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THE

CALCUTTA

**CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.**

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I.—*A few notes on Lower Egypt.—The Pyramids, their size, form, origin and design, with reflections.—Singular fate of the Mummies,—Ancient Memphis,—Fulfilment of Scripture Prophecies.* By Rev. A. DUFF, D. D.

(Continued from page 518.)

Who has not at times been so overcome by accounts of the “Eternal Pyramids,” as to desire to be left alone to lose himself in a reverie of contemplation and wonder? We have read of travellers, who, when they *first* beheld these enormous piles indenting their forms on the clear blue sky, declared that for some time they “remained motionless”—that, on recovering from the primary sensation, their “enthusiasm amounted almost to madness, and they shouted applause to the magnificent spectacle!” We were therefore prepared, and really expected to be astonished. Soon after the dawn of a glorious morn, while passing the point where the Delta commences, a few miles below Cairo, by the separation of the stream into its two main branches, we first beheld, at a considerable distance to the right, the peaks of the two great Pyramids of Ghizeh shooting up, Parnassus-like, from an apparently common body. As we approached more nearly opposite, the gap or opening between them began to widen and descend, till at last they presented themselves from base to summit as two distinct and independent fabrics. There being nothing in two sharp peaks, shining like fiery wedges in the full radiance of the rising sun, to excite unwonted surprise, we still waited in earnest expectation of the uprising of a sensation of deepest wonder. At length the naked base of the Libyan rock appeared; upon it the great Pyramids stood out fully disclosed to view;—and yet no emotion whatever of the anticipated astonishment! On

the contrary, we felt an almost resistless propensity to give way to that opposite emotion of derision and contempt which is ever apt to spring up, when it is discovered or imagined that one has been made the unconscious dupe of trick and delusive artifice. We neither experienced, nor could experience any feeling or sentiment of wonder whatsoever. Disappointed at our own disappointment, we could only be astonished to think what others, standing where we were and placed as strangers in precisely similar circumstances, could possibly have found to be astonished at. What could be the cause of so unexpected a result? It seemed to be this. From the vast breadth of the base, compared with the altitude of the rapidly tapering summit, and from the entire absence of adjacent objects of *known* dimensions, whereby to measure them, the elevation appeared to the eye, at the distance of a few miles, exceedingly diminutive. Many glass-works in Great Britain at about the same distance have struck our eye as being alike lofty and magnificent. Then again, their embrowned sun-burnt aspect so much resembled the sterile sand of the desert; they looked so plain, so bare, so smooth, so meaningless from top to bottom—without doorway, or window, or arch, or colonnade, or turret, or spire, or dome, or gilded pinnacle, or any other wonted external symbol which could convey an impression of wisdom, skill, or design; beauty, proportion, or utility—that an isolated fragment of rock, or conical mound of earth, or artificial *cairn* of stones on the crest of a mountain-ridge, has often attracted and far more powerfully rivetted our attention.

Nevertheless, it was impossible to follow the first impulse and abruptly turn away from monuments which have excited the admiration of every Egyptian traveller from Herodotus to Belzoni, and of every Egyptian conqueror from Alexander to Napoleon—monuments, which have been alternately represented as royal sepulchres, astronomical observatories, or fire-temples—monuments, therefore, whose construction, form, and internal repositories might well be supposed capable of revealing a few of the secrets of primitive art, somewhat of the progress of early science, and not a little of the character and migrations of the most ancient elemental and mythologic worship. Hence, we determined on a closer inspection. Accordingly, accompanied with a few friends, we started from Cairo about noon; passed the palace and pleasure grounds of Ibrahim Pasha, bestud with canals and ponds, too often, at that season, mere reservoirs of stagnant greenish water, and trees powdered over with perpetual dust; crossed the river close by the island of Rhodah, in which is preserved the famous Nilometer or instrument for marking the progress and height of the annual

inundation, and the loamy surface of which, under the direction of two *Scotsmen*, in the service of the Pasha, has been converted into the most beautiful garden in Egypt; and, finally, towards evening reached the Pyramids of Ghizeh, on the elevated ridge of the rocky boundary of the Libyan desert, distant about ten miles from Grand Cairo. In traversing the seven or eight miles of fertile field between the river and the sterile margin of the desert, these mighty pyramidal piles were throughout full in view. Yet to the eye they seemed to undergo no change. When actually within a few hundred yards of us, they did not seem one whit larger than they appeared from the citadel of Cairo. The most enthusiastic admirer of the Pyramids amongst us,—who constantly raved about them in somewhat of the spirit and style of romance, and who to the last fully expected to be overwhelmed with a sense of the wonderful and sublime as he approached them—was now forced in the bitterness of regret to exclaim, “Well, I must confess that I am sadly disappointed.” And so singular was the optical illusion as to their real size, that, it was not till we came up to the very base of the great Pyramid, walked round it, measuring the number of paces and keeping an account of the time;—it was not till we handled the large blocks, averaging three or four feet square, of regular super-imposed layers of which the pile was composed, and looking up, saw them gradually diminish into the size of bricks, and finally dwindle away into the size of marble balls;—it was not till we had undergone the real toil and labour of the ascent, and standing on the summit, saw how the largest tumuli beneath had shrunk into mole-hills:—it was not till after all this *personal experience*, that, moving a few paces from the base and casting our eyes fixedly along the steep acclivity, we were in any proportionate degree impressed with a sense of its real magnitude.

As the interior must be visited by torchlight, we resolved, though the shadows of evening had closed around us, to enter the great Pyramid. With the assistance of some attendant Arabs, we reached the opening on the north side, at the elevation of forty feet above the base—resembling the mouth of a cave scooped out of the solid rock. In a bending and painfully constrained attitude we proceeded along the low narrow and cheerless passages—in directions, ascending, descending, or horizontal—half suffocated with dust, smoke and heat. We then visited the principal chambers—usually styled, the king’s and queen’s. In none of these, with the exception of a single sarcophagus, is aught to be found but bare and blackened walls—the largest not exceeding 18 feet in height, 18 in breadth, and 36 in length. Is this all which can be exhibited by the interior of

a pile which some of its admirers have pronounced "the most sublime, most wonderful, and most stupendous of all fabrics"—"the most ancient and yet most mighty monument of man's power and pride?"—was the first involuntary exclamation, when, restored to the natural upright posture, and fixed in the centre of the king's chamber, we looked round on its emptied sarcophagus and dark naked walls! Why, there is not in the British Empire a single mine of any note that may not boast of passages and chambers, which display vastly more skill, ingenuity, and even taste in the excavation of them! To stand in the centre of the great Pyramid and in the centre of St. Paul's:—what a contrast! The emotions generated in the former position are as mean and Tartarean as those generated in the latter are celestial and sublime.

Wearied, fatigued and disappointed, we retired to enjoy, if possible, two or three hours' slumber in one of the smaller tombs quarried out of the face of the contiguous rock—thus converting into a chamber of real repose for the living that which three thousand years ago was designed as the abode of imaginary repose for the dead—and causing a receptacle, which embodied in its professed design the sentiment of an ignorant superstitious age, to resound for once with the reading of the word of life, and the voice of prayer and praise to Jehovah, Lord of Hosts!

By break of day we hastened from our rocky dormitory to the apex of the Great Pyramid, and there witnessed the first rays of the sun, as they glittered over the domes and minarets of Cairo. The general view, making allowance for our relative position on the opposite side of the vale, was much the same as from the citadel of Saladin. In the one, as well as the other, the desert—the desert—was the universal boundary!—the desert, so happily symbolized as "an immense ocean of sand, like the real ocean with its flux and re-flux; its caravans which cleave it like navies; its dromedaries which furrow it like boats: and its simoons which agitate it like hurricanes." The narrow valley of the Nile winded through this ocean of savage barrenness like a living stream of beauty and fertility. Between it and its desert boundary there was not contrast merely, but contrast so violent as to produce a painful sense of the incongruous or unnatural. The inquiry was forced upon us, How came fields of such emerald green to be so fringed and inwoven with the waste howling wilderness, that between fertility the most charming and sterility the most frightful, there is not any where the measurable fraction of a single foot-step? In other lands, the rich verdure of the mead and noble

majesty of the forest are imperceptibly succeeded by the more stunted yet not unpleasant copse and herbage of the upland moor or rising acclivity,—and these again by the ferns and the lichens and the mosses which delight to feather the brow of the mountain, before it is surmounted by its naked cloud-capp'd peak. But here, between loveliness the most exuberant and deformity the most barren, there is no transition at all. The feeling excited by so singular a juxtaposition was somewhat akin—comparing small things with great—to that which must be experienced were one to behold the still gorgeous heart of the richest Cashmerian shawl in close contact and inseparable union with a broad and ample border—now all tawdry and tattered, discoloured and bespattered with mud!

As to the Pyramid itself, after having walked round it, surveyed it from every point of view, explored the interior, and stood on the summit, the *only* impression which we could derive from it, was that of *magnitude—mere magnitude*—the magnitude of so vast an artificial accumulation of inert matter. Stationed on that proud summit on which, doubtless, once stood Herodotus, the father of History, and Alexander, the Conqueror of the world, and many a sage and hero since—some of whose names are roughly graven on the uppermost flags, in order to immortalize their arduous visit—the spontaneous musings of our inner man could not but run in a somewhat moralizing channel. Is this, thought we, the very pile which has been often pronounced “the *greatest* and most *indestructible* monument of human power?”—As to its alleged *indestructibility*, whether relative or absolute, that is an idle and fallacious boast. Some of the more ancient Pyramids to the south have now been actually turned into masses of dust and rubbish. And this one, perhaps the most modern of them all, exhibits the most indubitable symptoms of gradual decay. The steps, of a foot or a foot and a half wide, formed by the receding tiers or layers of calcareous stone in the upward ascent, are every where mouldering into decay;—and this too, in a climate like that of Egypt, where there is neither rain nor frost!—so that, from the steps being partly worn away, and partly blocked up with the crumbling materials from above, the ascent, except along one or two tracks which are kept clear of loosened fragments, is no longer practicable. What then becomes of man's vain boast of indestructibility? Even when favoured with the most unvarying climate in the world, the great Pyramid proves by its scarred and shattered sides, that it is no more proof against ultimate dissolution than frail man himself. And if it had been reared either in India, with its deluges of rain and subse-

quent burning heat; or in Britain, with its melting snows and subsequent hardening frost, it would assuredly have been rent into pieces, or turned into a pile of ruins, ages ago!—As to its *magnitude*,—that, compared with most other works of man, is incontestible. But then, *even in this respect*, is it not rivalled by the great wall of China, which, with its massy towers, stretches uninterruptedly across vallies and rivers and mountains to the extent of *fifteen hundred miles*!—or, by the great Canal of China, which, for *six hundred miles*, has been forced through the mightiest obstacles, often considerably raised by the most stupendous walls and embankments above the level of lakes and marshes which it is made to traverse, and finally opening into the Yellow Sea with a breadth of a thousand feet! And if, in point of *mere magnitude*, it is rivalled, if not out-rivalled by other products of human power, how utterly poor and insignificant, compared with the works of God! Compare in point of *magnitude*, this greatest of the Pyramids with Ben Nevis of the Grampians, Mount Blanc of the Alps, Chimborazo of the Andes, Dhwalagiri of the Himalaya!—with the terrestrial globe itself!—with sun, moon, and stars! In the comparison, or rather *contrast*, surely man's vauntful pride ought for once to be changed into adoring humility. And then, what is man's power at best, but the *communicated* ability of piling up a heap of stones from *pre-existing* matter? Contrast this with the *underived creative* power which summoned into being man himself, and the matter on which he operates, out of the barren womb of *nothing*!—and surely, on the topmost height of the greatest of the Pyramids, where infidelity has often found an argument to exalt man at the expense of the Creator,—surely there, beyond all other spots, may new and decisive and cumulative arguments be found for exalting the Creator over the prostrated pretensions of his vain and feeble and sinful creature—man!

Again, Is this, thought we, the very pile which has been often pronounced one of the mightiest monuments of “mechanical genius and architectural skill?”—Why, as a manifestation of those attributes of superior intelligence, it no more admits of being compared with the dome of St. Paul's, than the latter, with the spangled vault of heaven! Here, there is nothing whatever to shew that aught was to be solved, save the simple problem, In what form may the largest possible aggregate of square stones be piled up in one *nearly solid* mass, so as to prove *most stable*—resisting alike the encroachments of man and the inroads of the elements? Such, all but demonstrably, having been the sole problem, the conception of some species of the

Pyramidal form was inevitable. Set a child to raise the highest and most stable pile with its wooden bricks, and it stumbles almost instinctively on the general form of a Pyramid. Compare, then, in point of expansive reach and power, the mind of the architect which conceived the form of the great Pyramid and its few dark narrow passages and dungeon-like chambers, with the mind of him who conceived the ideal model of St. Paul's—including an almost boundless multiplicity and yet noble harmony in the adaptations, proportions, and uses of all its parts! Compare the mechanical genius necessary for the execution of the one and of the other. In constructing the dome of St. Paul's, the raising of the solid materials to so great a height, was that part of the operation which demanded by far the least display of the requisite architectural or designing skill. In constructing a pyramid, the raising of stones, of from two to four feet square, along the solid and immovable side of the inclined plane supplied on every side by the portion previously fabricated, demanded not merely the highest, but almost the only display of the requisite architectural and designing skill. In the former case, mere brute force could achieve little or nothing:—in the latter case, mere brute force, assisted by the simplest and the rudest of mechanical agencies,—the lever, the inclined plane, and the pulley,—was really all which could be required. But why attempt to reduce the Pyramids to their proper level, by a comparison with transcendently nobler monuments of man's designing intelligence? Behold at their very base, how they are confronted and out-rivalled by the instinct of an insect. *There*, rise the hillocky nests of the lion-ant, which, after careful examination, led a celebrated naturalist to exclaim, "All the architecture, magnificence and expense that shine in the excellent pyramids cannot give a contemplator of nature such high ideas as are excited by the art of these little creatures." And if even in one of the minutest of dumb irrationals the great Creator can plant so admirable an instinct—out-rivalling the topmost flower of human invention—oh, how ought vain man to shrink into his own inherent nothingness, in view of the inexhaustible resources of creative Intelligence!

Once more, Is this, thought we, the greatest of those very piles which have for ages filled the world with learned dissertations respecting their origin and design? Who then could well escape the gregarious tendency to follow the leaders in the realm of literature? But yesterday our mind was brimful of theories on the subject. Where are these now? Alas for the Ithuriel touch of experience! they are wholly vanished. What fanciful chimeras have not ingenious imaginative men

been led to substitute for sober realities? At one time, have these been represented as "disguised fortresses" for the concealment of treasure; or "oracular shrines," for the exhibition of "acoustic phenomena" and other priestly jugglery. At another, they have risen into magnificent fire-temples, or astronomical observatories. Then followed the elaborated dissertation on the *wealth*, the *hierophancy*, the *mythology*, or the *science* of the ancient world. What laborious trifling! That these were ever treasure-citadels or caverns for priestly trickeries, is utterly unfounded in history, and wholly contradicted by the form and structure of the fabrics themselves. That they could ever have been designed for fire-altars or astronomical edifices, involves a visible physical impossibility. On either of these latter suppositions the summits must have been uniformly flat and uniformly accessible. Now the direct contrary of this is the real fact. When finished, all the Pyramids terminated in a sharp culminating point or apex; and some of them so terminate to this day. And those which do not, such as the great pyramid, bear evidence that their tops have been violently dislocated and thrown down. Moreover, when finished, the entire surface of the receding steps was covered over with a smooth casing of flat stone-flags. The casing of some of them, in whole or in part, such as that of the upper quarter of the second pyramid, close at hand, is still perfectly entire, and its apex sharp-pointed. So that unless the fire-worshippers and the Astronomers of those days could climb up like lizards; or, like the fabled genii of the middle ages, could consociate as on the point of a needle, these peaks were physically unfitted for any of their operations! Whence, then, the origin of such fanciful hypotheses at all?—One of the chief reasons for supposing them to have been fire-temples is, their pyramidal form, which somewhat resembles that of burning flame!—By indulgence in such or similar fancies how many strange ends have these pyramids been made to serve! We have read of their having been designed to represent *the soul*, which is of "a fiery nature and adhereth to the body as a pyramid doth to the basis, or as fire doth to the fuel;"—or, the *great cycle* of thirty-six thousand years; since a pyramid, "the top of it standing fixed, and the base being moved about, would describe a circle, and the whole body of it a cone;"—or, the *nature of things*; because, "as a Pyramid, having its beginning from a point at the top, is by degrees dilated on all parts, so the nature of all things proceeding from one fountain and beginning, viz. from God, the chief workmaster, is diffused into various kinds and species, all which it conjoins to that beginning and point, from whence every thing issues

and flows ;"—or the "first and most simple of mathematical bodies ;"—or "the mysteries of pyramidal numbers ;"—or "the emission of rays from luminous bodies ;"—or "the emanation of sensible species from their objects !"—But where are such frivolous far-fetched fancies to terminate ? The truth is, that the pyramidal form must have been chosen, for the simplest and best of all reasons, viz. that, owing to its gradual contraction from the very bottom towards the top, and consequent decrease of its own down-bearing weight, as well as diminished liability to cracks and rents, this form is by far *the most stable and permanent*. As to the supposed astronomical design, one of the principal reasons for the opinion is founded on the direction of the sides, which happen to be turned towards the *four cardinal points* !—if a ground of argument so utterly futile be admitted, there is not an illiterate mountaineer in the Highlands of Scotland who might not be proved an accomplished astronomer, and his cottage an astronomical observatory—since, if he has a freedom of choice, he is sure to erect his hut, fronting the sun at right angles, when on the meridian at noon—the sides of his humble abode being thus as exactly turned towards the four cardinal points, as the pyramids of Egypt ! Besides, is it not one main object of the astronomer to secure, if possible, a clear unobstructed horizon ? Now here, on the top of the great pyramid, a considerable portion of the sky is most gratuitously shut out of view by the second and other smaller ones. How much more must large portions of the heavens be concealed from the summits of the smaller—even if accessible—by the needless intervention of the larger ?—Altogether, there is not only no probable evidence in favour, but very positive evidence in disproof, of the Hierophantic, Sabian, Astronomical and other similar supposed origins and ends of the pyramids.

What then could have been the real origin and end of these vast fabrics ? Formerly, we felt an *a priori* repugnance in admitting the plain unvarnished statement of Herodotus, who represents them as sepulchral monuments, reared by the pride and vanity and superstition of tyrant monarchs—deeming the account, if not incredible, at least wholly unworthy of the boasted wisdom of Egypt. Standing, however, where we now do, it seems impossible to doubt, that, of all others, the account of the Grecian historian is the truest and the best. The desire of perpetuating one's name and memory by monumental piles has prevailed in all countries and in all ages. In the case of many of the great men of the earth this desire has often risen into *a sort of rage, or predominant passion*, for whose gratification

the wealth of provinces and the might of kingdoms has scarcely sufficed. In Egypt, from the earliest times, owing to the prevalent doctrine of its people, respecting transmigration and the absolute necessity of preserving the body undecayed, in order to its after re-inhabitation by the former departed spirit,—this animating passion became epidemic and national. While the great, accordingly, had their towering mausoleums above ground, the multitude must have their well-excavated and well-walled pits and vaults, and catacombs beneath. But, in Egypt, the alluvial soil is far too limited in quantity and far too precious in quality to be occupied to the vast extent which the execution of such works might demand. Hence doubtless it is, that, throughout the entire length of Egypt, the principal repositories for the dead are found behind or opposite to the ancient cities, upon the margin of the utterly unproductive and boundless desert of Libya, which constitutes the western boundary of the valley, sometimes terminating in a gradual undulating sandy descent, and sometimes stretching along in an abrupt precipitous wall, or shooting out into a bluff rocky promontory of two or three hundred feet in height. Now, *it is in the very midst of these sacred repositories of mummy pits and catacombs that the three great clusters of pyramids are still to be seen.* There is abundant evidence that one of the earliest streams of emigration passed into Africa by the straits of Babelmandel—that a portion of it, settling at Thebes, made it the capital of a great empire—and that, as it descended the fertile vale, the seat of empire was successively changed, till the last purely Egyptian dynasty became extinct at Memphis. Accordingly, from Thebes downwards there are many smaller pyramids or tumuli. The first great cluster is at Dashur, between twenty and thirty miles above Cairo. These are universally allowed to be the rudest and least perfect of the principal groups. The next cluster is on the elevated platform immediately behind the site of Memphis; and manifests signs of improved architectural skill. The last and greatest and most perfect of the whole is that on the loftiest of which we now stand, exactly confronting Cairo, the acknowledged site of the Egyptian Babylon, founded by Cambyses. What then are these huge structures? Standing where we now do, the question seems scarcely to admit of reasoning at all. There is an *intense feeling*, and we cannot help it; there is, in spite of ourselves, an *overwhelming sensation*, that they are *sepulchral monuments, and nothing more.* Wherever we turn, what do our *eyes behold?* Close to the very base of these mighty fabrics, and around them for miles in all directions, are numberless subterranean excavations, pits, or cata-

combs, in which have been discovered sarcophagi and piles of the embalmed dead. Around them in all directions are numberless supernal edifices, mounds, or tumuli, in which, when opened, have been found bones, and fragments of wooden cases, and bandaged mummies. And in any of the pyramids which have been explored, what has ever yet been found except some vaulted chambers, a sarcophagus, and a few mouldering bones? Altogether, it seems utterly impossible to stand here, surrounded by such an endless variety of indisputable memorials of the dead,—differing not less in size than in form and structure,—without being resistlessly impressed with the conviction that we are really standing in the centre of a vast Necropolis, or city of the dead—as resistlessly impressed with that conviction, as if encompassed by the monuments of the largest church-yard in Christendom,—and that these towering pyramidal piles are only the most gigantic of ten thousand clustering mausoleums. Instead, therefore, of any longer regarding them as monuments of “hidden wisdom, mystery and wonder,”—methinks the only real mystery and wonder is, that men of sense should, for ages, have insisted on forcing sparkles of some rare wisdom out of masses which doggedly refuse to testify to aught save the delusive hopes of superstition—the extravagant pride of the tyrant—and the galling submission of the slave.

But what are these furrows around the great Sphinx?—What these hollow perforated stones at the mouth of the mummy pits?—What these masses of rubbish beneath the openings of the two great pyramids?—Ah! These ought to teach us a memorable lesson. They are the surviving witnesses of a zeal the most fervent—a perseverance the most enduring;—the zeal of Antiquarian research;—the perseverance of men, who, exiling themselves from their native homes and all the comforts and enjoyments of civilized society, spent days and months and years—not in ascetic indolence, but in the most indefatigable activity, amid the gloomy solitude of caves, and catacombs, and pyramidal vaults—where the oppressiveness of the heat and the impurity of a confined atmosphere often affected their corporeal system, even to the bursting of veins and arteries! All for what?—for the discovery of a dark passage or sepulchral vault—a stone coffin or mouldering mummy! And yet, an applauding world, glistening with joy, dignifies the spirit which animated these adventurers, as that of the noblest and most heroic enthusiasm! Oh! the short-sighted misjudging partiality of man! Should any of the citizens of Zion, fraught with the fervour of a divine benevolence, resolve to submit to even a similar amount of self-

sacrifice, when bent on the God-like enterprize of attempting the recovery of lost souls—each one of which in real preciousness would, in the balance of the sanctuary, outweigh all the pyramids—yea, and the great globe itself which sustains them;—the spirit by which *they* are actuated must be stigmatized as that of a “senseless fanaticism!” Verily, there is a day coming, when the most heedless of a scoffing race shall be compelled to acknowledge that the redemption of one lost soul would have been an object of importance infinitely transcending the revelation of all the mysteries, not of Egypt alone, but of the whole physical universe!

From the pyramids of Ghizeh, skirting along the margin of the desert, we proceeded in a southerly direction to those of Sakharah—distant about eight or nine miles. These too, as already remarked, are in the very centre of numberless tombs and mummy-pits—constituting the great cemetery of ancient Memphis. One of the pyramids is in a state of total dilapidation, being now a shapeless mass of stones and crumbling materials. Another, on one of its sides, presents an aspect similar to that exhibited by the slip of a forest on the slope of a hill. A third consists of half a dozen diminishing platforms, not unlike the ordinary representation of the tower of Babel. Here we saw some of the mummy pits which had been opened by Mr. Wilkinson and others; the painted walls of which exhibit representations of ancient figures, costumes, and instruments, in colours as fresh and vivid as if the pencil of the artist had only crossed them yesterday. We also witnessed numbers of Arabs busily engaged in excavating other pits, for the sake of extricating the mummies, which have now become one of the most profitable marketable commodities in the land of Egypt. Never perhaps, has the vanity of the human heart met with a more decisive humbling; or the folly of superstition with a more signal exposure. What anxious labour, what profuse expenditure lavished on the embalming of the dead body, and on the fabricating of conditories for its reception till the expiry of the cycle of three thousand years of transmigration—after which it was believed that the disembodied spirit should return to re-possess and re-animate its former identical tenement\*! The cycle of

\* This is the ordinary representation of the ancient Egyptian doctrine. But Servius, in his comment on Virgil's *Æneid*, attempts to shew that the Egyptians, “skilful in wisdom, kept their dead embalmed so much the longer, to the end that the soul might for a long while continue and be obnoxious to the body, lest it should quickly pass to another;”—while, on the contrary, the Romans burnt their dead, that “the soul might suddenly return into the generality, that is, into its own nature.” Hence, in order that “the body might not, either by putrefaction be reduced to

transmigration has now, in the case of millions of the embalmed dead, run its course. But what human spirits have ever yet returned? Or, should they now return, where are the *perfectly preserved* bodies to receive them? Omnipotence requires not that the human frame should retain its substantial form in order to a resurrection. That Power, which could at first summon the dust to assume a form of such wondrous synnecry and beauty, can again command the same scattered dust to mould itself into a form vastly more glorious. Ignorant of Jehovah's power, the ancient Egyptians fondly believed that the perfect preservation of the material form was essential to its ultimate spiritual re-animation. How cruelly have their hopes been mocked! Hundreds of the most sacred repositories of their dead have been sold to the highest bidder, for the very purpose of being ransacked, and wholly rifled of their contents! Yea, to consummate the ignominy, *mummy flesh* is now constantly sold as a peculiar species of merchandise destined for a very peculiar use! It seems that in the master pieces of Titian, the founder of the brilliant but sensuous school of colours in painting, there is one species of *brown tint*, which it had baffled all his successors to imitate. But the notable discovery has now been made, that, by means of a portion of mummy flesh, an imitation may be produced;—which, in point of fact, has so far succeeded, that hundreds of paintings are annually disposed of, as *genuine* products of that celebrated artist. How little could it have entered into the imaginations of the ancient embalmers of Egypt to conceive, that, instead of preserving a tabernacle of clay for its after re-possession by the returning soul, they were only expending toil, anxiety, and wealth in preparing materials for a few unprincipled Italian painters of the 19th century, to enable them successfully to practise a gainful but nefarious imposition!

In descending from the dreary heights of Sakharah to the valley immediately below, we were struck with the singular appearance of a long strip of marshy ground between the base of the Libyan ridge and the flat plain beyond. It looked as if it had been scooped out and hollowed. Its entire aspect irresistibly made us stop and cry out, "Surely that must be

dust, out of which it was taken; or by fire be converted into ashes; they invented curious compositions, besides the intombing them in stately reconditories (such as catacombs and pyramids), thereby to preserve them from rottenness, and to make them eternal." According to this representation, not less than the other, how utterly confounded has the wisdom of Egypt become!—how utterly blasted its hopes!—by the ruthless pillage of its sepulchres, and the wide-spread destruction of their slumbering tenants!

the deserted bed of a lake or river." Instantly it came to our remembrance, that between Memphis and the Libyan range, there was once an artificial lake which communicated with the Nile—the celebrated Acherusia of Diodorus. On passing this deep channel, it became palpable to the eye of sense that, when the lake existed, the bodies of the dead from Memphis, must have been ferried over—most probably by an established ferry-man, and at a regulated hire—to be interred in the general Necropolis, on the heights above. Now, as the Greeks, by the confession of Herodotus and other writers of their own, borrowed the main part of their mythology from Egypt, and the Romans from the Greeks, how could we resist the inference, that, from the very scene then before our eyes, originated all the fables of the Greek and Roman poets relative to the dark Stygian lake—to Charon, his ferry-boat and "obolus" hire? And the inference seemed conclusive, when the eye, at a single glance, now embraced the elevated plains of the pyramids and the mummies in all their naked and desolate horrors as if scathed and blasted by some consuming fire, with the beauteous groves and plains, spreading out from their base beyond the flood, then clad in *living green*. It seemed to us the very reality which *primarily* gave rise to the mythologic scenery so powerfully painted in the sixth book of the *Eneid*, when the poet expatiates on the "dark and turbid waters of Acheron," with its "horror-striking banks," encompassing the region of "doleful shades;" and the "green vale," with its "grassy sward," in which were found the abodes of the blessed. But, O, how unlike that bright realm, of which the poetic region of "eternal spring and never-withering flowers" is but the gross material type!

With no ordinary emotion did we approach and traverse the site of ancient Memphis;—Memphis, once introduced *by name* in our received version; "Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them," Hosea ix. 6—Memphis, often referred to by other prophets under the designation of *Noph*; "The princes of Noph are deceived, they have also seduced Egypt," Isaiah xix. 13—Memphis, the capital of the Pharaohs—the seat of the Magi or wise men who were the counsellors of kings—the place of Joseph's unmerited disgrace and subsequent glorious exaltation—the school where Moses became learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians—the scene of the most stupendous miracles—the witness of the vindication of Jehovah's supremacy over the idols of Egypt and the powers and principalities of darkness! Oh, how changed from the day when Egypt's proud monarch presumed to defy the great "I AM," saying, "I will not let the people go!" For

several miles together, nought is visible now, save heaps of pounded rubbish, interspersed with clumps of palm trees!

This utter annihilation of a city so interwoven with the texture of Sacred History, naturally led the mind to revert with admiration to the singular fulfilment of scripture prophecies—prophecies, uttered at a time when Egypt outshone all other lands in the pomp and glory of her wisdom, her princes, her cities, her canals, her rivers, and her idols.

“Where are thy wise men?”—asks the prophet Isaiah—“Where are they?” Where are thy wise men? Where are they?—may Echo now mournfully respond from every corner of a land, whence all wisdom hath fled, and the very remembrance of it hath perished. The wisdom of its priests and people has, to adopt the emphatic language of a modern writer, given place to “the decrepitude and imbecility of a second childhood. No native can now decipher a single inscription in the sacred character; but foreigners from the extremity of Western Europe must be called in to disinter the monuments and to unravel the hieroglyphic records of the past.”

“I will set fire in Egypt,” saith the Spirit of the Lord by the Prophet Ezekiel, “and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.” All the ancient cities of Egypt, without one exception, are now wasted—so wasted, as to be without an inhabitant. Some of them exhibit nought but the promiscuous confusion of broken columns, and shattered edifices. The traces of others have become so strangely obliterated, that the precise spot where they stood is still a matter of debate among antiquarians. Many of them have disappeared altogether amid the sands of the desert.

“I will make the rivers (of Egypt) dry,” saith the Lord. How many lakes, canals and large branches of the Nile itself have, in upper Egypt, been literally dried up, and choked with sand! And in lower Egypt, of the *seven* mouths of the Nile, five of which were natural and two artificial, is it not memorable that the two latter are the only ones, which remain as free outlets of the mighty stream?—and that the five former are now so obstructed, as to be either wholly dried up, or converted into stagnant marshes?

“I will make the land of Egypt desolate, in the midst of the countries that are desolate.” And is it not matter of historic fact, that many an immense and flourishing district along the whole extent of Egypt has become irretrievably desolate?—the once fertile fields being now turned into a burning desert? Yea, as the necessary consequence of such desolation, is it not also matter of historic fact, that a territory

which formerly supplied the necessaries and luxuries of life to upwards of *seven millions*, can now very inadequately support a *third part* of that number? Nor is the progress of desolation yet ended. Through the repressive energies of a merciless tyranny, the work of destruction is advancing apace—and in many places advancing rapidly and irretraceably.

“I will also destroy the idols and will cause their images to cease out of Noph,” (Memphis.) Where are now the once-famed idols and images of Egypt?—Egypt, the very birth-place and cradle of the leading Mythologies and Idolatries of antiquity? They are hid in the burning sands, buried beneath the rubbish of ruins, strewn in mutilated and dishonoured fragments upon the surface, or transported to replenish the museums and the galleries of every metropolis in Europe with idle curiosities!

“The pomp of her strength shall cease,” continues the Prophet; “the pride of her power shall come down. I will sell the land into the hands of the wicked; it shall be a base kingdom, the basest of the kingdoms; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt.” How singularly minute the verification of every part of this most remarkable prophecy! Where now is the pomp of Egypt’s ancient strength—the pride of her ancient power?—all, all sepulchred in the dust which covers her temples and palaces and stupendous monuments. The only visible remaining relic of the “pomp and pride” of royal Memphis, is the huge bust of the colossal statue of Sesostris, erected by himself, with several others, in front of the temple of Vulcan. It was the practice of this proud conqueror to rear pillars in every subjugated province—invariably bearing the daringly presumptuous inscription, “Sesostris, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, subdued this country by his arms.” Now, as if to verify to the very senses of posterity the faithfulness of His word, who declares, that He “will stain the pride of all glory,” the most gigantic representation of the hero himself now lies amid the ruins of his own capital—lies shattered and mutilated in the most humiliating of all postures—even in a deep trench, with its face fast stuck in the mud! And what mere human sagacity could possibly have foreseen, or what stretch of mere human hardihood could possibly have hazarded the remaining parts of the prediction?—and that too, at a time when Egypt to human eye appeared the greatest and most flourishing, as well as to human estimate the most stable and permanent, of all earthly kingdoms?—Yet, is it not the undisputed and indisputable testimony of all history that, since the days of the prophets, Egypt has been overrun by successive

races of foreign conquerors and literally sold into the hands of wicked oppressors?—that, since the days of the prophets, there never has been, even amid innumerable scenes of anarchy and change, a single native prince of the land of Egypt? Nor is this all. The insults, indignities, cruelties, and miseries to which the wretched inhabitants have almost uninterruptedly, throughout the long period of two thousand years, passively submitted, almost exceed credibility. So entirely extinct has the spirit of liberty and independence become, that, in the present moment, even in the lowest depths of their woe, they never dream of the rise and formation of a native government. No:—so crushed have their souls become, that they seem utterly incapable of entertaining a sentiment which has been cherished by the crouching Greek, the degenerate Italian, the submissive Hindu, and the fettered Negro. At this moment, those, who have most freely mingled with them and know their minds best, positively assured us that the height of their ambition—the loftiest aspiration of their shrivelled souls, is, that God, in his providence, may be pleased to permit *some other foreign power* of a milder character to assume the sceptre;—prepared to reckon it the greatest privilege, should only a whip of rods be substituted in place of the present fiercely brandished scourge of scorpions. Thus truly and literally has Egypt gradually become not only “base,” but “the basest of the kingdoms.”

Here, as every where else, how can the humble but enlightened soul more wisely terminate its inquiries into the ways of Providence, than in the simple yet sublime language of the holy Apostle?—“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”

A. D.

(To be concluded in the next.)

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## II.—Discussions with the Jews.

To the Editors of the Calcutta Christian Observer.

GENTLEMEN,

We have had some discussions with a few of the scattered children of Israel at this place, and I propose to furnish you with an abstract of them; not that any success has attended these efforts, but with the hope that some of the followers of the true Messiah may have their attention directed to the subject, and be led to labor in behalf of the Jews resident in Calcutta.

The controversy has lain chiefly between ourselves and David Cohen, a man of considerable powers of mind, and extensive acquaintance with

the Scriptures ; while several others of his people listened to the arguments but without evincing any great interest in them. Only one indeed seems to have had his attention moved, but for the most part he agreed with the conclusions of our immediate opponent. I wish I could add that those conclusions were always fairly drawn, or that there was any desire to arrive at the truth, rather than to defend, by any means whatever, a fallacious system. The hardihood with which assertions were made—the impatience shewn where a fair inference was drawn—the quibbling about words—the repeated assumption of the point in debate,—and worse than all, the taking up and abandoning a position, over and over again, according to the exigency of the case, without the least shame at the inconsistency, indicated that however the mind was staggered, there was no desire for truth and no candour in the heart.

The enclosed paper is that which I took with me to the discussion this evening. I need only add that the applicability of every passage quoted was denied—that whenever it was possible, irrelevant questions were mooted by our opponent—and that all that ingenuity could effect to evade the points at issue, was tried with a zeal worthy of a better cause. Such a Jew brought to humility and candour by the truth, and holding fast the faith in Christ, would well be worth all the prayer and labor that could be devoted in the way of human means to bring him to the cross.—In such a case the greater the impediment, the more should Christian courage be stirred up to overcome them.

Yours faithfully,

Allahabad, 17th August, 1840.

X.

Haggai ii. 3—9.

9. "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former."

I commenced by inquiring, what honor was here meant, and you replied "The house the Jews were then building." I then observed that the passage contained a comparison, and that it was requisite to ascertain what was that glory of the first house with which the latter was compared ; for which purpose the following passages were read—1 Chron. xxviii. 19 ; 2 Chron. ii. 5 ; 1 Chron. xxii. 14 ; 2 Chron. ii. 10, 17, 8 ; 1 Kings v. 13 ; vi. 38 ; 2 Chron. vii. 1—3 ; besides other passages ; and it was admitted that in the second temple God did not give a new plan ; that the wisest king was not the builder ;—that there was not such a man known ;—that there were not such multitudes employed ; that the ark, the oracle, the mercy seat were wanting ; that there was no Shechinah ; no fire from heaven for perpetual daily sacrifice ; and that prophecy soon ceased there.

The question was then put "When was the promise fulfilled?"

You replied as follows. In the 3rd v. is said "Who among you is left that saw *this house* in her first glory ;" and as the people were not looking at the first house but on the beginning of the second, you argue that the word house refers not to the building, but to the place or site of the building ; as is said in the 9th v. "I will give peace in *this place*," and does not say, "in the second house." Further to show that that very spot was called a house before there was a house there, you quote Gen. xxviii. 16, 17, where Jacob awaked out of his sleep and said "Surely ; the Lord is in *this place* ;" and then v. 17, "How dreadful is *this place* ;" "this is none other but the *house* of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Hence in Haggai the promises refer not to the house but to the place. Also it is not said *this second house*, but *this latter house* ; and as the second house was never possessed of the promised glory, it could not mean that house, but a third house. Further, God condemned the second house as "*unclean*" from the very first ; for as in v. 10—13, things extremely unclean are men-

tioned ; so in v. 14, it is said all the people were equally unclean, and also that the work of their hands was unclean. Now as the temple was the work of their hands, the temple was unclean, and therefore the promises could not apply to it ;—but refer to a third temple yet to be built.

To this I reply. *First*, that the very object of all the promises in Haggai was to encourage the people to build the second temple, and that the work was begun and carried on by the command of God, and through the encouragement afforded by his spirit. In the 2nd v. the people thought it was not the time to build the house ; but in the 7th and 8th they are told to go and bring wood and build the house ; and in the 14th v. it is said, the Lord stirred up the spirit of the people, so that “ they came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts their God.” In less than a month they had made some progress (ch. ii. 1). When they had thus begun, what they saw, and the scanty means they had to complete the temple seemed insignificant ; and the word of God was, “ Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing ?” v. 3 ; Yet, said God, *Be strong and work*, and then follows the encouragement of the promises contained in v. 3—9, that God would make “ the glory of this latter house” “ greater than that of the former.” There was every need of such encouragement ; for the work had ceased for 12 or 14 years (Ezra iv. 24) ; but God determined that it should be finished in the time of Zerubbabel, (Zech. iv. 9,) and continually urges the people to work. So in Zech. viii. 9, God took care that the work should not again cease, Ez. v. 5 ; vi. 14, and so much were the people encouraged, that after the promise they received they went on with very great rapidity. For though when they were told to bring timber, Hag. i. 8, they were quite disheartened (1st day of 6th mo. ; i. 1.) after the promises given to them in the 2nd ch. (7th mo. 21st day v. 1) it is said the work went on fast, and timber was soon laid on the walls. (Ez. v. 8.)

Now it is irrational to suppose that God would give such commands and be so urgent to make the people build an utterly unclean temple ; it is also unreasonable to suppose, that, when he had commanded the people to work and encouraged them, he should tell them that the whole building was defiled and such as he would not have ; it is also unreasonable to suppose that those people had any concern with a third temple which was not to be built for more than 2000 years after ; for it would be the same as telling them all their work would be destroyed, and in no wise be an inducement to them to *be strong and work*, and not to fear.

*Further*, the second temple was not considered more unclean than the first, for it would not be called “ The Lord’s house” i. 2, and the house of the Lord of hosts their God, Zech. viii. 9, and the Lord’s temple, ii. 15, 18, and in many other places. These are not proper names for an abomination. Moreover God said of that very house “ I will take pleasure in it and I will be glorified saith the Lord :” i. v. 8. God cannot take pleasure in, or be glorified by, what is unclean. Besides the people kept the dedication of the house with joy, Ezra vi. 16, which they would not have done, had God spoken of it to dishonor it.

But it is said, the people were unclean and also the work of their hands. This is true, for every man is unclean in the sight of God, and therefore the sacrifices were required to purify them. But this they could not do perfectly till the temple was finished, which therefore was an encouragement to them to complete it. But when it was complete, they did purify themselves, for after the house was dedicated, it is said, “ For the priests and Levites were purified together.” Ezra vi. 20, &c. so in Neh ix. 33.

But if it be argued that their having purified themselves and the work of the house of God showed that they were before unclean, I reply that this being a consequence of work performed by men who are sinful crea-

tures, the second temple was as clean in this respect as the altar had been and as was the temple of Solomon. Exod. xxix. 37.—Lev. xvi. 16, 18, 33. Even Aaron had to make an atonement for himself and family, Lev. xvi. 11, Num. viii. 19, 21. (1 Kings viii. 64, 2 Chron. vii. 7.)

That the first temple was in some respects unclean, might be shown in the same way, 1 Kings ix. 3; 2 Chron. vii. 4. Afterwards in Hezekiah's time, 2 Chron. xxix. 15, 16.—1 Chron. xxiii. 28. So that all things, however holy, had, from the first and while the first temple stood, to be cleansed.

The second temple therefore was as pure as the altar and sanctuary had been, and as pure as the first temple had been; and this view is conformable with the declaration of God, (ch. i. v. 8.) "I will take pleasure in it, and be glorified."

But you say, "*this* house in her first glory," cannot apply by comparison to the second house, because the first was utterly destroyed;—and therefore was not "*this* house." But the second was looked upon as a mere rebuilding of the former house, and not as an entirely new house. It was to be erected of as much of the same materials as remained, as nearly as the people could on the same plan; and was to stand in the same place. For the former house was destroyed by fire, which does not consume stones, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19. And in the same way Jerusalem was destroyed. 2 Kings xxv. 9. Yet in its dissolution, Ez. v. 15, it was still called Jerusalem; and Jerusalem it is called to the present day, though nothing of what it was before remains. When it was rebuilt, it was not considered a new city; but had any one spoken of it in comparison with what it was before, then and only then it would be proper to speak of it in its first glory, or to call it the latter city. In Ezra iv. 13, it says, "if *this* city be builded again." Now in what sense could that Jerusalem be builded again, that would not apply to the building again of the temple of God? That the two buildings of the temple were properly considered one house, may be seen from Ez. v. 11, 12, 13, in which the words *this house* refer to the former temple, v. 12; to the new house, v. 13; and to both as one and the same in the 11th v. So also in Haggai 4th v. "*this house*" refers to both buildings,—the new one having been partly built. Therefore the expression, "*this house* in her first glory," ch. ii. v. 3, is strictly proper, as referring to both houses by comparison. In the 7th v. *this house* not having reference to any comparison, means the second house; and in the 9th v. *this latter house* being compared with the former, has the word *latter* added to the word *this*, to show beyond all doubt that the house then building was meant. True it is not said "second time;" but that house is no where in all Scripture called "the second;" if it is, show me the place. If the word, "former house" meant the first house; then *this latter house* meant the second. Thus the *former* and *latter* rain meant the 1st and 2nd periods of rain, there being no 3rd, (Deut. xi. 14; Jer. v. 24 dual.)—The passage is so clear as to seem impossible to be misconstrued, and it would not have been, had not the Jews found that either it must be perverted, or else that they must assert that God promised falsely, or admit that the promise has been fulfilled.

If therefore God commanded that temple to be built; if he overcame the resistance of the people and made them build, and if he accepted the temple for his service, then it was not so despicable as some Jews pretend; for there are many others who endeavour to account for the fulfilment of the prophecy by ascribing its great glory to the time of the Asmoneans; and they are our witnesses that the passage is properly understood as referring to a second and not to a third temple.—Thus God said he would take pleasure in it and be glorified, which is a promise peculiar to the second temple and perfectly accordant with the passage

that declares that the glory of the latter shall exceed that of the former.

But great stress is laid upon Gen. xxviii. 16 to 22. That spot was not the same as was afterwards the site of the temple of Jerusalem, which belonged to the lot of Judah; for Luz, the city mentioned in the 19 v., and in Ch. xxv. 6, fell to the lot of Joseph: Judges i. 22—23, and Josh. vii. 2.

Josh. xvi. 2. There is no wonder that Jacob spoke of what he had seen as a house, for the vision represented the angels going up and down by a stair, and God as seen in heaven as in the upper story.

But I object in the last place that the word Beth, when applied to locality and is not in construction, means simply a house. I demand that a passage be shown in which this is not the case. On this ground, till the objection be answered, I assert that the word house in Ch. ii. 37, and 9. of Haggai means the building—and hence argue that the promise stands that the former should be filled with glory. Further I maintain that the words *this house* refer in every passage of Scripture to a building, the foundation of which has already been laid, and not to any future building.

Therefore on the above grounds severally and taken in conjunction, it is proved that the glory spoken of, which was to exceed the glory of the temple as it first stood, must be fulfilled in the second building; or the promise of God asserted to be false and the Scripture a lie.

I again demand when and how the promise was fulfilled.

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### III.—*A Study concerning the Excellency of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

READER! do not carelessly pass by this article. Have respect unto the name prefixed, the name of JESUS CHRIST, our blessed Redeemer:—and if this imperfect study should have the effect of exciting or reviving within thee one worthy thought concerning HIM, that thought may do thee good, when thy gold and silver have gone to thine heirs, and thy bones shall have mouldered into dust within the dark and silent tomb. God be with thee!

The Christian is so called from his attachment to Christ. He has chosen Him as that object by which he shall be distinguished, by whose glory he shall be glorified, and by whose love he shall be constrained. Esteem is the basis of this glorying and love;—and that esteem rests, in its turn, on the exceeding excellency of Christ above all other objects known by the Christian. This knowledge of the excellency of Jesus Christ, is the internal light of a Christian's soul: and surely it is well to communicate to the world something of this blessed light, in as far as it is communicable from man to man. The "saint" is not so irrational a being as many suppose; he *can* give a reason for his hope, and also for his fond preference of ONE to all.

Why then does the Christian prefer Christ to all—and the knowledge therefore of Christ to all other science in the world?

1. The true *Image of God* is known in Christ Jesus. He is called “The Image of the Invisible God”—“the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person.” Yea Christ himself says, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou then, shew us the Father?” He was “God manifest in the flesh,” dwelling amongst men, and revealing to them Godhead through the medium of humanity. The world has been in pursuit of an image of God;—but, in vain. Its wise men have been groping after some intellectual likeness of the Almighty, but they have become fools in their effort;—they have all failed, and have all sinned in their proud failure. Yet, the Christian, without an effort, has received that which the world could not find, nor the whole universe contrive. In his blessed Lord, he knows his God; and therefore he exclaims, “My Lord and my God!” He needs not to ransack the heights above, or the depths beneath, to find out the Almighty;—he needs not lengthened trains of reasoning, or boundless flights of imagination, in order to explore the perfections of the Supreme;—he shuts his door; he opens his gospel; he approaches to Jesus of Nazareth, by faith communing with Him as his Lord;—he sees God and is satisfied. Especially in the cross does he see the glory of Jehovah, and understand the character of Him with whom he has to do;—he admires the sovereignty, wisdom, holiness, righteousness, truth, love, mercy, and goodness, displayed in the sacrifice of his Lord:—and he is filled with a joyful and satisfying knowledge of God, such as transcends all human expression. Blessed is the man who hath thus “God in Christ” “dwelling in his heart by faith,” as the supreme object of his acquaintance and fellowship!

2. The Lord Jesus Christ is known to the saints as an *Almighty Saviour*—and how excellent is such knowledge! The importance of an acquaintanceship often depends on the circumstances in which we are placed. If we are sick, we value the acquaintance of a physician; if in debt, of a rich and benevolent man; if ignorant, of a skilful and learned instructor; if in danger, of a strong, wise and intrepid friend, who will plunge into fire or water and deliver us. Now our chief character is that of *sin*; our chief danger that of *Hell*; our chief want is that of *salvation*; and our chief benefit, that of a *Saviour*. Now this last we have in Christ. His very name is “Jesus,” the “Saviour.” He is sent by the Father, and is anointed by the Holy Ghost;—thus is He appointed by

God. He is Divine, and represents the rights of Godhead ;— He is human, and upholds the interests of man. He is full of grace to attract, of wisdom to direct, and of power to execute. He was, He is, and He shall be for evermore. He has fulfilled the law ; He has endured the curse ; He has vanquished death ; He has purchased life ; He has entered Heaven ; and He makes himself known by His Gospel on earth. Believers take refuge in Him :—they glory in His atoning blood ; they rejoice in His justifying righteousness ; they pursue after the enjoyment of His glory ! When they are sin-sick, what so sweet to them as the knowledge of the Saviour ! When they fear Hell, what so precious as the knowledge of their Blessed Redeemer ! These are feelings and this is experience, into which the world enters not, neither can enter ;— the man of mere worldly science comes hither, and looking for a moment at this employment of the saints, turns aside with scorn. But here the believer dwells, even under the pavilion of present salvation, with a present Saviour ; and says, “ What is all other knowledge to me as a sinner ?—what can the sun, moon and stars do for me ? what can all men do for me ?—what can all angels do for me ?—what can the universe do for me as a sinner ? Blessed be Thou, Oh Christ Jesus my Lord ! the knowledge of the universe is as dross compared with the knowledge of Thee ! ”

3. In the person of Christ Jesus our Lord, we are introduced to the acquaintance of a most *loving Friend*. Pure love actuated Him, and still actuates Him, as our Almighty Saviour. This love is everlasting, unchanging, infinite, and unsolicited ;—it found nothing lovely in us, it gives every thing that is lovely to us. Although Christ is the Son of God, yet He became the son of man, our kinsman ;—bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh ; and thus He possesses the most exquisite human sympathies. He knows weakness and sorrow ; He knows pain and death ; He knows the anger of God, and the curse of the law, and the penalties of Hell ; and He made himself acquainted with these for our sakes. “ Greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends ”—yet the Son of God hath done this for us. He is great, but we are mean ; He is rich, but we are poor ; He is wise, but we are fools ; He is good, but we are evil ; He is blessed, but we are wretched ; He is glorious, but we are vile. Yet is He our dear and affectionate Friend. He was our friend in purpose, before the world was made ; He is our friend now that we exist, in deed ; and He will be our friend in perpetuity, as long as eternity endures. This friend dwelt amongst us. He died for us. He

rose again on our behalf, and He lives for evermore to bless us. Oh blessed are they who name the Son of God for their Friend, the Son of man for their bosom companion! Oh lovely Jesus, what friend is like unto Thee! So meek, gentle, humble, merciful, forbearing, constant, intimate, ready, willing, affectionate, and ever-loving as ever-lovely! How blessed are the men who know thee, and walk with thee, as their Friend! What solitude is dull, what privation is sad, what pain is keen, what potion is bitter, what fire is hot, what water is deep, when the Friend of sinners is with us? Science is but a dumb-waiter in the day of trouble, and Philosophy is but a funeral mute in the hour of death;—but Christ is the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother:—the Friend who lives by our needs. Is it wonderful that Paul accounted all earthly acquaintanceships to be but dross compared with this? Well may the Church glory and say, “This is my beloved, and this is my friend, oh ye daughters of Jerusalem.”

4. Christians do know and enjoy in Christ Jesus a most gracious *Master*. We are dependent and subordinate creatures; we are also made for activity; we need therefore to be employed as servants under a Master. Jesus, as “God manifest in the flesh,” is the believer’s Lord. He has supreme authority in himself, and He has purchased his people to be his own property. They “are not their own”—they “are bought with a price;” therefore do they “serve their Lord in their bodies and spirits which are His.” But they are imperfect and sinful servants; they need therefore a gracious Master, who will not enter into judgment with them, but forgive and forbear towards them. Such is Christ. His person is lovely, His service blessed, His recompence glorious. Paul said of Him, “His love constraineth me”—and John, “His commands are not grievous to be borne.” His yoke is ease itself, His burden lightness, His work is rest indeed. When the former slaves of self, Satan, and the world, enter His service, it is to them as freedom, joyful emancipation; they are filled with peace and joy unspeakable. He is ever near to them; His eye is ever upon them—He helps the weak—He instructs the ignorant—He bears with the feeble-minded—He chastens the froward—humbles the conceited—comforts the sorrowful—confirms the holy—moderates the joyful—and blesses the meek and patient. His work is man’s good, and God’s glory; His reward is man’s perfection and divine blessedness; He ever lives, is every where present, and is always the same;—He is God. He is man; He is our Lord and our kinsman—our God and our Saviour! Oh how glorious is the knowledge of such a Master?—how

blessed the experience of a life devoted to His service! Who would not follow Him, who would not serve Him, who would not die in His cause?—Happy, happy is the man who is all the day employed in the service of Jesus, and who knows no work but His! Well, well may he say, “Yea, doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Master—He is so good, so wise, so great, so humble, so mighty, so tender, so holy, so kind, so righteous, so merciful, so stedfast, so considerate, so glorious, so sympathetic, that I cannot but glory in Him unto the very death.”

5. A perfect *Example of Character* is presented to us in the life of Christ. This elsewhere is undiscoverable. For Jesus was not only man, perfect man, but He was also God dwelling in man. He was thus incorruptible and infallible in His very constitution:—in the fountain of His character He was divine; in its medium or channel of exercise, human. In Him was every perfection of Godhead, in Him every grace of manhood—the source of the law and the end of the law in one dwelt in Him. His thoughts were perfect thoughts—His words were perfect words—His acts were perfect acts. His character was glorious, and it was also lovely—yea love was its glory. There were seen in Him the tenderness of the infant, the softness of the child, the warmth of the youth, the maturity of the man. He was meek and yet bold, humble yet majestic, gracious yet righteous, forgiving yet authoritative, courteous yet independent, affectionate yet faithful. He did good, but forbid its fame—He performed miracles, yet sought not their glory—He lived for God and for man, and sacrificed Himself on their behalf in the end, yet was He silent in His deed—He died as a sufferer, in true agony—He died as a conqueror, in true victory—He rose from the grave as the same Jesus—He ascended into glory as the same Christ—and He is now in the highest heavens, the “same, yesterday, to-day, and forever!”—Oh Blessed One! thou only perfect, unfallen One that ever trode this earth, how shall we speak of Thee as we ought! Be thou our “pillar of cloud” by day—our “pillar of fire” by night. Dwell, oh dwell in our sight! Be the light of our eyes, and the guide of our weary, wandering, stumbling feet! Blessed and Glorious Exemplar! happy is the man that knoweth Thee! well may his soul rest from its heavy toils, for he hath found the home of holiness and peace—well may he sell all that he hath, for he hath found the Pearl of great price! There is perhaps nothing pertaining to Christ so despised amongst us as His example!—Arise then and study your Lord’s character—draw near to His

person, sit at His feet, hang on His words, drink His spirit, do His works, and walk in His steps.

6. To know Jesus Christ is to know *Heaven* begun on earth. The chief glory of Heaven is that of Jesus Christ at the right hand of God. The chief fellowship of Heaven is the Lamb that sitteth on the midst of the Throne. The chief song is to Him that "loved us and washed us in His blood." The character of Christ is the character of Heaven. The mind of Christ is the mind of Heaven. The people of Christ are the people of Heaven. Union to Christ is the key of Heaven. The Love of Christ is the power of Heaven. Obedience to Christ is the test of entrance to Heaven. The knowledge of Christ is the very pass-port to Heaven. For Christ will say to the rejected ones, "Depart from me—I never knew you—you had no fellowship with me—I knew you not as my acquaintances or my friends!"—How blessed are they who already know the place to which they go, and where they are to dwell forever!—who have a daily foretaste of bliss and glory in the company of their beloved friend and Lord!—who can say of life that it is Christ, of death that it is gain—who regard departure from this life as presence with Jesus—and who look forward to eternity, as being with the Lord Christ forevermore! Yet such is the blessedness of that man who counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus His Lord; to him earth is Jesus known by faith, and heaven is Jesus known by sight. How slight the transition, how glorious the change!

7. But we must now briefly sum up. We are still the creatures of time and space; and we must sum up the theme of eternity in one short hour. Christ is "*All and in all*" to His people, until they reach Heavenly Glory. Whatever they need as sinners to save them; whatever they need as believers to confirm them; whatever they need as children to mature, or as men to perfect them, is contained in Christ Jesus. He is their Prophet, Priest and King—their "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." He is their Father, Brother, Husband, and Kinsman, Redeemer. They live in Him, they die in Him, they sleep in Him, they rise in Him. He is their Advocate and Intercessor, and Representative. When they form new ties on earth He blesses them;—when these ties are sundered He supplies them. Thus is He the Husband of the widow, and the Guardian of the orphan, and the inheritance of him that hath no possession on the earth. He is the head of the body, the life of the soul, the delight of the whole man. But there is one engrossing relationship and a final one in which Christ stands to His people

—He is their *Judge*. To His word they appeal now; at His throne they shall appear hereafter. By Him shall they be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and by His sentence shall they enter into the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world. He Himself also shall bear testimony as their chief *Witness*; and Oh! happy are the people who have the Son of God as a witness for them in the great and terrible day of the Lord!

Reader! do we possess the excellent knowledge of this Christ? Have we personal acquaintance and true fellowship with Him? Once we were strangers to Him—do we now know Him? Do we know Him by His Gospel, by His Spirit, and by the experience of His grace? Have we trusted in Him, are we now serving Him, are we suffering for His sake, are we applying to Him for all that we need? Have we fellowship with Him as the Image of God to us—as the Saviour of sinners—as an affectionate Friend—as a gracious Master—as a perfect Example—as Heaven begun—as All in all to us for grace and glory? Oh, can we thus know Christ and not feel it, neither be conscious of the effects of such knowledge! If ye know Him in deed and in truth, then do ye love Him, and trust in Him, and delight in Him, and serve Him, and glory in Him—do ye not so? Do ye not seek his love more than gold, and desire his grace as sweeter than the honey-comb? Can ye be happy when He is displeased, can ye rejoice when He withdraws the sense of His presence from you? Is not His likeness your pursuit, and conformity to Him your only ambition? Do you not regard His cause as your own, and His glory as also yours? Do you not love the Bible that introduced you to Him, and the Gospel that manifested His love? Do you not bless the Father who gave Him, and the Holy Spirit who revealed Him? Do you not value the Providence of God which makes Him precious to you, and the ordinances that bring nigh to you His rich salvation? Oh, yes, we believe it is so with some of our readers. Your hearts glow under the sound of His name. Few ye may be, but blessed. Go, increase in this knowledge until earthly sciences shall seem but as your kneading-trough, and worldly business as the servant that ministers your daily food. Go, walk with your Lord, until you shall feel, and the world shall see, that the Son of God dwelleth in you and you in Him—until Heaven shall seem more desirable than earth—and until the intensity of your faith has prepared you for the extacy of beatific sight!

And, oh, come ye poor ignorant worldlings that know not this “Pearl of great price!” come ye, and buy without money and without price! What avail all your possessions if

is not salvation? What benefit will ye derive at last from your friendships, if ye enjoy not the friendship of a Saviour. Will the sun enlighten you in the way to Heaven, or the moon disclose to you the road to Hell? Will the stars reveal to your eyes the contents of eternity;—or can the lightnings make known to you a judgment to come? Will science justify you? Can business sanctify you? Has the world died for you?—Ye must leave this world as naked as ye entered it. What then will avail all that ye must leave behind you, or all that which worms shall eat?—Be wise my fellow men—be wise; sell all that ye have, rise up, and follow Christ. Behold Him that will lead you out from the curse, from sin, from death, from all evil. Behold him that will even now receive you, as a Saviour—receive you as you now are, and make you to be what now you are not! Behold him who waits to receive your guilt, and to give his own righteousness—who will give himself to you, whilst you give yourself to Him. Are you a persecutor? Come—for so was Paul. Are you injurious? Come—so was Paul. Are you a blasphemer? Come—so was Paul. Whatever you be, come! leave all that heap of vain dross, and come, and you will know the Christ, the Son of the living God. He will introduce you to the Father, and He will send to you the Holy Spirit. Happy then shalt thou be, O sinner!—Haste thee, haste thee—lose not even a day, or an hour of such bliss: haste thee—and the Lord be with thee!

J. M. D.

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IV.—*Sacred Literature of the Hindus.*

No. 2.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In this letter I purpose to make some quotations from the Hindu sacred books, showing their erroneous ideas in regard to the means of obtaining salvation. The professed end of all sacred books is to point out some way whereby the inquirer may find deliverance from sin, and acceptance with the Deity, whose perfections are delineated. Our sacred book points out but one salvation, and one way to it, even Christ; but the Hindu shástras point out two kinds of salvation, and many ways, though all widely differ from the word of God.

The first kind of salvation mentioned in the Hindu shástras, consists in sensual enjoyment, a birth in a king, brahman, or god's body, together with the pleasure of eating, drinking, and indulging all the passions.

The second, is that of absorption in to the deity, and thus being forever free from connexion with matter.

I shall first refer to some of the chief ways in which the salvation consisting in sensual enjoyment is to be obtained.

1. It is often asserted that by merely having the sacred books, salvation may be found. Thus (5 Bk. 8 Chap. 102) "Whoever hears these words of Hurri will pass over the sea of this world." The substance of the saving story to which the poet refers, is that Bharat Raja rescued a young deer, gave his whole attention to cherishing it, at length lost it, died of grief, and went into the body of a deer himself. It assuredly needs profound philosophy to show how salvation could result from such a story as this. Again (5 Bk. 16, 95) "Hearing the words of the 5th book men will cross the world." The words referred to, are a long senseless dissertation upon geography. (6 Book 26, 391-2) "They who hear this story, or repeat it with their mouths, shall be free from disease, evil bands, and shall find knowledge to comfort the mind." The story referred to, is a speculative harangue about the human system. The 11th book begins thus: "By these holy words of the Bhagabat, the misery of the world is to be destroyed." (11 book 1, 367,) "Such is the greatness of Krishna, that by hearing of his glory and perfections, men will cross this awful world." (11th book 1, 37-9.) "Those who hear this book, though they may be enemies to brahmans and gurus, and very much fallen, the moment these words enter their ears all their misfortunes will be destroyed." Thus hundreds of quotations might be multiplied, where it is declared that by merely hearing certain shastra stories, deliverance from all sorrows incidents to this birth is found.

2. Another way of obtaining salvation according to the shastras, is by worshipping the brahmans. Nothing can be more ingenious than the means these priests have taken to render their very names adorable. The duty of serving them is not enforced by precepts, which would seem to imply that its propriety had been disputed, but casually alluded to, as a well known and established duty. Every Hindu considers it as self-evident as that a man ought not to kill. Every important personage who figures in the Bhagabat is made to lavish great sums upon the brahmans. Every man who wishes to perform some great work first calls these *holy men*, and bestows gifts upon them. Every man whose virtues are exalted is praised most of all for adoring the brahmans. If a person is unfortunate, his misfortunes are attributed to some neglect of the brahmans. Brahmans must be called to marriages, births, weanings and deaths, when they are feasted and paid. To refer to some passages we may notice the circumstances that attended Krishna's birth. He was born of the wife of Basudeb in the prison, by whom he was brought by night and placed in the house of Nanda, who became his foster-father, supposing him to be his own son. It is said (book 10, 14) "a crowd of brahmans assembled, having heard of the child's birth. Nanda beholding them worshipped their feet, and presented them garments. The brahmans joyfully sung the baidi and fulfilled the customs of the east, by worshipping the gods of the fathers. Nanda in return gave ornaments and two lakhs of cows." The story concludes with an account of much music and dancing, and the brahmans blessing Nanda before their departure. When Krishna was weaned (10th book 7, 15) "Certain brahmans came and blessed both mother and child, Nanda being pleased gave gifts of cows and garments." When Krishna awoke he was in such a rage for the breast that he broke a large post by a kick of his foot; the brahmans were again called to consult the stars in relation to the accident, and they departed after receiving another fee. At marriages the services of brahmans are indispensable (book 10, 58, 25.) A raja makes a wedding for his daughter. The brahmans, as was custom at seasons of rejoicing, are feasted by the raja, for which they worship the gods of the fathers and speak peace." If a man dies, the brahmans must be called, feasted and paid before the friends of the deceased can receive

absolution. Not being able to bear this expense many are put out of caste forever.

There is a prophesy in the Bhagabat that brahmans will in time lose their influence over the sudras, and that time is represented as being the very consummation of the evil age. (12 Bk. 2, 36.) "Sudras shall become Bramhacharis, Vaishnabs, and Sanyasis. Being proud of a little knowledge, they shall revile the way of the baids. The brahman shall become the disciple of the sudra and speak to them the instruction of incantations. They will be called excellent gurus and be raised to eminence. Brahmans being ignorant will salute them. Such will be the feature of this evil age, men will become so wicked." What could be better calculated to make men look with horror to that unfortunate time, than such a prophesy as this? Numerous other passages might be quoted, showing how ingeniously brahmans have contrived the phraseology of the shastras, so as to render their very names sacred.

3. It is well known that worshipping the gods is another means the shastras mention, by which men may obtain salvation. Their sacred books say there are 33,000,000 (10 Bk. 3, 113.) "The thirty-three millions of gods who are under Bramha, Shiba, and Indra, all assembled in the city of Mathura, and each one saluted the feet of Daibaki, the mother of Krishna." Thus they all acknowledged their inferiority to Krishna, and hence it appears to be more important to worship Krishna than them. Almost every chapter closes by declaring that by worshipping this god alone, salvation is to be found. But notwithstanding Krishna is so highly exalted, any man is at liberty to worship his favorite god, with the certain promise that he shall find salvation by so doing. This doctrine is founded upon the belief that God animates all things, and hence let us worship what we will, we worship him. (11 Bk. 3, 8) "Narayan sits as the eternal cause in all bodies." (10 Bk. 25, 61) "My gods are the wilderness and the mountains, the water and the air that I enjoy."

By the following passage we see how important it is for one to serve the god of his own fancy. (10 Bk. 25, 31.) "The man who is covetous worships not his favorite god, has to the least pleasure and enters into misfortune."

4. Bathing is mentioned as another method of finding salvation. When brahmans bathe, they repeat the names of the following rivers and tanks with a wish that they may bathe in them, Ganga, Ganga Narayan, Modadhi, Rohenachi, Bata Krishna (and some others.)

These appear to be most renowned in the shastras as sacred places of pilgrimage. After referring to several of these sacred waters, it is said, (5 Bk. 20, 19:) "He who practises bathing daily will find salvation from endless sins." "Whoever bathes in these waters whether men or beasts put all sin at a distance and will be filled with pleasure."

5. Another celebrated way mentioned in the shastras, is by performing austerities, called tapasya. By using this means, it is believed, a person may be born in the body of a brahman or a god, that he may enter one of the heavens and remain years, centuries or ages, just according to his amount of merit, which when exhausted he may again fall. Bramha, Vishnu, Shiba, Indra, and in fact all the gods are believed to have obtained their inheritance in this way. The nature of the services to be performed by Vaishnabs varies according to their peculiar sect; but the grand object of all is to destroy the bodily passions and appetites through a rigid course of discipline. Among the numerous devotees Dhruva is one of the most noted. His history begins with an invocation to Ganesh (6 Bk. 8). "I salute the water-lily feet of the son of Ambika, whose name among all the gods is the opposing king. Thy moon-like beautiful aspect, thy diadem-hair, falling about thy breasts, fascinating to the

mind. Thou quaffest ambrosial waters, O thou holder of the noose and the iron hook! By virtue of whose sight the ties of this world are broken, for pure words proceed from thy lips. Be propitious to my mind, O Lambadara! and I will declare the words of the Bhagabat, that saves from this world. Among the services of devotees, that which is most excellent I will relate even the history of Dhruba.

The substance of this history is as follows. In ancient times there was a great king whose name was Dakyaprajapati. He married two wives Suruchi and Sunati, of whom the first was his favorite. In process of time each of his wives bore a son. The name of Sunati's son was Dhruba the hero of this history. When the two boys were about seven years old the king was one day, according to his custom, holding both upon his knees. Suruchi seeing this, and knowing herself to be the favorite queen, was emboldened to address Dhruba in the most reproachful language. She told him he had no right to sit upon his father's knee with her son, as it was clear from his having been born of the less beloved wife that he had suffered no austerities in a former birth. This was more than the proud spirit of Dhruba could bear, and with eyes filled with tears, he goes and unbosoms his feelings to his mother, who though she sympathizes with him still affirmed that what Suruchi had said must be true, and advised him to repair to the forest immediately. Dhruba, although at so tender an age resolves to go and secure such an amount of merit as would raise him above all his enemies. When his mother saw his absolute determination, her maternal sympathies began to triumph over reason. But in spite of all her dissuasions her son was steadfast in his purpose, and immediately repaired to the dense wilderness and commenced an ascetic life. So great was his tapusya that it soon made heaven and earth to quake! The gods, fearing that he would obtain such favour of Vishnu as to rob them of their respective dominions, repair to the court of Indra for counsel. Indra after listening to their complaint, replied that if they would break his tapusya, they must resort to such means as was calculated to affect children, either fear or sympathy. Accordingly they first filled the wilderness with the hissing of serpents and yells of wild beasts, awful thunders and vivid lightnings; but all this did not move the intrepid spirit of Dhruba. This plan failing, they resort to another more likely to succeed. A demon takes the form of his own mother, comes to him with hair all in confusion, clothes rent, and countenance grief-worn. In this plight she clasps him to his bosom, telling how much abuse she had suffered from Suruchi since his departure; that she had wandered over hills and dales, among brambles, serpents and beasts of prey, and now that she had found him he must go home with her, for he had already suffered too much for so small a child. But Dhruba, suspecting all this to be some trick of the gods, paid no attention to her entreaties. As Indra would give no further counsel, the gods now go to the court of Bramha, who after hearing an account of their fears told them not to be concerned, for the child would never interfere with their dominions, for he had already obtained sufficient merit to raise him far above them all. Soon after Vishnu appeared and took him to the 14th heaven! and as the story closes, "Thus he who was not permitted to sit upon his father's knee was admitted to a seat in the 14th world."

Numerous stories of this kind are related in the Bhagabat, and are taught to children at a very early age. You cannot be at a loss to perceive what a baleful influence they must have upon the youthful mind. In the first place they serve to fan the worst passion of the human heart, envy. Out of envy a man goes to perform austerities, and out of envy all the gods engage to disturb him. Again when we warn them to forsake their evil ways and turn to the Lord, we can see in their very coun-

tenances such language as this: "This is the temptation of some incarnate demon, to break my constancy, like the temptations to which Dhruva was exposed." A short time since a man said to me after listening to the gospel, "Ah! this is the way of the world's temptations. The Moguls first came to this country and after eating up the merit they had secured in a former birth, were succeeded by the Mahrattas, and their store of merit becoming exhausted they were succeeded by the Musalmáns, and when they had devoured all their merit, you English came in to take your turn; you will soon go the way of the world, and why should we renounce our faith for the creatures of a day." What a death-blow this sentiment strikes at the very root of all intellectual or spiritual improvement.

6. Not only those who perform *tapusya* find this kind of salvation, but those persons who even see them. Dhruva obtained a seat for his mother with himself, (6 Bk. 8, 10.) "With his mother he sat down in the northern sky, and even by beholding him the pain of three ages will be destroyed." (11 Bk. 2, 90.) "Whoever sees a devotee, will cross over the waves of this world."

These are the chief means for obtaining that salvation which consists in sensual enjoyment, and is the result of ceremonies. There are several other ways mentioned, but I think all are included under these heads, as marking the face, repeating the names of the gods, and pilgrimages, are included in bathing and in serving the gods.

O how different is such sensual indulgence from that salvation that consists in deliverance from sin, communion with God and eternal life; and how different are such vain ceremonies from serving God in spirit and in truth! I hope in my next to give some account of the means to be used to secure that kind of salvation which is said to consist in absorption into the Deity.

E. N.

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### V.—*Geography of India.*

Holding as we do that all truth is worthy of being known, and that all sound knowledge is valuable, and that every advance that is made in science has in one way or other a bearing upon the state of mankind in their relation to God, we do not consider ourselves to be going a single step out of our own territories when we notice any attempt that is made, either for the general improvement of the human mind, or for the promotion of the interests of any particular department of science. But while we hold that all science and all truth has a bearing more or less remote on the future and eternal destinies of man, in subserviency to that grand truth which is the foundation stone on which the eternal destinies of all must be reared, there are some departments of knowledge which have a peculiarly direct bearing upon that grand enterprise for the accomplishment of which the Christian Church is retained upon the earth; and among those none holds a more prominent place than the science of Geography. The field which

the Christian Church is commissioned to occupy, and to sow with the incorruptible seed of the word, is the **WORLD**; and comparing great things with small, a correct knowledge of the world is just as necessary to the Church, as is a correct acquaintance with his various fields, with their several soils, exposures and capabilities, to the agriculturist. Although this statement on the first blush of it will we believe command general assent, yet its importance is so great that we shall take the liberty to dwell a little further upon it.

In all works that are to be achieved by human agency of a mechanical or an intellectual kind, there is one principle whose application is requisite in order to attain the full and proper productiveness of that agency;—that principle is “the division of labour.” The essence of this principle consists in this, that no man shall be employed to perform any work which may be performed by one of inferior skill or ability. Now from the nature of the missionary work it clearly appears that there is no department of human labour to which this principle is more strictly applicable, or to which there is more necessity for applying it. Every man whose heart is touched with the love of God, who has tasted and felt in any degree the preciousness of Christ the Saviour, is fit for some department or other of the Missionary work, but he is not necessarily fit for all the branches of it. Just as the stones and the beams of the temple were hewn and squared on the mountains, and prepared and fitted each one for its own place in the sacred edifice; and as each one was fitted for occupying its own place in the building and no other, so in the Christian temple the lively stones are all fitted for their several positions; if removed from these positions they will not occupy any others so efficiently or so well. To take some examples. What would Luther, the brightest luminary that has been raised above the horizon since the days of the apostles, what would he have been had he been placed in other circumstances than those in which by the good Providence of God he was placed. What would Bishop Butler have been as the pastor of an illiterate and unsophisticated congregation? or in our own day, and to take an example more closely in point, what would the lamented John Williams have been had he been planted among the subtle bráhmans of India, or what Henry Martyn among the savages of New Zealand? The simple common sense of the one would have been overwhelmed in the whirlpool of sophistry, the exquisite sensitiveness and sublimated taste of the other, which so grievously racked his frame amidst a refined people, would have paralyzed all his energies amidst a barbarous race. These are examples by which God

evidently shews that he does design his servants for particular stations, and assigns particular stations to particular classes of men. Now in order to follow the leadings of providence, and be free of the charge of working in opposition to the designs of God,—the Church is bound to possess herself of all the knowledge she possibly can attain, regarding the different quarters of that field which her Divine Master has committed to her to be cultivated. She ought to possess such a knowledge of her whole territories, (for the world is all her own, as she is Christ's and Christ is God's) as to be in no danger of ever leaving any open door unentered, or sending a man to that portion of the vineyard for which he is not best fitted. Hence follows at once the importance of the science of Geography in its direct bearing upon the Missionary enterprise. Indirectly too, through the medium of its influence on trade and commerce, it must exercise a powerful bearing on the missionary work\*.

And while the importance of Geography is so great, we believe there is not to be found in any language any work from which the church can gather more than most remote inferences for her guidance in the allocation of her various laborers. Take even India, which is like a world in itself, inhabited by different races of people, of all varieties of intellec-

\* We have been favored by the projector of the work with the following interesting and eloquently written extract of a letter, dated 26th February, 1840, to the Rev. D. A. "I was much struck with a train of thought strictly in accordance with the views *I have* brought before the Christian Public at home, and which I think have been sadly overlooked or *under-estimated*. In the instructions of the Prudential Committee of Missions in America to the brethren proceeding to Asia Minor I find the following admirable observations: 'The Imperial warrior who lately convulsed the civilized world with his ambitious schemes, always made himself thoroughly acquainted with the nations he designed to conquer; their geography, numbers, government, character and history he studied as means to his favorite end, with the characteristic ardor of his great but perverted mind. Facts were the lights by which he marched his armies through Europe, and none were unsought, or deemed unimportant, which might affect the issue of a campaign or a battle. And in this minuteness and accuracy of information, combined with a capacity to adapt the means at command to the end in view, lies the secret of practical wisdom.

"Remember that you also are soldiers engaged in a warfare, and in a war of conquest. And though the contest be spiritual, of mind with mind and heart with heart, and your weapons spiritual and rendered powerful by divine aid, yet is there the same demand for inquiry and information, the same scope and necessity for discretion and forethought, as there were in the military enterprises of Napoleon. Indeed to a very great extent your inquiries will relate to precisely the same classes of objects; though you will survey them from other points of view, associate them by different relations, and estimate them by another species of arithmetic and measurement.'"

J.

tual capabilities, possessing different systems of religion, differing in fact from one another in every thing in which human beings all sinful can differ from each other.

We therefore hail the announcement of a large and comprehensive work on the Geography of India, which shall contain, in a methodical manner, all that is known or that can be known regarding the whole of British India and the neighbouring territories; and we rejoice to be the first to lay the prospectus of such a work before the Christian people. We know that the work will be conducted not only with the highest scientific ability, but also with the soundest Christian wisdom; and therefore while we leave to others to speak of its importance in a political and commercial view, we earnestly wish it all success on account of the influence which we think it calculated to exert on the enterprise in which we are embarked. We subjoin the Prospectus which has been put into our hands, and have no doubt that the undertaking will commend itself to the favour of our readers.—ED.

#### PROSPECTUS.

It were much to be desired, among other indications of general improvement and intercourse, that the progress of a familiar and exact acquaintance with the Geography and statistics of every country throughout the earth, kept pace with the exhibition of that enterprise which seeks to reclaim it from darkness and barbarism: or make it available to the friendly commercial internationality, which must reciprocally affect its well-being, and our own. Such, as an exemplification, are the new and extended relations of British India with the contiguous countries of Central Asia, the bordering nations of the Malayan Peninsula, and China, and the innumerable islands of the eastern archipelago; with which no doubt a far more productive trade would be carried on, to say nothing of the spread of civilization and religious truth, were the public in possession of more full and correct information of what is available for the British market, or suited to the wants of these countries, as an article of export or manufacture from our own. Such information is justly appreciable as subserving the noblest object of Philanthropy,—the communication of the blessed Gospel to all nations.

War and commercial adventure, have indeed originated a great variety of researches, which contribute to the illustration of one of the fairest and richest portions of the globe; yet who, that desires a mere summary acquaintance with the present condition and resources, the precise locality often, of these countries, can be satisfied with the imperfect knowledge which at a very remote date furnished matter for the best and only works now in existence. The more ample and recent details, however, being interspersed through a multitude of works and documents, some comparatively costly and rare, others little known or accessible to a very limited number of readers, are so mixed up likewise with much that is of an extraneous character, or of purely local in-

terest, as to repress the most anxious curiosity. And if such be the case with portions of each country, how is the difficulty enhanced, in obtaining more comprehensive views of Geography? It is, in fact, no very easy matter, with the best information before us, to arrive at any decided estimate either of the state and relative limits of our most settled possessions, or of those which have been recently superadded, or brought within the commanding influence of our political power. Such knowledge, no doubt, exists to a large amount, and is to be found with the several employes of Government; but they are usually too much occupied to make any further inquiries than may be necessary to present exigencies; and if presented by them to the higher authorities, it is simply in connection with their immediate duties. Nay, all who have occasion to make such researches, are necessitated or prevailed on so to blend them with particulars of transient importance, that the most indefatigable patience would be severely taxed to draw such inferences as the present state of knowledge might very reasonably be expected to furnish.

Without advertng, otherwise than in a cursory way, to the deficiencies of Hamilton's Gazetteer, and his larger Geographical and statistical account of India, (one identical work by the way, though published under different titles,) it must be allowed, that the accumulation of materials since the date of its first appearance in 1815, for an enlarged and improved description of our Eastern possessions, would abundantly justify the attempt to get up something more in accordance with the philosophical, yet popular works brought out on the continent at a long subsequent date: gleaned chiefly from the writings of British officers, by industrious and learned foreigners.

It is indeed a reproach to our country, that we invariably leave others to analyse and compound the fragmentary results of science and discovery, which our own curiosity and observation have arrived at: and receive at a distant date, perhaps, from foreigners, that which we might well have been *proud* of communicating to them, in all its racy originality: while, at the same time, by determining the tide of further inquiry into such channels, the British public would have had the earliest intelligence of every fact essential to its best interests. The works of Balbi, Malte Brun, Ritter, and Berghaus, would have made but a poor show without the help of British materials, though it is delightful to see masterminds like these, of so much ability and aptitude to discuss their value, instituting investigations from these documents, into questions of the most important and instructive nature. What accessions have they not brought to Physical Geography, to the systematizing of facts, bearing on subjects of universal concern? They have called attention to our neglect, and invited us to methods of a more pleasing description than have hitherto been followed by British Geographers. They have taught us that this department of knowledge is not a mere dry epitome of facts absolutely denuded of narrative or reflection; and which as the mere annals in respect of history, indicate certain landmarks in space, as those in time; but apart from irrelevant and speculative discussions, may present in the spirit of that striking natural landscape from whence it is drawn up, some resem-

blances of varied novelty, some curious and valuable truths at every fresh step. It is to the illustrious Humboldt that they and we must consider ourselves indebted for such comprehensive and just views of this subject; and on such models must all works be formed, which aim at an enduring existence and popular acceptability. The remark we have ventured could never be put forward without allusion to the names of D'Anville and Rennell, as they who have chalked out the best, the only course in works of an extensive Geographical nature.

The condensation of what is practically important to the Missionary, the merchant, and the functionaries of Government, is not incompatible with such a style, or arrangement, as shall recommend it to more general consideration; and expecting, as we may, day by day, a still further accession to our present knowledge, there are notwithstanding, now, abundant materials, sufficient at least, to encourage a publication, which shall embrace in a compendious form the most interesting particulars, bearing on the Geography and statistics of Asia, and those parts more directly under the authority or influence of the British Government, with suitable and correct maps of the larger divisions.

Without adhering to the admirable specimen put forth by Mr. Macculloch, as an universal Geographical Dictionary, it is proposed to arrange the articles in some sort alphabetically—classing the places of minor note, subordinately to the great territorial divisions, and thus not giving them an undue degree of importance, or sacrificing perspicuity and utility to the straight-laced system of a mere Gazetteer.

The unexpected difficulties that occurred to the restriction of such a work as this to the British possessions in India, as at first contemplated, have induced the Projector to believe, that without entering into the like minute account of other countries, in places beyond those limits, or not so immediately connected therewith, it will not be thought a defect that it embraces all that can concern or interest the British public, especially our countrymen in India. How, in fact, could we dispense with a description of Aden, of Mocha, of Karrack, of Kelat and Herat, of the places of note on the overland route from Bussora to Beirout, by which the communication is carried on with Europe for four months in the year; or some passing notice of those places of resort in China, which our forces are about to occupy? If there is any thing omitted which should properly have been inserted, it will be matter for after consideration to append; if any thing to suppress, new matter may easily be found to supply its place.

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#### VI.—*Remarks on the Notice of the Missionary Conference in the last number.*

To the Editors of the Calcutta Christian Observer.

DEAR GENTLEMEN,

In common with some others, my associates and fellow labourers in the missionary field, I have felt aggrieved by the last notice of the Missionary Conference over the signature of T. S.

Independently of the question at issue, viz. "the place the English language," &c. there are two or three exceptions which I beg leave to take to the article by T. S. To T. S. himself I take no exceptions: let this be borne in mind, for I esteem him highly as a missionary brother; but I do object:—

1. To a young brother who has scarcely smelt the air of India being deputed to write on a subject where the long-trying experience of others is available, and necessary in order to satisfy the minds of those most deeply interested on this point.

2. I object to the state of things in Calcutta being assumed as a datum on which to build an argument for India generally. If your opinion on this point be limited to Calcutta, I do not object to it; but there is so little resemblance between missionary labour in Calcutta and that in the country generally, that he who would argue from one to the other would deceive himself, and all who are influenced by his opinions.

3. I protest against the use of such epithets from the pen of a missionary brother in reference to the language of India as the "heartless drudgery of acquiring a barbarous language," and "a tedious course of hard and uninteresting labour," &c. I have never heard such language from those who really understand the languages of India, though it is common to hear it from those who know little or nothing about them. I have been labouring daily about 15 years in a language less cultivated than the Bengáli, and I deny fearlessly that either that or the Bengáli can be called a barbarous language. There is no idea that man can form which may not be expressed with the utmost precision by these languages; the greatest difficulty of the translator is not paucity of terms, but the selection of them. Let these languages be cultivated, and that ability to understand them be extended to the many which is now monopolized by the few, and there will be no complaint of the paucity or barbarity of the language.

4. There is another remark I think called for by the tone and manner in which reference is made to English; teachers of English being able to set about the work at once, &c. Now without "sneering" at this advantage, I wish to qualify it. Where men cannot or will not devote the time and study necessary to acquire the native language, it is well to have them set to work in teaching English rather than not work at all; but I would say to every man who wishes in the full sense of the term to be a missionary to the heathen—beware how you allow yourself to be seduced into teaching in English. I have had an opportunity of observing the course of many missionaries, but I can scarcely think of one who began with teaching

English that did not end there. I demur not to our friend's position, that they were probably as well qualified as their fellows to acquire the languages of the country; but the fact is, that if a man does not set to in good earnest to acquire the native language when he first arrives in the country, he very seldom has the time or energy to do it afterwards; or he is so immersed in other labours, where he can do without it, that he gives up the task. It is *thus* with T. S.; he can venture to say, "I could acquire it if it were *necessary*." Necessary! can a missionary ever pen such a word when 99 out of every hundred of the people in the land can understand no other? Necessary—when nine-tenths of the millions of India must go down to the grave unblest with the light of the gospel, unless the missionary does submit to this heartless drudgery! Is this the way to speak of the interests of this people? Is this the way to encourage the new missionary to set to in earnest to acquire their language?

It is true that those brethren who thus devote their energies to teaching and preaching in English are well employed; to that I object not, but they are employed only in some little favoured spots, some choice parterres of their own and others planting and dressing, while the whole waste howling wilderness remains untouched.

But this teaching in English is advocated with especial reference to the ministry. I am afraid this is not solid ground. The natives of India make out very poorly in English unless they begin in childhood. Are we then to devote certain native children to the ministry before their religious character is developed? or are we to teach all we can with a view to a future selection? We shall not find many advocates for the former I apprehend, and if the latter be intended, what becomes of the leading point, of teaching through the medium of the English language with a view to the ministry? How many of the youths taught English enter the ministry? While how many of our preachers, and those who are most likely to become native preachers, know nothing or next to nothing of English? I very much fear the tendency of the system proposed by T. S. will be to make well-taught clerks, deputy collectors, &c. &c., while our *real native* preachers will be neglected, and the only languages through which they can be reached trampled under foot. I beg to repeat that I am looking not at Calcutta but India.

Have we not seen the flower of our native Christian youth, taught in English, go off one after the other for more lucrative and congenial employment? Has the teaching them English any tendency to make them love the work of preaching the

Gospel through the medium of their native tongue? I think not. There are a few exceptions, but they are exceptions, not the rule. Beside, we cannot support a native ministry, at present, and certainly the native churches cannot, at such salaries as our well-taught native youth can command. It appears to me we shall err greatly if we raise up a native ministry which a native church cannot sustain.

And what is the great spring and motive in which this teaching of the native ministry through the medium of English is based. Is it not said that thus the newly arrived teacher of theology may commence his labours at once? I confess this does not seem to me a very weighty argument. It appears to me that it is not a very desirable matter that a newly arrived teacher, whether a young man or an old one, is the best to set about this work. If we are arguing *only for teaching theology to the rising native ministry*, I apprehend that there are brethren enough who have had long experience in the peculiarities of Hinduism, and know how to bring the arguments of Christianity to bear upon it, may be found, while one newly arrived may go to work in the wide field and get experience there.

I confess that I should hail with delight, the establishment of a Bengáli Theological Institution, where the very best masters should be employed, and the student taught only through the Bengáli and Sanscrit, and where their whole energies should be devoted to obtaining knowledge, and acquiring the best way of imparting it, in the most forcible and effective manner. Bengáli would thus be improved—its power developed and increased, and a brighter day dawn on the native church.

But if we are to look for pastors for our native churches, taught in English, to settle down in our native villages, and hunt out Hinduism through all its jungles and fastnesses, I fear our eyes will fail with longing.

Let me not be considered as a foe to teaching English to some extent. My practice is my best defence here; but if I am less strenuous for it than I once was, it is partly because I share the change which all missionaries, so far as I know, experience who cultivate the native languages; and partly because I fear that a fearful delusion is spreading through many minds especially at home on this point.

Secular men will teach English for secular purposes, and if our Christian youth are so situated as to be able to acquire it, it may be of service to them, in providing for their temporal wants, but my own conviction is, that our native ministry, whether they know English or not, should be taught Theology

through the medium of the native languages. This is the most direct way of settling theological terms, of searching out the best phraseology, of calling forth a native Theology, and of qualifying men for the actual work we wish them to accomplish.

This too is the way to remove the difficulty arising from the want of books. Teaching by lecture is now very generally and advantageously employed. The students would soon acquire the habit of taking down lectures, and among them men of studious habits would soon be found to supply theological works nearly as fast as they are really needed.

I crave indulgence for my letter being so hastily written, for I could not command time to write more leisurely, and subscribe myself,

Yours sincerely,

A. SUTTON.

Cuttack, Sept. 10, 1840.

VII.—*What is the harm of attending the Dúrgá Pújá Náches?*

To the Editors of the Calcutta Christian Observer.

SIRS,

The *Dúrgá Pújá náches* are approaching, and doubtless the invitations of the wealthy worshippers of the idol *Dúrgá* will as usual go forth to their *Christian* neighbours, the European society of Calcutta, to join them in paying honor to *Dúrgá*; for though the invitation may be expressed in other words—may be, to the *Dúrgá Pújá náches*, we must not forget that the *náches* are purposely a part of the worship of the idol *Dúrgá*. The choir of singers, the *nách girls*, will generally be found stationed near the door of the apartment, wherein sits in Heathen state the idol, *fully displayed* to the view of her worshippers—though none of the *Christian* guests, assembled by her votaries to do her honor, may enter, to pollute a place made *sacred* by her presence; the adjoining room is said to be the nearest approach a *Christian* may make to *Dúrgá*. When *Christians*, therefore, though from mere curiosity, or civility to her worshippers who invite them, follow in the train of *Dúrgá's* blinded votaries—those *Christians* undoubtedly swell the retinue of the idol, and distinctly though probably inadvertently, give encouragement to the grossest superstition—may they may be said to lend the chief attraction to *idolatry*!

The Hindu *worship* and *ritual* differ so totally from our own, that amidst such melancholy scenes of native superstition, we are apt to forget, and lose sight of the fact, that they form a portion of their *worship*, and to fancy it merely a feast or show;—not so. The *Christians* worship their God in their churches, and sing, and celebrate his praise, and assemble around the communion table of their Divine Saviour who gave his life a sacrifice for sin. The *Hindus* likewise *worship* their *idols*, and as a part of their ritual, sing and celebrate their idol's praise by a choir of *nách-girls* hired for that purpose. It would appear that the ordinary *nách-girls* assembled before the door of the idol, merely sing their customary songs, some of which are said to be indecent, but that other singers are mixed with them who sing, as the choir, the praises of the *idol*! That

those feasts and *náches* are a part of their *idol worship*, is obvious from the very terms of the invitation, namely, "*Dúrgá*"—the *idol Dúrgá*—"Pú-já" *worship*—*náches*, singing and dancing: indeed if any doubt remained on this head, it would be removed by the invitation cards, some of which are said expressly to invite the company to *náches*, in honor of the *Dúrgá Pújá*!

Christians are forbidden to eat of meats offered to idols. Whenever their so doing can be construed as giving countenance to idolatry, and this prohibition extends even to the meat sold in the shambles, provided the Christian be told that it had previously been offered to an idol. How then can a Christian go to such feasts? Not that *Dúrgá's* votaries would so far insult the goddess, as to offer to her the meats polluted by such European guests; the feast itself however forms a part of the display in honor of *Dúrgá*, who were she not an idol of stone, having eyes, that see not, might be supposed to view with complacency the *Christians*, assembled by her votaries to do her honor! How therefore can *Christians* be found amongst those who swell her retinue, and by their presence, are doing honor to the idol?

And as regards the *náches*, what would be the demoralizing effect upon a *Christian congregation*, say in *England*, of men and women, and youth of both sexes, assembled under the sanction of *Divine service* for the worship of God, were a band of females, the greater portion of whom were prostitutes, to dance and sing, as part of the worship, in such strains and songs, in the ears and language of such an *English congregation*, as the *nách girls* of *India* sing, before the *idol Dúrgá*?—songs, it is to be feared, few of which, could be admitted into your pages!—songs not from devout lips, to the praises of a *Holy God*, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, but songs where they relate to the idol, from such a choir, in praise of the exploits and lives of those beings, which unhappily are worshipped as *Divine personages* by the followers of *Dúrgá*!! We have long and fully heard of the songs and scenes at *Jagannath*; it is to be feared that *Dúrgá's* choir when unrestrained by *Christian guests*, may not much surpass in purity that of *Jagannath*. What would be the effect upon an *English congregation*, of worship, in their own language, such as this? Would there be found a single family to attend such a scene of contamination under the guise of *Divine worship*? Would not every one who bore the honored name of *Christian*, use his utmost endeavour to deter from going thither, his friends, domestics, and all over whom he had any influence, lest their minds should be contaminated, their principles overturned, and their lives become abandoned? and can *Christians* then in a foreign land act upon other principles, forgetting the high and holy name they bear, go, and by their presence at this portion of the *Heathen ritual*, the feast, singing and *náches* in honor of the *idol worship*, encourage such scenes, perhaps to the injury of thousands who attend?—oh no! If it be strictly prohibited in the circumstances already stated "to eat meats offered to idols," can it be right to go to, or partake of the feasts given in honor of the *idol*?—can it be right to encourage others by our presence, to go and partake of the more dangerous mental food, the songs sung by successive bands of *Indian nách-girls*? *Christians* went there in former days, in ignorance of the evil they were encouraging; but let us hope, now that the evil has been sufficiently exposed to be apparent to every one, that none will go.

Independently of *Christian principles* (for after becoming aware of the nature of the scene, let us hope that no sincere worshipper of the *Divine Jesus*, who gave his life a sacrifice for *sin*, could be present at, or encourage such worship of *Idols*), the *Philanthropist* has ample reason

to decline attendance; for, let us see the deep *injury* and *cruelty* to many innocent female children, he is indirectly *aiding* by the encouragement of his attendance. In proportion to the *encouragement* given to the *worship of Dúrgá*, or as they are distinctly styled *Dúrgá Pújá* (*worship*) *náches*, by the presence of guests, the wealthy worshippers of *Dúrgá* increase their expenditure of rupees to render the *náches* popular, and to obtain the most attractive *nách* girls, to dance and sing before the idol: (it is singular that *such* a class of society as *nách* women should have been thought of to do honor to the *gods*.) Those therefore whose profession it is to procure *nách* girls for such occasions, have their purses replenished and are enabled to purchase more *innocent female children* to be brought up to the same profession. Now it is notorious that by far the greater proportion of Indian *nách* girls are prostitutes. How melancholy then to reflect that every encouragement given to "*náches*" tends to add to the number of innocent female children, who are purchased for the diabolical purpose of being reared in abandoned habits?—what generous mind then would, by his presence, lend encouragement to the destruction of female innocence, virtue and happiness!—The whole system of *náches* is evil at the core, and therefore all friends of humanity ought to discourage them, and more especially when they form a part of the honor done to idols! Indeed it is incumbent on those who are aware of the evil to make it known to others, as most probably no Christian family would attend *náches* when once acquainted with the fact that they were so objectionable, for wherever we are present and appear even to take only a general interest and pleasure in a scene, or play, or place of native worship or *nách*, we are naturally supposed, at least by the natives, however ignorant we may be of the language, songs or ceremonies used, to *approve* of what is going on, else why should we lend the *encouragement* of our *presence*? and though most Europeans are ignorant of what is sung, the natives drink in the songs, too frequently indecent; and who would not shrink from being supposed by the natives, (who may not be aware of our ignorance of the words)—to approve of all the songs sung, by a succession of *nách girls*?

It is satisfactory to know that the "*Christian Observer*,"—the "*Friend of India*," and other papers whose objects are the promotion of religion, and virtue, and the improvement of India, continue very watchful of this evil, and to warn their own countrymen against any participation in honors done to Idols; and it will be gratifying if those publications are enabled to state that this year no Christians have been found encouraging the *Dúrgá Pújá náches*.

I remain, Sirs, &c.

A STRANGER.

24th Sept. 1840.

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VIII.—*History of Madagascar. By the Rev. William Ellis, Author of the Polynesian Researches.*

The Government of Madagascar is a modified despotism. The high estimation in which the hereditary nobles are held, and the great influence they consequently possess, together with an ancient practice of occasionally appealing to the people concerning political affairs, have given to the subjects a power over the interests of the nation which is incompatible with an absolute monarchy.

The nobles of Madagascar, as in most countries, rank next to members of the royal family, possessing extensive estates and an almost unlimited authority over their vassals; they bear a striking resemblance to feudal lords of the middle ages. Persons raised to the exalted situations of field-officers, privy counsellors and judges are invariably chosen from their order.

Individuals employed to collect fines, taxes and confiscations and to superintend every branch of the revenue are of an inferior class; they are called *Farantsa* and are placed under the judges.

Government intelligence is communicated to the nation by heralds. One is dispatched from the capital to every district of the country. On arriving at his destination he ascends an elevation in the midst of the market-place, and a gun is fired as a signal for the people to listen; he then lifts up his sonorous voice and proclaims to the assembled thousands the commands of his royal master. Should there be no market on the day the orders of Government are issued, the herald delivers his message to the head-men of the district who immediately make it known to the centurions, whose duty it then becomes to carry the intelligence to every individual in their respective hundreds. Hence, though the Malagasy are but very partially acquainted with the advantages of a well regulated press, and are entirely ignorant of the great modern inventions, steam-vessels and rail-roads, by which information on any subject may be conveyed from one end of the country to the other in the space of a few hours, yet through the medium of heralds the common people among them are more enlightened respecting politics than the peasantry of European nations, which are blessed with all facilities to expedite the diffusion of knowledge.

As the best institutions have sometimes been attended with great calamities, owing to the unrestrained ambition of men in power, a passion which has been a severe scourge to the world and given existence to the worst Governments, persons are divided in their opinions respecting the kind of Government in which the general good would preponderate over the occasional evil. This is a question which has been discussed for ages and produced folios without number, leaving it in the uncertainty in which those ponderous tomes have involved it, to be elucidated by writers whom nature has blessed with a strong vision to pierce the surrounding darkness. It may not be improper to observe, that on the pure administration of justice and the perfect independence of judges, depend the security, industry and well-being of individuals, and consequently the vital interests of nations, is universally admitted

by the wise and upright of every political creed : it is not denied by any, except by knaves and tyrants.

Faithful dispensers of law, deaf to the solicitations of friends and the threatenings of enemies, anxious to ascertain only what is right, and pronouncing their judgment of what is so with a rectitude which is never known to bend, become the guardians of a people's freedom and of a people's morals—a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them that do well. But forgetting the solemn responsibility of their office and how large a portion of the public weal is entrusted to their care; being deterred by fear or seduced by gold from a conscientious discharge of their sacred functions, they afflict their country with the heaviest calamities; for which posterity never fails to brand their memory with the everlasting infamy which is stampt on the name of Jeffreys, that monster of depravity.

Should emperors, kings, presidents or dictators endeavour to corrupt the administration of law and make the bench an engine of political power to effect purposes which they are ashamed and afraid to avow, they may for a time prosper in wickedness, but will, in the end, most probably gather the fruits of misrule amid intestine wars and atrocious deeds of blood, like those which closed the days of the pious and well-intentioned, but ill-fated Charles. Few Governments have long survived after tampering with courts of law. History presents many instances of the dread catastrophes they reserved for others falling on themselves and grinding them to powder.

It is a fact the existence of which is much to be regretted, that the foregoing observations apply with peculiar force to the administration of law in the island of Madagascar. The royal authority has been frequently employed to impede the course of justice, and deprive individuals of property and life who were never informed why such iniquitous proceedings were commenced against them. It has been a practice not uncommon for the sovereign to keep spies in every town, and to give orders for secret executions, denying the unhappy persons the least opportunity of vindicating their injured character. This is one fruitful source from which the miseries of Madagascar have flowed.

Besides impediments to the faithful administration of justice arising from an improper use of the royal authority, ordeals which have been practiced from time immemorial consign the innocent and guilty to the same awful deaths. Though to enlightened minds they appear irrational and presumptuous, the Malagasy place implicit confidence in the rectitude of their decisions, and cases are not uncommon of persons voluntarily submitting to them to defend the honour of their name.

When it is remembered that almost all superstitious and half civilized nations have adopted and long retained the ordeal process, the veneration with which it is regarded in Madagascar will cease to astonish the reader, though he may still deeply lament the great enormities of which it is productive. The ordeals of fire and water—the hallowed morsel and the holy eucharist—the judgment of the cross and the trial of the bier, opened in Europe a wide field for malice, rapine and murder, and some of them were not abolished till the seventeenth century. The tests to which supposed witches were compelled to submit were used as late as the year 1728.

The ordeal held in the highest veneration and most frequently used in the Island of Madagascar is drinking the tangena. The tangena tree bears a nut believed to be a very powerful poison, but if taken in small doses operates as an emetic. It is administered in the following manner :

“ The accused having eaten as much rice as possible, swallows three pieces of the skin of a fowl killed for the purpose, each piece about the size of a dollar, and swallowed whole. The cursers now prepare the tangena, scraping a small quantity of the nut into some juice of banana, and repeating the mysterious talismanic words, *Tomadi mariko*. The virtue of the tangena is tried on two chickens before being given to the accused person. One of the chickens having been made to swallow it, the curser exclaims, *Hear, oh test, if thou art a perfect judge—if not false, if just and suitable kill this chicken*. The other having drunk it, he exclaims, *Hear, oh test, if thou art a suitable and righteous test, let this chicken live*. Should both die, the tangena is pronounced bad, as it does not give to the accused a fair chance of being found innocent ; or if both live, it is rejected as not having the virtue requisite to detect and convict the guilty. In either case other tangena must be provided. Should one die and one live, it is of course declared suitable and just. (It will be readily supposed that unequal quantities are given so as to secure the effect desired, however the pretence may be to give an equal portion to each.)

“ The accused is then seated on the floor in the middle of the house, —a hole dug opposite to him and a fish-basket placed in it. He must now drink the carefully prepared draught, on which hinges life or death. As soon as he has swallowed it, the *panozondoha*, or curser, placing his hand on the crown of the head of the accused, pronounces the imprecation or prayer which is sometimes uttered before the tangena is taken.—At the conclusion of the formula, rice-water is given in copious draughts, till a decision is made for life or death, by vomiting the three pieces of skin, or being found unable to do. This is the crisis,—this the circumstance which decides the character and fate of the poor sufferer. And for the ejection of the three pieces, they watch earnestly and carefully examine the contents of the fish-basket already named. If they are found, it is announced he is innocent, if otherwise, he is declared guilty, and in this case is to be struck and beaten with the rice pestle till dead, unless he has previously, as sometimes happens, died by the poisonous action of the tangena. The corpse is dragged away from the house, wrapped in some old matting, with the head placed southward. Sometimes the body is hastily buried, but frequently is merely dragged to a distance from the house or village and left for the dogs or birds of prey.

“To complete the iniquity of the whole, and fill up the measure of the sufferings of the accused, as well as to satisfy the avarice of the accuser, the property is all swept off even down to the rice-measure.”

The confiscated property falls to the sovereign, the judges and accusers. As the last have an interest in the conviction, it presents to the unprincipled a powerful temptation to accuse the rich who are innocent with the design of obtaining a part of their wealth, and it is to be feared, that by bribing the officers who administer the tangena to make it sufficiently strong, they too frequently accomplish their deadly purpose. It is estimated that in every year upwards of three thousand persons perish by this infernal ordeal process; all their families are reduced to extreme poverty and wretchedness, in which most of them continue till death puts a period to their misery.

The corrupt administration of law by ordeals and tyranny is not the only calamity which has befallen Madagascar. Domestic slavery has existed in the island from the earliest period of its history. The slaves are debtors, felons and captives; persons who may have incurred the displeasure of the monarch, and others driven by hunger to dispose of their liberty to avoid the horrors of starvation. Their wives and children are also reduced to bondage.

As with the exception of taking away life the master possesses unlimited authority, their sufferings may be mitigated or increased at his pleasure. Evident as it must be to every mind, it is scarcely necessary to state that so large a power over the destinies of the poor and helpless lodged in the hands of irresponsible, and often unprincipled men, leads to the commission of a thousand atrocities.

But it remained for Europeans to perfect this system of iniquity, or to use the sorrowful words of the children of bondage, white men with black hearts were the first that tore us from our kindred and home, and sold us for gold in foreign lands.

Soon after Vasco de Gama opened the highway from Europe to India, the isle of St. Mary's, which is situated off the north-east coast of Madagascar, was infested with pirates, who continued to carry on their depredations with increasing success till the year 1721, when several European nations alarmed at the great losses which their commerce had sustained, united to arrest them in their career of plunder and murder.

After a long and deperate resistance the vessels of the pirates were taken and destroyed by fire.

“Forced to give up” says Mr. Ellis, “their wandering and predatory life, they plunged into a different kind of villainy which has left upon

their memory a deeper stain. They carried into execution the murderous plan of fomenting wars between some of the provinces in which they had traded on the eastern coast of Madagascar, and inducing the victorious to sell their prisoners in exchange for arms and ammunition. Deceived by the artifices of the pirates, whom they never suspected of treachery, and whom they had long courted as friends, without knowing their real character and pursuits, the Malagasy became the victims of the most atrocious perfidy, and that, too, under the impression, that as the whites were a superior race of men, they could not materially err in following their advice. By wars of retaliation, the natives became scourges of one another, plunging each other into inextricable misery, wasting each other's resources, depopulating each other's territory, and affording satisfaction to none, but to men who were unworthy of the name, and whose rapacious avarice could be equalled only by their cruel contempt of human rights and human misery.

"The trade having commenced on the coast, and the pleasure of its gains gradually expelling all sense of the injustice of the traffic, it soon extended to the interior of the island, withering all before it, and desolating like a pestilence wherever its baneful influence spread.

"With the increased demand for slaves, the supply was consequently increased. Various modes were then employed to obtain slaves for sale, and all these were characterised by deceit, and treachery, violence and cruelty."

Though no data exist to establish the truth of the statement, there can be little doubt that annually several thousands were consigned to hopeless captivity, in which many of them, wasted away with hunger, flayed to the bone with the lash, and stricken to the heart with sorrows continually accumulating, soon sickened and died, and are now, it is to be hoped, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

The markets to which the slaves from Madagascar were conveyed for sale were the Isles of France and Bourbon; North and South America, and the West Indies.

The Mauritius which the English had taken four years previously, being confirmed to them by the peace of 1814, and the ministry of the day being anxious to carry out as far as possible their humane intentions respecting the abolition of slavery, sent an ambassador to Radama king of Madagascar to induce him to abolish the trade in his dominions.

The persons who greatly distinguished themselves by their praise-worthy labours to bring this system of iniquity to an end in that island were His Excellency Sir Robert Farquhar, Governor of Mauritius and Sir James Hastie, British agent to the court of Radama.

After encountering many difficulties, a treaty very expensive to England prohibiting the exportation of slaves from the island was concluded on the 11th of October, 1820. The way in which Sir James welcomed that auspicious day is highly creditable to his humanity and must be gratifying to the benevolent feelings of every kindred mind.

“The moment arrived when the welfare of millions was to be decided, I agreed, and I trust that Divine Power which guides all hearts, will induce the government to sanction the act. The Kabary was convened, the proclamation published and received with transport by thousands. The British flag was unfurled, and freedom—freedom from the bloody stain of slave-dealing—hailed as the gift of the British nation. I declare, said that noble-minded man, the first peal of Radama’s cannon announcing the amity sealed, rejoiced my heart more than the gift of thousands would have done.”

That the death of this generous-hearted man called forth the tears of a nation, and that now his name is cherished in fond and affectionate remembrance by all the Malagasy who have souls to appreciate what is great and good, will be readily admitted.

“Few monarchs have given a higher testimony of their regard for an individual than that conveyed in the language of Radama to the friends who were watching by the bedside of Sir James Hastie. I have, said he, lost many of my people, many of my soldiers, most of my officers, and several of the maroserana, or highest nobles; but this is nothing in comparison with the loss of Andrian\*-Asy. He has been a faithful friend, vady ny Madagascar, a husband to Madagascar. The good he has done cannot be too highly spoken of by me. He has surpassed every agent that preceded him; and never will any who may succeed him, prove his equal. Many may come here, but none will feel more interest in Madagascar than Andrian-Asy. Many may boast much, but none will do so much as he has done, nor endure the toils which he has endured. May God spare his valuable life to us.”

Such was this worthy representative of the British nation. Would to heaven that all who have filled similar situations had imitated his example, how much heart-rending agony would mankind have been spared, and how much less tremendously awful would be the scenes which have yet to be presented when oppressors of their kind and traffickers in human flesh will be summoned to judgment.

The first persons who visited Madagascar with the design of evangelizing it were Roman Catholic Missionaries. That pre-eminent piety and great talents, self-denial and the most laborious efforts to propagate a system believed to be founded on the principles of sacred truth, characterized Cavallero, Bareze and Xavier, Ricci, de Nobilibus and many others of the same community whose names might be mentioned, is confirmed by the impartial records of history. Father Stephen and his coadjutors who laboured for a period in the island of Madagascar, were as zealous as the most distinguished of their brethren. By their instrumentality many thousands of the natives renounced idolatry and were admitted into the church by the ordinance of baptism. The Mission was thus pro-

\* Andrian, nobleman, a title of respect and honor; and Hastie contracted into Asy.

ceeding, apparently attended with great success, and seemingly taking fast hold of the affections of the people, when by using physical force to accelerate the work of evangelization they involved the Europeans and the Malagasy in war. In the first battle the latter were victorious, and refusing all quarter only one European escaped from the field to tell of the defeat and slaughter of his companions in arms. The settlers at Fort Dauphin, enraged by the massacre of Father Stephen and his colleagues, and by the cruelty with which the soldiers had been slain who had espoused their cause, immediately prepared to take the field. After routing the armies of the chieftains, killing the sick and aged that had been unable to fly with their vanquished countrymen, sacking and burning to the ground every town and village to which they came, the want of provisions, at length, stopped the Christian victors in the perpetration of these wholesale murders, and necessitated them to return to Fort Dauphin.

Having thus desolated all the adjacent country and made the Malagasy their implacable enemies, and now finding their supplies cut off, they were compelled to break up their establishment, which terminated the papal Mission, never, it is to be hoped, to be revived, identifying as it has the name of Christianity with deeds of rapine and murder.

In the year 1818 Protestant Missionaries visited the island. They found, as might have been expected, that few of the persons who had been baptised manifested in their lives any of the important signs of conversion, and that most of them like the heathen were hostile to the new religion whose propagators had interfered with their civil rights and deluged the country with the blood of their kindred and friends.

Under these unfavorable auspices the agents of the London Society commenced their labours. Their conduct being such as to convince all who had intercourse with them that they were not different in name only, but also in character from those who had preceded them, they gradually gained the esteem and affection of the people.

In 1820 an account of the Society's Mission in the South Seas was drawn up and presented to Radama. Being highly gratified by the great improvements effected by the instrumentality of the Gospel in those islands, he immediately requested Mr. Jones to remove to the capital that his own subjects might enjoy the same eminent advantages.

In connexion with the Missionary operations commenced at the capital, a school was established for educating the Malagasy youths.

When the institution was opened the number of scholars

was small, but it soon so much increased as to render a larger building indispensable to afford suitable accommodation. Believing that a good education would raise the tone of morals and elevate the people in their social and civil relations so as to prepare them to fill with honour the spheres in which Divine Providence might call them to move, the government generously undertook to erect the school at the public expense.

In laying the foundation-stone the liberal-minded monarch, according to the usages of the country, sprinkled it with sacred water. As this ceremony had always been restricted to members of the royal family the natives were exceedingly astonished to see Radama performing it for a foreigner and a stranger.

But by thus giving a public testimony of his countenance and approbation, he wished to remove from their minds any prejudice which might exist, and induce them to send their children to be instructed. To facilitate the accomplishment of this praise-worthy object he sent the children of his own family and persuaded the nobility to do the same.

Under these auspices the work of education advanced in a manner so as to gratify the most sanguine expectations ; two additional schools were opened in the capital, which together with the other were, at the desire of the king, afterwards formed into one, designated the Missionary seminary, designed to furnish teachers and to be a model for all schools that might be formed in any part of his dominions. The desirableness and practicability of extending the benefits of education still more widely were soon apparent ; requests for the erection of schools in the adjacent districts were daily sent to the capital, but as the want of teachers rendered the Missionaries unable to meet the wishes of all, preference was given, according to the number of scholars promised.

In a short time a considerable number of young men from the central school in the capital being qualified for teachers, other towns and villages were favoured with the means of education. Radama continued to take the same deep interest in the work, and used all his influence to diffuse through his dominions the benefits of knowledge. He generally attended the examinations and took an active part in the business of the day. On one occasion—

“ The schools of the respective districts having been classed, so that it might be seen what districts had been most zealous in meeting the king’s wishes, he addressed the children in the following words. Do you tell your parents that by attending the schools and learning the lessons taught you, you not only give me and the white people pleasure, but do honour to yourselves and your parents. The knowledge you obtain is good—good for trade. By reading and writing, you will learn,

record, and preserve in remembrance what else would be forgotten, and to acquire the good dispositions which are taught, will render you good subjects; and this will be your greatest honour and glory. Now go home and tell your parents I am pleased with you. Fear God, and obey the king."

"Some of the teachers from each district replied to the king in language expressive of their attachment to him, and their determination to deserve his favour; after which, ten bullocks were given to them as a royal present, and the assembly broke up, well pleased with the transactions of the day."

On a similar occasion.

"The Missionaries, said he, in his address, have left their own country, their relations and their friends to come to you, and instruct you and your children; and in the discharge of this benevolent work some of them have fallen. There, pointing to the Missionary burial-ground, yonder is the spot where the bones of several of them are laid, far from the graves of their fathers; and this is a proof of what I have told you respecting them. Take care, therefore that the children attend properly. Those who are the most advanced may now leave the schools, but let them still attend on Sundays and at the monthly examinations, lest they should forget what they have learned. It may here be added that this plan was strictly enforced by Radama, with this condition, that if the dismissed scholars were found to have forgotten their former lessons they should re-enter the schools and again submit themselves to tuition."

Introduction of the mechanic arts, literature and science; improvements in agriculture and extension of commerce; infusing into all ranks of society a higher tone of morals, and leading men to respect and fulfil with virtue and honour the private and public relations of life, are some of the results of a well-conducted national education, and are always found of unspeakable importance to the prosperity, happiness and stability of a country.

But he who expects that all youths placed under instruction will immediately renounce idolatry and embrace the Christian faith, knows little of the deep-rooted hostility the human heart cherishes against the gospel, and will in all probability become wiser by a more enlarged acquaintance with himself and the rest of his species. Still he who believes that every well-directed effort for the religious improvement of the young may shed a benign influence on the future, if not on the present generation, which may produce effects of a highly gratifying nature and be a full compensation for all previous labour, has a faith supported by the authentic history of the church both in christian and heathen lands and supported by the word of inspiration itself.

The following instances of success in the island of Madagascar, to which others might be added did space allow, will serve to confirm the truth of the above statement.

"A school had been established by the Missionaries at the village of Ambohimamonbola, and amongst the scholars was the son of the idol's

guardian. The youth having learned that he alone was the true God who had created the heavens and the earth, plainly told his father that that was not God which was taken care of by others, but he who took care of all. The father was very angry, and asked his son if he did not know that Rakelemalaza was god? The boy declined urging the point till another opportunity offered. Meantime he found in his catechism the text. Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord; when he exclaimed, now I am both delighted and grieved: delighted to have found the word of the true God, grieved on account of my relatives. They are lovers of idols. He then begged his father's permission to quit the school: for why, said he, should I continue to learn what you do not believe. What do I not believe, asked the father. That, replied the youth, of which I have told you before; and which will not only do me good but you also. There are new heavens and a new earth for those who believe in God, with everlasting life, and garments shining like the sun, that never wax old."

"An impression was made upon the father's mind. He paused, encouraged the youth, and shortly afterwards resolved on relinquishing his charge of the idol. Pretending business at some distance, he therefore asked leave of absence, and remained beyond the stipulated time; for which a fine was imposed upon him, and another person chosen to supersede him in his office. Having obtained information of this, he returned home, paid his fine, and felt himself relieved in being free from his charge of keeping a god which he had learned could neither keep others nor himself."

"In the month of August, 1825, a prayer-meeting was instituted for the benefit of the Malagasy youths, in which it was agreed that the native language only should be used. It afforded much satisfaction to the missionaries to find some of the scholars not only willing to associate with them, in these exercises, but capable of engaging in prayer themselves, and with simplicity, fervour, and apparently feelings of true devotion, imploring the blessings of the true God on themselves and their countrymen."

Another department of the mission, the preaching of the gospel remains to be noticed.

It must be highly gratifying to the feelings of the Christian to know that the word which has been made the power of God to his own salvation has likewise subdued to its holy and enlightened sway men of every country, of every creed and of every shade of morals, and given them joy and peace in believing. The progress of a people from error to truth,—from idolatry to the service of the living God may have been slow, and for a long period imperceptible to those who laboured among them; still there has not yet been found a people on the face of the earth, from the time the fishermen of Galilee commenced their ministry to the present day, to whom the tidings of redemption, announced with simplicity and faithfulness, have not eventually been made the savour of life unto life to a few, if not unto many. The word of the Lord has not yet returned unto him void.

In the island of Madagascar the Missionaries' immediate labours for the spiritual benefit of the people were greatly

blessed. The places for divine worship both in the capital and provinces, were filled with attentive and serious hearers. Many who seemed to be impressed with the importance and necessity of personal religion frequently came to the houses of the Missionaries to be instructed more fully in the doctrines of the gospel. These individuals afforded satisfactory evidence of their piety and devotedness to the Saviour, by the purity and consistency of their lives, and the affectionate earnestness with which they tried to persuade their countrymen to renounce idolatry and to seek the blessings of salvation.

“On Sabbath, the 29th of May, 1831, twenty of the first converts to Christ in Madagascar were publicly baptized by Mr. Griffiths, in the Mission chapel, before a numerous, highly interested, and deeply affected audience. On the following sabbath, June 5th, eight individuals were baptized by Mr. Johns in the newly-erected chapel at Ambalonakonga.

“The following letter which was addressed to Mr. Johns will shew the views and feelings with which the Malagasy converts sought the privileges of Christian fellowship.

“May you, Sir, live long, and never be ill, saith your son R. This is what I have to say to you, viz. :—That I rejoiced much when I heard the word of the queen, (the permission to be baptized, &c.) so that the way is now free to receive baptism, and to commemorate the death of Christ. I am truly very glad to find there is nothing now to prevent or hinder any at all who has examined and tried himself: therefore, it is my wish to be a partaker of these. I devote myself both soul and body to Jesus, that I may serve him in all things, according to his will; and I pray to God, in this giving myself to Jesus to assist me by his Holy Spirit, that I may love Jesus with all my heart, with all my spirit, with all my strength, and that I may not be made to stand any longer in doubt by any thing whatsoever. Having thus given myself up to Jesus, both soul and body, I now ask permission of you to join the church, and unite in commemorating the death of Jesus; and that I also may join you to sing and praise, and to give glory to God as long as I shall live. And now, after this prayer for me unto God, that I may be assisted to fulfil what I have said, and serve Jesus faithfully all my days here on earth. I myself pray unto God to assist me by his Holy Spirit to fulfil my vows, that I may serve Jesus even until I die.”

After the formation of these two churches many individuals desirous of making a public profession of their faith in the Saviour solicited to be admitted into Christian fellowship. Special seasons were therefore appointed to hear their religion experience, and to point out with affectionate faithfulness the character and obligations of true disciples of the Redeemer. These meetings were attended by considerable numbers, some of whom were persons of high rank and of great influence in the government. In one year fifty additional converts who had given evidence of an entire change of heart by fruits of righteousness equally abundant and cheering, were received into one of the churches; while during the same period the other church was blessed with a similar degree of spiritual prosperity.

The following letter addressed by Messrs. Johns and Freeman to the Directors of the London Missionary Society, under date November 6th, 1834, gives a general view of the religious state of the country at that period.

"We have been exceedingly gratified with the personal conduct of many. There is a seriousness and steadiness, and perseverance and diligence about them, which constrains us to hope that their hearts have been opened by Him, by whose sovereign grace

' Dry bones are raised and clothed afresh  
And hearts of stone are turned to flesh.'

We look on with wonder and surprise, and are often prompted to exclaim, This is the finger of God. The difficulty still remains as intimated in our last report of ascertaining the numbers under religious impressions. The preached word is listened to attentively, and the Scriptures are earnestly sought, and delicately examined. There are also several prayer-meetings held in the town during the week-evenings. The two principal circumstances which we wish to notice in connection with these meetings are, first that a spirit of prayer actually exists and increases among the natives; and second, that these meetings are convened and conducted by the natives themselves. They frequently request our attendance, to give an exhortation, and lead the service; but the houses are their own residences, and they consider themselves as acting on their own convictions, at the movement of their own minds, and from a consideration of present obligation to employ the means in their power of spreading around their respective neighbourhoods the knowledge of the true God, and of eternal life.

It is not, however, exclusively in connection with the stations that fall immediately under our own personal observation, that a spirit of hearing and inquiring is awakened; God appears to manifest his purposes of mercy to this people, in raising up an agency of his own from among themselves, to carry on his own work. He is forming for himself his own instruments, giving them zeal and knowledge, imbuing them with love to the truth, and compassion for their countrymen, and thus supplying the exigencies of his cause by their unexpected instrumentality, and so compensating for our lack of service. And as a specific illustration of this point we may remark, that in a district to the west of the capital, at a village about sixty miles distant, a small chapel has been lately erected by the zeal and devotedness of the natives, chiefly excited, however, by the exertions of a pious woman.

A very delightful spirit of enquiry is awakened in that district; and several of the adult natives, men of rank and importance in their station, conduct prayer-meetings, and engage themselves in those exercises with much apparent fervour, pleasure, and propriety. Another chapel is also being erected in a district to the south, perhaps 120 miles distant. Public worship, chiefly for prayer and reading the Scriptures, is held in many distant parts of the country, principally raised and conducted by those who were formerly scholars or teachers in the missionary schools. Applications from all these for books, and especially for the scriptures are very numerous."

General education and the mechanic arts, civilization and Christianity were thus rapidly advancing the temporal and spiritual well-being of the nation, when persecution interfered with the rights of conscience and formed the infernal, but vain purpose of extirpating the religion of Jesus. Radama,

the late lamented monarch, whose death occurred in the month of July, 1828, took great interest in the diffusion of secular and sacred knowledge, and embraced every opportunity to encourage the Missionaries in their praise-worthy labours. Ranavolona his successor, likewise publicly guaranteed religious liberty, and expressed before assembled thousands her unqualified approbation of all measures to promote the welfare of the country which had received the sanction of the king, her predecessor; but scarcely had she ascended the throne before the royal promise was broken, and deep-rooted hostility manifested against the gospel.

The reasons which have induced other rulers to oppose the Christian faith were perhaps the identical ones that dictated the policy of the Queen. Ignorance and superstition which have upheld tyranny in every age were rapidly decreasing in every part of the island; while the gospel which defines the rights of beggar and prince, and supports both with the same divine authority—which raises up in every country, men like Peter and John who refuse with immoveable firmness to obey commands of earthly sovereigns which contravene the laws of God, was taking fast hold of the minds and affections of the people both in the capital and provinces. It was consequently apparent to this arch-oppressor, that if Christianity continued to spread tyranny must eventually die. She therefore chose the line of policy adopted by Nero and Caligula. To this may be added, that Ranavolona no longer sustained the character of Cæsar's wife, and might regard the chastity of the Christian females as a reflection upon her own morals.

Influenced by these or other reasons she commenced the dreadful work. In the early part of his reign Radama passed an act prohibiting the use of wine and spirituous liquors. Though it had never been thought to have reference to Europeans and was not universally observed by the natives, it still remained the law of the land; and resolving to embarrass the Christians she commanded them to use water instead of wine at the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

Being after many endeavours unable to induce the Queen to exempt them, in the enjoyment of their religious privileges, from the operation of this act, the communicants deemed it their duty to comply with her wishes. While yielding thus to arbitrary power which interfered with the institutions of heaven cannot be commended, every person of correct sensibility will sympathize with the afflicted pastor and flock, though he may question the propriety of the course they pursued on this trying occasion.

No sooner was this law enforced than an order was issued prohibiting all belonging to the army and educated in the Government schools from receiving the rite of baptism, or being admitted into Christian fellowship, and commanding those of these two classes who had already joined the church to refrain in future from partaking of the sacramental elements. By the close of the year, excepting Europeans, this order was extended to all persons in the Malagasy dominions. Shortly afterwards an edict was published forbidding masters to allow their slaves to learn to read or to write on pain of the slave being visited with the severest punishment, and the master himself being reduced to slavery.

About the same period a law was passed, prohibiting the people from attending divine worship, keeping the Sabbath, reading the scriptures and from even thinking of religious subjects. It was declared that the transgression of this law would be punished by the death of the offenders, the confiscation of their property, and if married, the slavery of their wives and children. They were likewise commanded to accuse themselves and to give up all religious books in their possession, and were fined and degraded in rank according to the extent they had followed the instructions of the Missionaries.

“Among others, a distinguished Christian female, Rafaravavy, was in great danger of losing her life. An accusation was laid against her before the government by some of her slaves, of her having observed the Sabbath, retained and read a copy of the scriptures, and conversed with some of her companions on religious subjects. These were the crimes laid to her charge. She denied not, but confessed the truth of the accusation. In daily prospect of death, she then remarked to a beloved friend, to whom she was accustomed amidst mutual tears to pour out the feelings of her heart, that as to her life, she felt indifferent; that, if her blood were to be shed on the land, she trusted it might be the means of kindling such a feeling of interest in Madagascar as should never be extinguished. Did not the Saviour forewarn us, said she, that we should incur the hatred of all men for his sake? The Son of God has died in our stead, and that will shortly redeem us from all our sufferings. I know in whom I have believed; and though my blood be shed, the word of God must prosper in this country. She added, with great feeling, Pray for me, that if it be the Lord's will I should suffer now, that he would take my soul to himself; but that, if I am spared, I may live more than ever to his glory. Nothing grieved her, she remarked, so much as the spiritual state of those around her; and the immediate prospect of martyrdom itself appeared less painful to her than seeing all her connexions living in wickedness.

“The queen did not, at that time, think fit to inflict on her the punishment of death. She was condemned to pay a fine, equivalent to half the amount of her estimated value, if sold into slavery, and was severely threatened, and warned that though her life was spared, she should be taught a lesson not to trifle with the edict of the queen. Scarcely could a more striking example of Christian forgiveness and meekness be found in all the records of the church, than she displayed on this trying occasion

towards her accusers. She sought Divine mercy on their behalf, earnestly admonished them, affectionately prayed with them, sought to lead them to repentance, and endeavoured to direct them to the Saviour."

The christians now met in places of concealment, in their own houses, and on the Sabbath in caverns among the rocks, in the recesses of forests, and on the summits of mountains. In these meetings they enjoyed much of the divine presence, and delightful fellowship with each other. Though strictly watched, no infringement of the unjust edict of the Queen was discovered till the last Sabbath in the month of July or the first in August. They were then seen engaged in reading the Scriptures and in social worship, on the summit of a mountain, at a short distance from the capital.

"The premises of the suspected parties were searched, for the purpose of finding ground of accusation against them, and a box of books, namely, copies of the scriptures and other Christian publications, that had been given by the Missionaries, being found buried near the house of that eminent Christian Rasalama, she was apprehended and imprisoned; her house, her entire property, was given up to plunder, her person secured, and her hands and feet loaded with heavy iron rings. She was menaced in vain during a period from eight to ten days, to induce her to impeach her companions. She remained firm, and perfectly composed; and was put to death by spearing on the 14th of August, 1837.

"She was wonderfully supported to the last moment of her life. No feature in her Christian character appears to have been more distinctly manifested than her steadfastness and fidelity even to the death. Although the queen forbade her, she did pray, even when in irons; and continued to preach Christ to the officers and to the crowd that followed her for nearly three-quarters of a mile, from the place of public condemnation to the place of common execution. Here she continued to pray and exhort all around her to believe in Jesus Christ, even till the executioner's spear, thrust through her body, deprived her of the power of utterance.

"Never in the annals of the church did a Christian martyr suffer from motives more pure, simple, and unmixed with earthly alloy. She had never heard of any after glory of martyrdom on earth. No external splendour had been cast around the subject in her mind, by reading any lives of martyrs. All was to her obloquy and contempt. If the blood of the martyrs be the seed of the Church, we may trust Rasalama will not have died in vain. She died directly and exclusively in defence of the Gospel.

"Fifteen others have been apprehended, and condemned to the utter and final loss of liberty, never to be redeemed by their friends; and with the further stipulation that, if transferred to other masters, it shall be on the condition of their being compelled to labour from morning to night, to the utmost limit of their strength. Their property has also been confiscated; of those who were married, their wives and children, whether professing Christianity or not, have also been reduced to slavery, but with the mitigating circumstance of permission to be redeemed. The total number thus affected is said to amount to nearly one hundred."

The last accounts brought intelligence of another female having been crucified, and considerable numbers having had accusations preferred against them. Though the state of Ma-

Madagascar is exceedingly distressing, it does not justify feelings of despondency, but leaves encouragement for the exercise of hope. The Christian religion is imperishable: it has stood with the unyielding firmness of a rock the attacks of Porphyry and Julian, and of other legions of foes that have followed in the train of these distinguished adversaries. Tyrants and persecutors, hypocrites within and avowed enemies without, though arrayed against it like so many fiends, have been unable to destroy it. In vain therefore do the kings of the earth set themselves, and rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed. Truth must prevail and Madagascar be a portion of the Saviour's spiritual dominions; he must have given unto him the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; for sooner shall the heavens pass away than the declarations of Jehovah fail. Should man, as the Moravian Greenland Missionaries said, ever lose his road, let him never lose his faith in God.

If, however, a people ever required the sympathies and prayers of the church the brethren and sisters in Madagascar at present especially need them.

Deprived of their pastors whom government has compelled to leave the country, they are left as sheep without a shepherd a prey to the devouring wolf. Yet enlightened and sanctified by divine grace they stand forth as witnesses of Jesus not knowing what may befall them. May their faith fail not, and grace be given them commensurate to the necessities of their day.

SCRUTATOR.

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## **Missionary and Religious Intelligence.**

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### **I.—MISSIONARY AND ECCLESIASTICAL MOVEMENTS.**

During the last month the following Ministers and Missionaries have left for Europe. The Rev. W. O. Ruspini; Rev. A. Garstin, Mrs. Garstin and children; Rev. W. Buyers, Mrs. Buyers and family; Rev. R. Bayne, Mrs. Bayne and family.—The Rev. Messrs. Robertson and Bateman, formerly chaplains on this establishment, have retired from the service.—We regret to announce the death of Mrs. Thomas, the wife of the Rev. J. Thomas, of the Baptist Mission in this city; she died on the morning of the 23rd ult. after a few days' illness. Her end was peace. May the Lord sustain our Baptist friends under these quickly successive bereavements.—We are confident many of our friends will rejoice to hear of the complete restoration to health of our excellent friend Mrs. Lyons, formerly of Banâras; through God's mercy she is quite restored.—We are happy to learn that the American Freewill Baptist Mission in Orissa,

has been strengthened by the arrival of the Rev. P. Bachelor and wife ; together with Miss Cummings, who is designed for native female education. May they be long spared to live and labor in this dark region.

### 2.—NEW PERIODICALS.

The last few weeks have been singularly prolific in prospectuses for new periodicals, both in this and the neighbouring presidencies. In Calcutta the *Indian Mirror*, to be conducted by East Indian youth, for their especial advantage. The *Weekly Intelligencer*, the property of a native and to be edited by a barrister of the Supreme Court, with what special object we know not : and one or two others which we anticipate will never see the light. At Madras the *Native Interpreter* ; and at Bombay the *Native's Friend*. All except the *Intelligencer* have appeared. The *Indian Mirror* is much of the same school as the *Embryo*. The Editor should eschew personality and writing nonsense in the form of gallantry about the fair sex. Verses on filled neckerchiefs, by the application of Eau de Cologne, and stories like the Forlorn Maid, can have no tendency to elevate and improve the mind. They are too much in the Castle of Otranto style—which it is by no means desirable to revive. Let the Editor, who craves lenity, seek to instruct ; other efforts must fail. The Madras periodical we have not seen. The Bombay *Native's Friend* is under the management of Dr. Wilson, which is a sufficient guarantee for its respectability and usefulness. Surely we have now in our *Hurkarus, Englishmen, Couriers, Stars, Telescopes, Mirrors, Observers, Intelligencers, Friends, Interpreters, Advocates* and the like, an ample means for satisfying the cravings of every class of the community. Our wish in fact is from the many stars, &c. one bright sun might be formed—one compendious weekly or bi-weekly paper in which the talents of the whole might be combined. This is a desideratum yet in our *periodical* literature.

### 3.—RE-OPENING OF THE BAPTIST CHAPEL.

The Circular Road Baptist Chapel was re-opened for Divine worship on Sabbath the 13th of September. The service in the morning was conducted by the Rev. J. Macdonald, and that in the evening by the Rev. W. Yates. The Chapel has been materially enlarged and improved. May the Lord make it the birth-place of many souls.

### 4.—ANNIVERSARY OF LA MARTINIÈRE.

The Annual Sermon connected with this Institution was preached before the governors, friends and pupils of the Institution on Tuesday the 15th ult. by the Rev. J. Charles, D. D. The subject, The fear of the Lord essential to the happiness of youth. The sermon was one of Dr. Charles' best efforts and well calculated, under the Divine blessing, to produce the most salutary effects. After Divine Service the pupils were regaled and the prizes awarded. Sir Edward Ryan addressed the young people in a brief but appropriate speech. The memory of the founder was pledged in flowing bowls, and the party separated highly delighted with the engagements of the morning.

### 5.—NEW WORKS IN BENGALI.

Since our last two new works, translations, have issued from the press—the one a translation of *Marshman's History of India*, and the other *Pleasing Stories*, being translations from the popular tales of the Persian

into Bengali, by Mr. G. Galloway. Both the works are highly creditable to the authors, and we trust they will have a wide circulation. Hope begins to dawn upon the prospects of the masses in India; for not only will they be taught to read, but they will be provided with something to read worthy of their attention. May such works be speedily multiplied.

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#### 6.—THE TELESCOPE.

The second number of the *Telescope* has made its appearance. It is not inferior to the first; but the Editor will do well to add a little of somewhat lighter though not less instructive matter. We are truly happy to witness the good feeling with which the appearance of our new brother has been hailed by the almost universal press. The circulation of the first number we are happy to say has exceeded the impression.

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#### 7.—THE CEYLON MAGAZINE.

A new periodical has been started at Ceylon under the superintendance of several of the literati of the spicy island. The first number indicates the promise of much choice and instructive matter. It is to be devoted to religious, scientific and literary subjects. We cordially recommend it to all our readers as a miscellany every way worthy of their patronage.

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#### 8.—THE CATHOLIC INSTITUTE.

A new and anomalous Society has been formed in this city during the last few days by the Romanists. It is called the *Catholic Institute* and is under *lay* direction. The object of the Society is the defence of popery and papists from *persecuting Protestants*. The establishment of the Institute has given rise to a good deal of angry discussion amongst the Romanists. The authority of the Vicar Apostolic has been denied by the laity, the clergy are divided and condemning each other, the whole giving striking evidence of the disunion of the infallibly united Church. The dispute is not only between the Vicar Apostolic and a portion of the laity, but with the Jesuits of St. Xavier's.

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#### 9.—THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The Rev. Mr. Vors, Secretary to the Church Missionary Society, at a meeting of the clergy in Dublin, stated that the laity would have no further management in the affairs ecclesiastical of the Society, and that the Committee had determined to discontinue the employment of Lutheran Missionaries and catechists, both of which have merely been employed from necessity in the less favored days of the Church. At the same time he stated that the Lutherans had been signally blessed by God, and that the decision would not affect present incumbents. Mr. Vors further stated that the Church of England in her whole capacity was not and could not be Missionary, inasmuch as the decisions of one diocese had not been and could not be binding on another.

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#### 10.—THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

The Church of Scotland possesses not a few spirits who have not defiled their garments, but who stand erect for Christ and his truth. The last decision of the Assembly was, that it was deemed desirable to petition against Lord Aberdeen's panacea for all the ills of the Church, which amounts to its rejection by the majority should it pass. We rejoice to

find amidst the almost general wreck of religious principle in this age of concession, that there are to be found men who will be no parties to the building up of a temple composed of the hay and stubble of the world, instead of the fine gold of the temple alone. May God in his mercy uphold his servants in their fidelity. Since the above was penned we learn that Lord Aberdeen has withdrawn his bill owing to the opposition it was likely to excite.

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#### 11.—REVIEW OF THE COOLY REPORT.

We are obliged to defer the continuation of the Review of the Cooly Report in the present number owing to the length to which it will necessarily extend and the press of other matter. We hope to place the whole before our readers either in our next, or in an extra intermediate number.

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#### 12.—THE CATHEDRAL AND THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

The Court of Directors have authorized the Governor General in Council to make over to the Bishop one lakh and a half of rupees, on the ground that the building be erected, owing to the need of church room in Calcutta.

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#### 13.—NEW WORK ON INDIA.

A new work has arrived in this country, entitled *Letters on India, &c.* by the Rev. W. Buyers, Banáras. We have had no time as yet to peruse the work. From a glance at the contents it appears to treat briefly on all the subjects which have occupied the attention of the Church in India. Like our periodicals, works on India appear to be thickening upon us. India will no longer be a *terra incognita* to the English people.

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#### 14.—THE DU'RGA' PU'JA'.

The horrible festivities connected with this libidinous pújá are close at hand. We notice them simply to refresh the memories of our Christian readers that any attendance on the náches is a positive sanction of all the abominations connected with the pújá, and we entreat them to let neither curiosity nor love of the marvellous, nor the wily or cringing solicitation of wealthy bábus seduce them from the path of Christian integrity and rectitude; but rather let them hear the voice of Him who hath said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Since this was in type we have received a letter on the subject from "A Stranger," which will be found in another page.

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#### 15.—RADDI'-I'-TA'LIM ZARTHUSHT.

Our readers will observe, under the head of the Native's Friend, a notice of the Tálim-i-Zarthusht, lately published by a Mobei, under the auspices of the Pársí Panchayat. Dr. Wilson proposes immediately to commence a reply; and it is hoped that the arrangements for its publication both in English and Gujaráthí will be intimated in our next number.—*Bombay Christian Spectator*.

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#### 16.—CHURCH AND MISSION ON MAHA'BALESIWAR.

From a very interesting sketch of Mahábaleshwar from the pen of Miss Emma Roberts, and published in a late number of the United Service Gazette, we extract the following notice.

“ The building of a Church on these wild hills is the more important, since Mahābaleshwar has long been a stronghold of superstition, the temples in the neighbouring village bearing the name, attracting numerous pilgrims, while the rivers that have their sources in the rocky cliffs, are esteemed peculiarly sacred. A sanguine mind cannot, without the greatest difficulty, repress the hope, that the example afforded by the Christian community at Malcolm Pett, the charities that they bestow, and the lucrative employment they afford to numerous labourers will exert a salutary influence over the minds of the people, gradually weaning them from those debasing superstitions which at present so effectually prevent all improvement in their moral, as well as their spiritual condition. In aid of this good cause there is a small missionary establishment at Malcolm Pett, which cannot be spoken of in terms of too high encomium. The Rev. Mr. Graves, and his wife, who belong to the Mahratta American Mission, established in Bombay, have won for themselves the respect and esteem of every branch of the community. Tolerant, hopeful, zealous, and untiring, despite of many disappointments and hindrances, they continue with unabating assiduity their labour of love, deeply regretting, yet never sinking under the adverse circumstances which retard their progress. Notwithstanding the slender nature of the pecuniary resources at her command, Mrs. Graves has rather a considerable school under her immediate superintendance, composed of the children of poor people belonging to the neighbouring villages whom she boards and educates. Many and severe are her trials, for even her activity and ceaseless care, cannot always prevent the influence of bad example from exercising an injurious effect upon young minds. Frequently she finds that her tasks must commence anew, that there is a danger, when removed from her eye, of her pupils relapsing into idolatry, or of contracting habits at variance with the precepts which she has inculcated. Nevertheless, though distressed, she is not disheartened, patiently persevering in defiance of every difficulty, and rejoicing over every circumstance which promises to render her exertions for the welfare of others ultimately successful. Mr. Graves, though suffering from failing health, is equally energetic and unwearied in the cause. He is to be seen in the bazar talking mildly to the people, and distributing translations of the Scriptures. He attends the jail, visits the poor, and expounds the principles of the Christian religion at his own house, to those who are inclined to listen to him. He often collects a congregation amounting to forty persons, trusting that the seed thus sown will in time produce fruit, and that if now afraid to reckon too confidently upon many conversions, he may feel assured that those who have openly embraced the Christian religion, are true disciples.”—*Ibid.*

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#### 17.—LETTER FROM GREECE.

The following letter will be interesting to those of our readers who feel an interest in the religious welfare of Greece.

The Rev. Dr. King, in a letter to a friend in this city, dated Athens, July 10, 1839, gives the following interesting information.—*N. Y. Obs.*

“ I have the pleasure now to inform you, that last Sunday, for the first time, I had divine service in my new school house and chapel, and that I had upwards of *seventy* hearers, all Greeks, except the Rev. Mr. Benjamin, and two members of my own family. The large upper room, in which I had my service, though very plain and simple, is considered very beautiful. Into the court of the house I have opened a large gate, which I call the ‘beautiful gate,’ and over which I had placed, the 4th of July, the marble which I had placed just seven years previous over the gate of

the place where I then intended to build my school house, and on which is inscribed in Greek, PHILADELPHIA, (Brotherly love.)

It so happened in 1832 that the marble was put up over the gate, the 4th of July, and it so happened now, that the gate of the court of this building, was finished on the 4th of July, the same day, and I believe the same hour of the day—and just seven years from the time of its having been put up over the other gate. So that I may say it has been as long in building as Solomon's Temple was, and you know I said to you, in a letter some months since, that it would be about so long, though I did not think that it would then take so long to finish it as it has.

I did not employ many workmen at the same time, because they could not work to advantage, and I wished to expend the fund in an economical a manner as possible. I do not know precisely how much I have spent in finishing the building, but I know, that I have spent considerably more than the one thousand dollars which you sent me—probably *one hundred and fifty* more. It is a great joy to me to have such a place for public worship, and in all probability, many more will attend than would have attended in my own private house.

During the last six months, I have sold and distributed gratis, upwards of *twenty-seven thousand* copies of the Scriptures, school books and religious tracts; more, I believe, than I have ever before distributed in the same space of time, since I came to Greece. *Barter's Saints' Rest* is now printing in Modern Greek, and will, I trust, be finished this month. It is about two-thirds printed. A wide door is opened here for printing the tracts and books of the American Tract Society, and I hope you will give us *large* means.

There are now several of your authorized books and tracts which ought to be reprinted in Modern Greek, but which we cannot think of doing unless you give us aid. I might mention the *Mother at Home*, *Rewards of Drunkenness*, *Scripture Histories*, *Little Ann*, *Ten Commandments*, &c., of which we need to print at least five thousand copies of each. Books, you see, are called for. *Twenty-seven thousand* copies in six months is no small matter, and the depôt must be replenished, or it will soon be empty. We have a very good mill, and plenty of grain; but the wheels will not turn without water: and I am waiting for you to hoist the gate and give us a good stream, so that many hungry, starving souls may be fed with the bread of life.

With best regards to Mrs. H. I remain, as ever,

Yours truly,  
JONAS KING.

#### 18.—OBLIGATION TO PREACH TO THE HEATHEN.

Our speculations regarding the final destiny of the heathen ought never to influence our conduct towards them, in any way tending to render us less zealous for their salvation. Were we even sure that they would occupy thrones in heaven, or pass, by an imperceptible transition, from a state of consciousness into the calmest sleep of oblivion, it would be just as much our duty to labour for their conversion as of those who see in every pagan the subject of an inevitable condemnation. The recognition of the moral righteousness of God, exalted, as it is, by the atonement of the cross, by a Christian catechumen in a pagan country, one prayer of faith offered to the Supreme Being, through the merits of Christ, by such an individual, is of infinitely more value than all our theories as to the final destiny of those who live and die in involuntary ignorance; as practical charity transcends subtle and ingenious speculation.—STEELE.