passengers.*—Mr. Thos. N. Richard, Supercargo; Messrs. A. D. Bols, and E. Johnson.
- Florence, (American,) L. Russell, from Boston 19th July.  
*Passengers.*—Mrs. Lock; Mr. Lock, Supercargo; Mr. G. E. Channing, Clerk.
- Alexander, W. Ramsay, from Sydney 11th October.
18. Salamandre, (Barque,) J. Debia, from Bordeaux 1st July, and Pondicherry 23rd November.

18 Water Witch, (Barque,) A. Henderson, from China 23rd November, and Singapore 3rd December.

*Passengers from China.*—J. Coobedge, and J. A. Durran, Esqs. merchants. *From Singapore.*—R. Jack, Esq. merchant; Mrs. Sutherland, Mrs. Reynell.

19. Collingwood, (Brig.) J. Hookey, from China 7th, and Singapore 21st November, and Penang 4th December.

*Passengers.*—Mahomed Sadah, and Rajaballa Sadah, Moguls.

— Thistle, (Schooner,) T. Spence, from Rangoon 8th December.

21. Kim Shin Him, (Brig,) John Britto, from Mergue 5th November.

22. Isabella, David Brown, from Liverpool 17th July.

*Passengers from Liverpool.*—Mrs. Knyvett; Misses Knyvett, F. Knyvett;

Lieut. W. Knyvett, 36th Regt. N. I.; Lieut. C. D. Colly, H. M.'s 26th Foot.

— Rebecca, (Brig,) R. A. J. Roe, from China, 30th October, and Singapore 16th November.

*Passengers.*—H. T. Blandford, Esq., E. Andrews, Esq.

23. London, (Brig,) W. McClean, from Liverpool 9th August.

25. Duke of Northumberland, W. L. Pope, from Portsmouth 12th August, and Cape of Good Hope 21st October.

*Passengers.*—Mrs. Swinhoe, Mrs. Lyall, Mrs. Pope, Mrs. Landells, and four Misses Landells; Miss French; Rev. Mr. Withers; C. Lyall, Esq. Merchant; —Plunket, Cadet; G. Candnam, Esq. Merchant; —Maring, Esq. Merchant; Mr. French. *From the Cape.*—Colonel Shubrick; Dr. Macintyre; Mr. Davidson; Lieut. Smith; three European and four Native servants.

26. India, (F. Barque,) Truquetel, from Havre de Grace 9th August.

27. Resolution, (Barque,) John Seager, from Padang 26th November.

*Passengers from Padang.*—Mrs. Butler; Misses E. Craigsman, C. Craigsman, and L. Rapsey; Capt. W. Butler, country service; Mr. E. Boyle, Merchant.

## DEC.

## DEPARTURES.

1. Barretto Junior, R. Saunders, for London.

3. Will Witch, (Brig,) J. D. Bristow, for Madras and Pondicherry.

7. Marion, J. Richard, for Singapore and China.

9. Sir Herbert Taylor, (Barque,) D. Wemyss, for the Mauritius.

*Passengers for the Mauritius.*—Lieutenant Jack, B. N. I.; — Henely, Esq.

— Solon, (American,) B. L. Allen, for New York.

13. Mountstuart Elphinstone, W. Toller, for London.

*Passengers for London.*—Mrs. Benton and four children; Mrs. Gogerly and five children; Mrs. Leighton and two children; Mrs. Martin and two children; Mrs. Hobson and four children; Miss Marnell; Samnel Denton, Esq.; Lieutenant Audain, H. M.'s 16th Regt.; Lieut. John Graham, N. I.; Rev. Mr. Gogerly; two Misses Ferris, and two Misses McDormond.

14. Fairlie, H. Ager for London.

— Halen, (Brig,) R. Macallister, for Penang and Singapore.

*Passengers per Bland.*—Mrs. Callan; Misses Byrne and Craigie; Captain Marsden; Lieut. A. Scott, of the Artillery; Lieuts. McDonald and Hepburne; Dr. Duncan; Mr. Duce, Pilot.

15. Bolton, W. Compton, for London.

— Virginie, (Barque,) J. Willie, for Moulmein and Rangoon.

— Fathel Curreem, (Arab,) Nacoda, for Malabar Coast, Judda and Mocha.

— Hydroos, Abboo Banker, for Judda.

20. Georgiana, T. Thomas, for London.

— Fortitude, (American,) W. Lambe, for Boston.

*Passengers per Exmouth for London.*—Colonel Hopper; Mrs. Hopper and Mr. Hopper; Col. and Mrs. Bird, and Mr. Bird; Mrs. Sherer; Dr. and Mrs. Chalmers and family; Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Warren, Mr. G. Betty and family; and Captain Warren, late of the Sherburne.

*Passengers per London for London.*—The Honourable Mrs. Forbes and children, Mrs. Dealtry; Mrs. W. Stalkart; Miss Stalkart; Major and Mrs. Kingston; Mrs. W. Jackson and children; Mrs. D. Ross and children; Colonel Sterling; Rev. Mr. Gilson; John Browne and W. Thacker, Esqrs.; Lieutenants Fisher and Chilcott; Masters Shakespeare, Griffin, Stalkart, and Watts; Misses Davidson and Innes.

*Passengers per Duke of Buccleugh for London.*—Mrs. Greenway and two children; Miss Stone; Master Davidson; Captain Seaton; Mr. Mellish. *For Madras.*—Captain and Mrs. Stokes; Mrs. and Miss Russell; Captain O. Drescoll.

(Domestic Occurrences unavoidably postponed.)



THE  
**CALCUTTA**  
**CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.**



EDITED BY  
CHRISTIAN MINISTERS OF VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS.

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*JANUARY TO DECEMBER,*  
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