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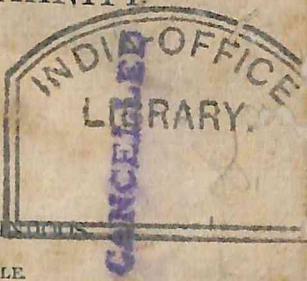
LETTERS

ON

THE STATE OF CHRISTIANITY

IN

INDIA;



IN WHICH

THE CONVERSION OF THE HINDOOS

IS CONSIDERED AS IMPRACTICABLE

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A VINDICATION OF THE HINDOOS,

MALE AND FEMALE,

IN ANSWER TO A SEVERE ATTACK MADE UPON BOTH BY

THE REVEREND *****

By THE ABBÉ J. A. DUBOIS,

MISSIONARY IN MYSORE,

AUTHOR OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA.

2008
Cujus vult miseretur, et cuius vult indurat. Rom. ix. 18.

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TO

THE HONOURABLE

THE COURT OF DIRECTORS,

AS A MARK OF HIS GRATITUDE,

AND AS A TESTIMONY OF HIS MOST SINCERE WISHES

FOR THE TEMPORAL WELFARE OF THEIR

HINDOO SUBJECTS,

AFTER HAVING VAINLY ENDEAVOURED TO PROMOTE

THEIR SPIRITUAL INTERESTS,

DURING A LONG RESIDENCE OF THIRTY-TWO YEARS

AMONG THEM, AS A RELIGIOUS TEACHER,

THESE LETTERS

ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THEIR MOST OBEDIENT

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

THESE Letters were written at several periods, to friends who had asked the Author's opinion on the subjects therein discussed. Two of them, the second and third, were addressed to a dignitary of the established church, a learned and liberal-minded gentleman, who, so far from taking offence at the candour and freedom with which the Author expresses his sentiments, was pleased to return him his unqualified thanks for the same. The others were addressed to friends, who appeared equally satisfied at the independent, candid, and impartial manner in which the subject was treated, and who encouraged him to have the whole published for the information of the Public, among whom much misapprehension prevailed, chiefly occasioned by many erroneous statements, published of late years at home, by many well-intentioned authors, who, misled by too warm a zeal, and mistaking their own religious creed as the common



standard which should rule all the human race, and knowing nothing, or very little of the invincible attachment of the people of India to their religion and customs, expected to be able to overcome the insurmountable religious prejudices of the Hindoos, and bring them at once to their own faith.

The Author has endeavoured to state (as well as his very imperfect acquaintance with the English language has enabled him to do) with freedom, candour, and simplicity, the desperateness of such an attempt. His notions on the subject are derived from an experience of thirty-two years of confidential and quite unrestrained intercourse among the natives of India, of all castes, religions, and ranks; during which, in order to win their confidence, and remove suspicion, as far as possible, he has constantly lived like them, embracing their manners, customs, and most of their prejudices, in his dress, his diet, their rules of civility, and good-breeding, and their mode of intercourse in the world. But the restraints under which he has lived during so long a period of his life, have proved of no advantage to him in promoting the sacred



cause in which he was engaged as a religious teacher. During that time he has vainly, in his exertions to promote the cause of Christianity, watered the soil of India with his sweats, and many times with his tears, at the sight of the quite insurmountable obduracy of the people he had to deal with; ready to water it with his blood, if his doing so had been able to overcome the invincible resistance he had to encounter every where, in his endeavours to disseminate some gleams of the evangelical light. Every where the seeds sown by him have fallen upon a naked rock, and have instantly dried away.

At length, entirely disgusted at the total inutility of his pursuits, and warned by his grey hair that it was full time to think of his own concerns, he has returned to Europe, to pass in retirement the few days he may still have to live, and get ready to give in his accounts to his Redeemer.

These Letters are now brought without pretensions before the public, whose indulgence the Author solicits, chiefly in what may appear deficient in point of style. What he states is not from hearsay, it is the result of a long and attentive experience; and he



will feel himself sufficiently rewarded for his troubles, if his candid and unaffected statements can prove of any utility to a liberal and indulgent Public.

LONDON, *June* 19. 1823.



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LETTER I.

To W. J. Esq. — *Mysore.*

My dear Sir,

SOME time ago, when conversing with you on the subject of proselytism in India, which seems of late to have considerably attracted the attention of the public in England, and to have given rise to much discussion among enlightened persons, you appeared astonished at the freedom of my opinions; and in order to justify them, I promised you a further statement of my sentiments in writing. I will now endeavour to fulfil my engagements, if not with ability at least with fairness and candour.

The question to be considered may be reduced to these two points: First, Is there a possibility of making real converts to Christianity among the natives in India? Secondly, Are the means employed for that purpose, and above all, the translation of the Holy Scrip-



tures into the idioms of the country, likely to conduce to this desirable object?

To both interrogatories I will answer in the negative: it is my decided opinion, first, that under existing circumstances there is no human possibility of converting the Hindoos, to any sect of christianity, and, secondly, that the translation of the Holy Scriptures circulated among them, so far from conducing to this end, will, on the contrary, increase the prejudices of the natives against the christian religion, and prove in many respects detrimental to it. These assertions, coming from a person of my profession, may to many appear bold and extraordinary; I will therefore support them by such arguments and proofs as a long experience and practice in the career of proselytism have enabled me to adduce.

Before I go farther, it will not be amiss to say a few words about the manner in which the christian religion was first brought into the country; and on the industry with which its interests were managed by the first preachers.

The christian religion of the catholic persuasion was introduced into India a little more than three hundred years ago; at the epoch of the Portuguese invasions. One of the first missionaries was the famous St. Francis Xavier, a Spanish jesuit of the greatest merit, and ani-



mated with a truly apostolical zeal, and still known under the appellation of the *Apostle of India*. He traversed several provinces of India, and is said to have made many thousand converts, at a period when the prejudices of the natives against the christian religion were far from reaching the height they have since attained. The cast of fishermen at Cape Comorin, who are all christians, still pride themselves in being the offspring of the first proselytes made by that apostle.

Xavier soon discovered in the manners and prejudices of the natives an insurmountable bar to the progress of christianity among them, as appears from the printed letters still extant, which he wrote to St. Ignatius de Loyola, his superior, and the founder of the order of the jesuits.

At last Francis Xavier, entirely disheartened by the invincible obstacles he every where met in his apostolic career, and by the apparent impossibility of making real converts, left the country in disgust, after a stay in it of only two or three years; and he embarked for Japan, where his spiritual labours were crowned with far greater success, and laid the foundation of those once numerous and flourishing congregations of Japanese christians,



who, within a period of less than a century, amounted to more than a million of souls. At this time their daily-increasing numbers threatening to supplant the religion of the country, awakened the jealousy and alarm of the Bonzes and other directors of the popular faith, and gave rise to one of the severest persecutions ever recorded in the annals of christianity, and which ended in the total extermination of the christians. After an interval of nearly two hundred years, this spirit of intolerance and persecution is still continued, as appears from the conduct observed to this day by the Japanese government towards the Europeans trading to their shores, and from some other circumstances.

The disappointment and want of success of Xavier ought to have been sufficient to damp the most fervent zeal of the persons disposed to enter the same career. When a man of his temper, talents, and virtues, had been baffled in all his endeavours to introduce christianity into India, his successors could scarcely flatter themselves with the hope of being more fortunate. However, this was not the case. His jesuit brethren in Europe were not to be deterred by difficulties or contradictions in undertaking, where the cause of religion was at stake. In consequence, jesuits



were sent from every catholic country to India, to forward the interests of the gospel.

By degrees those missionaries introduced themselves into the inland country. They saw that in order to fix the attention of these people, gain their confidence, and get a hearing, it was indispensably necessary to respect their prejudices, and even to conform to their dress, their manner of living, and forms of society; in short, scrupulously to adopt the costumes and practices of the country.

With this persuasion, they at their first outset announced themselves as European Brahmins come from a distance of five thousand leagues from the western parts of the *Djamboody*, for the double purpose of imparting and receiving knowledge from their brother Brahmins in India. Almost all these first missionaries were more or less acquainted with astronomy or medicine; the two sciences best calculated to ingratiate them with the natives of every description.

After announcing themselves as Brahmins, they made it their study to imitate that tribe: they put on a Hindoo dress of cavy, or yellow colour, the same as that used by the Indian religious teachers and penitents; they made frequent ablutions; whenever they showed themselves in public they applied to their fore-



head paste, made of sandal wood, as used by the Brahmins. They scrupulously abstained from every kind of animal food, as well as from intoxicating liquors, entirely faring like Brahmins on vegetables and milk; in a word, after the example of St. Paul (1 *Cor.* ix. 20. 21.) “Unto the Jews, they became as Jews, that they might gain the Jews; to them that were without law, as without law. They were made all things to all men, that they might by all means save some.” It was by such a life of almost incredible privations and restraints, that they insinuated themselves among these people.

Fully aware of the unalterable attachment of the natives to their own usages and practices, they made it their principal study not to hurt their feelings, by attacking all at once the superstitions with which most of their customs are infested: they judged it more prudent at the beginning to overlook many of them, and wait for a more favourable time, to put the converts right on the subject. Their colour, their talents, their virtues, above all, their perfect disinterestedness, rendered them acceptable even to the Hindoo princes, who, astonished at the novelty and singularity of the circumstance, bestowed their protection on these extraordinary men, and gave them



full freedom to preach their religion, and make proselytes to it.

The jesuits began their work under these favourable auspices, and made a great number of converts among all castes of Hindoos, in those countries where they were allowed the free exercise of their religious functions. It appears from authentic lists, made up about seventy years ago, which I have seen, that the number of native christians in these countries was as follows, viz. in the Marawa about 30,000, in the Madura above 100,000, in the Carnatic 80,000, in Mysore 35,000. At the present time hardly a third of this number is to be found in these districts respectively. I have heard that the number of converts was still much more considerable on the other coast, from Goa to Cape Comorin; but of these I never saw authentic lists.

Things were carrying on in this promising manner by the jesuit missionaries, when severe complaints were preferred against them from several parts to the Holy See at Rome. The accusers were chiefly friars of other religious orders, settled at Goa and Pondicherry, who accused the Jesuits of the most culpable indulgence, in tolerating and winking at all kinds of idolatrous superstitions among their proselytes, and with having themselves rather



become converts to the idolatrous worship of the Hindoo, by conforming to many of their practices and superstitions, than making Indians converts to the christian religion.

The charges had some degree of foundation, though not to the extent set forth by the accusers, whose representations seem on the whole to have proceeded rather from motives of envy and jealousy against the jesuits, than from a true disinterested zeal for the cause of religion.

Those often-repeated accusations gave rise to a long and warm correspondence between the parties concerned, in which the jesuits, in giving an account of their conduct to the Holy See, did not conceal that, from motives of prudence, and not to risk the revolt of the converts, and prejudice the pagans more and more against the new religion, they had been under the very unpleasant necessity of overlooking many reprehensible practices, waiting for fitter circumstances to suppress them gradually. At the same time they exposed the dangers which could not fail to ensue, if the feelings of the Hindoos were all at once hurt on this extremely delicate point, and the practices justly complained of, openly opposed and reprobated, before the christian religion had gained a solid footing in the country.



They endeavoured to give weight to their assertions, and excuse their conduct, by the example of the apostles themselves, who at the beginning of their apostolic career judged it prudent from regard to the prejudices of the Jews, and in order to encourage their conversion, to tolerate *circumcision* among them, as well as their abstaining from blood, and from strangled things, and the observance of many other judaical customs.

All these and many other like reasons appeared to the Holy See futile and merely evasive; and the jesuits were peremptorily ordered to preach the catholic religion in all its purity, and altogether suppress the superstitious practices, till then tolerated among the Neophites.

The jesuits, seeing that their following such directions would not only put a stop to all further conversions, but also occasion the apostacy of a great many proselytes, before they gave up their point, sent deputations to Rome, in order to enlighten the Holy See on the subject. This disgusting contest, which was carried on in several instances with much acrimony, lasted more than forty years before it came to an end.

At length the reigning Pope, wishing to finish the business, sent Cardinal de Tournon



to India with the title of apostolic legate, to make personal enquiries on the subject, and report all the details to the Holy See. The cardinal landed at Pondicherry about a century ago, and on his arrival sent for some of the principal missionaries, living in the inland country, had all matters minutely investigated, and made his report to the Pope. After some further delay, the famous and very learned Benedict XIV., having been raised to the papal chair, and wishing to put at once a stop to this scandalous contest, issued a very rigorous bull or decree in several articles, by which he formally and expressly condemned and reprobated all the superstitious practices (a list of which was contained in the instrument), till then tolerated by the missionaries, and required that the whole of them, of whatever order or dignity they might be, should bind themselves by a solemn oath taken before a bishop, to conform themselves without any tergiversation whatever to the spirit and letter of the decree; it was moreover ordered, that the decree should be read and published every Sunday in all churches and chapels in the presence of the congregation, and a promise of submission to it be required from all converts.

These orders were reluctantly complied



with: but what the jesuits had foreseen happened:—a great number of proselytes preferred renouncing the new religion to abandoning their practices. A stop was put to conversions; and the christian religion began to become odious to the Hindoos on account of its intolerance.

At that very time happened the European invasion, and the bloody contests for dominion between the English and French. The Europeans, till then almost entirely unknown to the natives in the interior, introduced themselves in several ways and under various denominations into every part of the country. The Hindoos soon found that those missionaries, whom their colour, their talents, and other qualities, had induced them to regard as such extraordinary beings, as men coming from another world, were in fact nothing else but disguised *Fringy* (Europeans); * and that their country, their religion, and original education, were the same with those of the vile, the contemptible *Fringy*, who had of late invaded their country. This event proved the last blow to the interests of the christian religion. No more conversions were made;

* *Fringy*, is the appellation under which the Europeans are designated by the natives of India; it is derived from the term Frank, and has been introduced by the Mahometans.



apostacy became almost general in several quarters; and christianity became more and more an object of contempt and aversion, in proportion as the European manners became better known to the Hindoos.

Nearly at that period the suppression of the order of the jesuits took place in Europe; and there being no longer a sufficient number of missionaries, a national black clergy was formed, and the attendance on the remaining congregations entrusted to their care. Those native missionaries not having the advantage of a proper education, and many amongst them shewing themselves more attached to their own interests than to those of religion, enjoy but little consideration even among their flocks, and none among the natives of any other description.

Such is the abridged history of the rise, the progress, and the decline of the christian religion in India. The low state to which it is now reduced, and the contempt in which it is held, cannot be surpassed. There is not at present in the country (as mentioned before) more than a third of the christians who were to be found in it eighty years ago, and this number diminishes every day by frequent apostacy. It will dwindle to nothing in a short period; and if things continue as they are now going

the christian religion



On, within less than fifty years there will, I fear, remain no vestige of christianity among the natives.

The christian religion, which was formerly an object of indifference, or at most of contempt, is at present become, I will venture to say, almost an object of horror. It is certain that during the last sixty years no proselytes or but a very few have been made. Those christians who are still to be met with in several parts of the country, and whose numbers (as I have just mentioned,) diminishes every day, are the offspring of the converts made by the jesuits before that period. The very small number of proselytes who are still gained over from time to time, are found among the lowest tribes; so are individuals who, driven out from their castes, on account of their vices or scandalous transgressions of their usages, are shunned afterwards by every body as outlawed men, and have no other resource left than that of turning christians, in order to form new connexions in society; and you will easily fancy that such an assemblage of the offals and dregs of society only tends to increase the contempt and aversion entertained by the Hindoos against christianity.

In fact, how can our holy religion prosper amidst so many insurmountable obstacles? A person who embraces it becomes a pro-



scribed and outlawed man ; he loses at once all that can attach him to life. A husband, a father is forthwith forsaken and deserted by his own wife and children, who obstinately refuse to have any further intercourse with their degraded relative. A son is unmercifully driven out of his paternal mansion, and entirely deserted by those who gave him birth.

By embracing the christian religion, therefore, a Hindoo loses his all. Relations, kindred, friends, —all desert him! Goods, possessions, inheritance, all disappear!

Where is the man furnished with a sufficient stock of cynical fortitude to be able to bear such severe trials?

The very name of christian carries along with it the stain of infamy; and the proposal alone to become a convert to christianity is considered by every well-bred Hindoo as a very serious insult, which is instantly resented, as I have witnessed in repeated instances. Such a proposal must always be made with the greatest prudence and circumspection, in order not to be exposed to severe reproof from those to whom it is addressed.

Fully aware of the dispositions of the Hindoos in this respect, and that forced religious controversies with them can answer no good purpose, and generally produces but bad effects, I have always made it my rule, in the



visits I from time to time receive from pagans of every caste, when visiting my several congregations, never to obtrude myself upon them on religious subjects, unless urged by them, which is often the case; a great many among them being fond of discoursing upon religion; some from motives of curiosity, but a greater number from vanity, and to have an opportunity of making a display of their pretended learning, as well as of becoming acquainted with the learning and mental resources of their opponents.

When attacked on this subject, the necessity of standing on the defensive obliges me to enter into discussions, and set forth the excellence of the christian religion, over the absurdities of paganism; employing for this purpose such short, plain, and simple reasoning, as may be within the comprehension of my hearers; for deep and learned arguments could not be understood by them.

On such occasions, when the arguments of my opponents in vindication of their own religion are exhausted, and they have nothing more to say, they rarely fail to conclude and sum up their reasoning by this solemn and, in their mind, unanswerable appeal, exclaiming with much exultation and emphasis, "After all, your religion is the religion of the *Fringy*;" refraining, however, from a feeling of respect,



or perhaps from motives of prudence, from adding, in my presence, the second part of this forcible sentence, viz. "and all that comes from so impure a source must be radically bad."

In the mean time, when compelled to sustain religious disputes with pagans, I am far from imitating the forbidding and provoking conduct of some uncivil and intolerant persons of my profession, who, instigated by a warm, a false, and in many instances a perilous zeal, on their first outset, when disputing upon religion with the heathen, begin their arguments with these opprobrious and insulting phrases, "All your gods are nothing else but demons; you all will go to hell to expiate in eternal flames the crime of your idolatry;" and such like vituperative language. Such a strain of abuse and insult only tends, as may be expected, to provoke a return of blasphemous expressions against the christian religion and its divine author; and to render christianity itself, its teachers, and its followers, more and more odious to the natives.

In my religious controversy I never forget the decorum, calmness, forbearance, and mutual regard that ought ever to be observed in such circumstances, carefully avoiding all that could to no good purpose wound the feelings and prejudices of my opponents; and



if I reap no other fruit from my trouble, but their reluctant assent to my simple arguments, I can at least pride myself, that on such occasions I get a patient and cheerful hearing, and that both my opponents and myself separate on good terms, satisfied with the mutual respect with which the dispute was carried on. But to return.

The christian religion is at the present time become so odious, that in several parts of the country a Hindoo, who should happen to have friends or connexions among the natives professing this religion, would not dare to own it in public, as he would be exposed to severe reproof for holding a familiar intercourse with (in their opinion) people so degraded.

Such is the state of degradation to which christianity has been reduced in these latter times, and which must be imputed in a great degree to the immoral and irregular conduct of many Europeans in every part of the country.

Besides the christians of the catholic persuasion, there are still existing in some parts of the country small congregations of the Lutheran sect; but they are held, if possible, in a still higher degree of contempt than the former.

The Lutheran mission was established at



Tranqubar a little more than a century ago. There were at all times among the missionaries of this sect respectable persons, distinguished by their talents and virtues; but they had only trifling successes in the work of proselytism: it could not be otherwise; the protestant religion being too simple in its worship to attract the attention of the Hindoo: as it has no show, no pomp, no outward ceremonies capable of making a strong impression on the senses, it was of course disliked by a quite sensual people, and has never had any considerable success.

If any of the several modes of christian worship were calculated to make an impression and gain ground in the country, it is no doubt the catholic form which you protestants call an idolatry in disguise: it has a *Pooga* or sacrifice; (the mass is termed by the Hindoos *Pooga*, literally, sacrifice;) it has processions, images, statues, *tirtan* or holy-water, fasts, *tittys* or feasts, and prayers for the dead, invocation of saints, &c., all which practices bear more or less resemblance to those in use among the Hindoos. Now, if even such a mode of worship is become so objectionable to the natives, can it be reasonably expected that any one of the simple protestant sects will ever prosper among



them? The contrary has till now been the case. I have just observed that the Lutheran missionaries have had no sensible success during more than a century. At the present time their congregations are reduced to four or five: the most worthy of notice are, one at Vepery near Madras, consisting of about five or six hundred souls; another at Trankbar, composed of about twelve hundred; another at Tanjore, of nearly the same number; and a fourth at Trichinopoly, of about three or four hundred.

There are besides a few protestant christians dispersed chiefly in the Tinnivelly district, but in such small numbers that they do not deserve the name of congregations. When I was at Vellore, four years ago, in attendance on a numerous congregation living in that place, having been informed that the Lutheran missionaries kept a *catechist* or native religious teacher at that station, on a salary of five pagodas a month, I was led to suppose that they had a numerous flock there; but I was not a little surprised when, on enquiry, I found that the whole congregation consisted of only three individuals, namely, a drummer, a cook, and a horse-keeper.

In the meantime, do not suppose that those thin congregations are wholly composed



of converted pagans ; at least half consists of catholic apostates, who went over to the Lutheran sect in times of famine, or from other interested motives.

It is not uncommon on the coast to see natives who successively pass from one religion to another, according to their actual interest. In my last journey to Madras, I became acquainted with native converts who regularly changed their religion twice a year, and who for a long while were in the habit of being six months catholic, and six months protestant.

Besides the Lutheran sect, the Moravian brethren sent also missionaries to India, about seventy years ago, to make proselytes to their own persuasion. But on their first arrival in the country, they were so much amazed and appalled at the insurmountable difficulties to be met with every where, and so satisfied of the impossibility of making true converts to christianity among a people circumstanced as the Hindoos were, that very wisely they dropped their design without even making the attempt. They afterwards tried to convert the savage of the Nicobar Islands, but without success ; at last, after lingering at Trankbar, where they had formed their principal establishment, during a period of



nearly sixty years, and where I had the pleasure to pay them frequent visits when at that place in 1793, they were all recalled home about twenty years ago, and this sect no longer exists in India.

Respecting the new missionaries of several sects, who have of late years made their appearance in the country, you may rest assured, as far as my information on the subject goes, that notwithstanding the pompous reports made by several among them, all their endeavours to make converts have till now proved abortive, and that their successes are only to be seen on paper.

The sect of the Nestorians in Travancore is generally known: a short curious account of them is given by Gibbon in his history of the Roman empire; but a much fuller account was before written in French by La Croze, historiographer to the late Frederick King of Prussia, in a work in two small volumes, entitled *le Christianisme de l'Inde*. The late Dr. B. speaks of them; but I was surprised at the exaggerations of this learned author on this and many other important points. The fact is, that this sect, a colony of whom is supposed by some authors to have introduced itself into the Travancore country about the end of the eighth century, when Nestorianism was violently per-



secuted in Persia, once amounted to more than 100,000, (Gibbon says to 200,000 individuals). The jesuits, on their first arrival in India, hearing of them, in one way or another converted the greatest part to the catholic faith. Their liturgy is to this day in the Syrian language, and in the performance of their religious ceremonies they use this ancient dead tongue. There remains still among them large congregations, consisting of 70 or 80,000 christians, of whom two-thirds are catholics, and a third Nestorians. They are all designated under the contemptuous name of *Nazarany*, and held by the pagans in still greater contempt than the christians of this part of the country. The Nairs chiefly keep them at the greatest distance, and they form a separate body in society.

Both catholics and Nestorians have a native clergy of their own; and the clergy of both are equally ignorant, neither having the means of receiving a proper education. As their liturgy is in Syrian, all the science of their clergy consists in being able to read, or rather spell this language, in order to be qualified to perform their religious ceremonies. I have been assured, that there is at present no one amongst the catholic or the Nestorian clergy capable of properly understanding or



explaining two phrases of the Syriac books. They have no houses of education, no teachers, no professors, but only some schools kept by their ignorant priests, for the purpose of teaching persons destined to the ecclesiastic profession, to read this language.

When the jesuits flourished in India, they took particular care to give a proper education to the persons of this class; and those who shewed a particular aptness for the sciences were sent to Rome for instruction, from whence they were sent back to their native country to be promoted to holy orders. Since the suppression of the jesuits, the Syrians being left to their own resources, it is not surprising that education among them has fallen into the low state in which it is now seen.

The catholic Syrians depend for their religious concerns upon the archbishop of Cronganor, and the Nestorians have a bishop of their own caste and sect.

I will conclude and sum up the first part of this account by repeating what I have already stated, that if any form of christianity were to make an impression and gain ground in the country, it is undoubtedly the catholic mode of worship, whose external pomp and shew appear so well suited to the genius and



dispositions of the natives ; and that when the catholic religion has failed to produce its effects, and its interests are become quite desperate, no other sect can flatter itself even with the remotest hopes of establishing its system : I trust that every unprejudiced and unbiassed mind will agree with me on this point.

I am in the meantime fully aware that a great many over-zealous protestants may be disposed to contradict this assertion, and maintain that the catholic religion being nothing but a corruption of the religion of Christ, and its worship a human invention, the divine assistance can never attend the propagation of it, and that its failure in the business of proselytism cannot be a matter of surprise.

Although a most sincere, and most undisguised Roman catholic, I am unwilling to enter here into a discussion foreign to my subject, on the respective merits or demerits either of the catholic or protestant persuasions. This is not the place to examine on what side are the innovations as well as corruptions of the word of God, so much complained of by both parties. I will even, for the sake of argument, suppose for an instant the catholic religion guilty of the superstitious innovations, abominations, and all kinds of idolatry laid to



its charge by the other sects, and on this account unworthy of any claim to the divine assistance, in the propagation of its supposed corrupted tenets. But let us examine whether the other supposed more pure and unpolluted modes of christian worship have been more fortunate and successful in the work of proselytism in India.

Behold the Lutheran mission established in India more than a century ago! Interrogate its missionaries, ask them what were their successes during so long a period, and through what means were gained over the few proselytes they made? Ask them whether the interests of their sect are improving, or whether they are gaining ground, or whether their small numbers are not rather dwindling away?

Behold the truly industrious, the unaffected and unassuming Moravian brethren! Ask them how many converts they have made in India during a stay of about seventy years by preaching the gospel in all its naked simplicity? They will candidly answer, "Not one! not a single man!"

Behold the Nestorians in Travancore! Interrogate them; ask them for an account of their success in the work of proselytism in these modern times? Ask them whether they are gaining ground, and whether the interests



of their ancient mode of worship is improving? They will reply, that so far from this being the case, their congregations once so flourishing, and amounting (according to Gibbon's account) to 200,000 souls, are now reduced to less than an eighth of this number, and are daily diminishing.

Behold the Baptist missionaries at Serampore! Inquire what are their spiritual successes on the shores of the Ganges? Ask them whether they have really the well-founded hope that their indefatigable labours in endeavouring to get the holy scriptures translated into all the idioms of India will increase their successes? Ask them whether those extremely incorrect versions, already obtained at an immense expense, have produced the sincere conversion of a single pagan? And I am persuaded, that if they are asked an answer upon their honour and conscience, they will all reply in the negative.

I will here conclude the first part of this account. What I have said of the state of the christian religion in India at the present and in former times, will, I trust, prove sufficient to make out what I have advanced, that there are in the actual circumstances of the case no human means to introduce christian-



ity among the natives with any well-founded hopes of success.

I will now pass to the second division of my subject, viz. that should a possibility of further extending christianity exist, the means till now employed for this desirable end, and, above all, the translation of the holy scriptures into the several idioms of the country, circulated among the natives, will not only prove inadequate for the purpose, but also be injurious in many respects to the interests of the religion by increasing the prejudices of the natives against it. This assertion will perhaps appear bold, or even paradoxical to many persons who are but imperfectly acquainted with the prejudices of the Hindoos; I will therefore with simplicity and candour adduce the arguments on which my opinions are grounded.

You would perhaps look upon me as unqualified to give an unbiassed opinion on this topic, if in common with many misinformed protestants, you entertained the unfounded idea that the reading of the holy scriptures is forbidden to the catholics. This is one of the many calumnies spread against them, to render them odious to the other sects. So far from this being the case, the study of the holy writ is strongly recommended, and forms



a leading feature of education in every seminary. What is required of the catholics on the subject is, that they shall not presume to interpret the text of the scriptures in a sense different from that of the church, or give it a meaning according to their own private judgment.

After having given you this explanation, I will resume my subject, and show that the naked text of the Bible, exhibited without a long previous preparation to the Hindoos, must prove detrimental to the christian religion, and increase their aversion to it, inasmuch as this sacred book contains in almost every page accounts which cannot fail deeply to wound their feelings, by openly hurting prejudices which are held most sacred.

To you who have some acquaintance with the education and customs of the Hindoos, I will put the following simple questions :

What will a well-bred native think, when, in reading over this holy book, he sees that Abraham, after receiving the visit of three angels under a human shape, entertains his guest by causing a calf to be killed, and served to them for their fare? The prejudiced Hindoo will at once judge that both Abraham and his heavenly guests were nothing but vile pariahs; and, without further reading, he will



forthwith throw away the book, containing (in his opinions,) such sacrilegious accounts.

What will a Brahmin say, when he peruses the details of the bloody sacrifices prescribed in the mosaical law in the worship of the true God? He will assuredly declare, that the god who could be pleased with the shedding of the blood of so many victims immolated to his honour, must undoubtedly be a deity of the same kind (far be from me the blasphemy) as the mischievous Hindoo deities, Cohly, Mahry, Darma-rajah, and other infernal gods, whose wrath cannot be appeased but by the shedding of blood, and the immolating of living victims.

But, above all, what will a Brahmin or any other well-bred Hindoo think, when he peruses in our holy books the account of the immolating of creatures held most sacred by him? What will be his feelings, when he sees that the immolating of oxen and bulls constituted a leading feature in the religious ordinances of the Israelites, and that the blood of those most sacred animals was almost daily shed at the shrine of the god they adored? What will be his feelings when he sees, that after Solomon had at immense expense and labour built a magnificent temple in honour of the true God, he made the *pra-*



tista or consecration of it, by causing 22,000 oxen to be slaughtered, and overflowing his new temple with the blood of these sacred victims? He will certainly in perusing accounts, (in his opinion so horribly sacrilegious,) shudder, and be seized with the liveliest horror, look on the book containing such shocking details as an abominable work, (far be from me, once more, the blasphemy, I am expressing the feelings of a prejudiced Pagan,) throw it away with indignation, consider himself as polluted for having touched it, go immediately to the river for the purpose of purifying himself by ablutions from the defilement he thinks he has contracted, and before he again enters his house, he will send for a Poorohita Brahmin to perform the requisite ceremonies for purifying it from the defilement it has contracted, by ignorantly keeping within its walls so polluted a thing as the Bible.

In the mean while he will become more and more confirmed in the idea, that a religion which derives its tenets from so impure a source is altogether detestable, and that those who profess it, must be the basest and vilest of men.

Such are the effects which, in my humble opinion, the reading of the naked text of the



Bible cannot fail to produce on the unprepared minds of the prejudiced Hindoos.

I have only cited the above instances, being the first which occurred to my mind in writing this letter; but I could point out in almost every chapter of holy writ passages nearly as exceptionable, and which it would be equally dangerous to exhibit without a long previous explanation to the prejudiced Hindoo.

On the whole, it is my decided opinion, that to open all at once and without a long preparation, this precious treasure to the Hindoos, would be similar to attempting to cure a person labouring under severe sore eyes, by obliging him to stare at the rays of a shining sun, at the risk of rendering him altogether blind, or at least of being altogether dazzled and confounded by an excess of light. It would be the same as the administering of solid food to young babes, whilst their weak stomachs are hardly adequate to digest milk of the lightest kind; it is exactly (to use the language of the scriptures,) "to give that which is holy unto the dogs, and cast pearls before swine;" it is "to put wine into old bottles, which break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish."

In order to give you an instance of the de-



licacy of the feelings of the natives, with respect to the accounts found in our holy books that are in opposition to their prejudices, I will relate the following occurrence :

Being at Carricaul, about twenty-eight years ago, I preached on a Sunday to the assembled congregation a sermon in the *Tamul* language, on the divine origin of the christian religion. Among other topics to prove my subject, I insisted on the intrinsic weakness and inadequacy of the means employed in the establishment of this religion, generally hated and persecuted everywhere, quite destitute of all human support, and left to its own resources amidst every kind of contradictions. I several times repeated, in treating this topic, that the christian religion had for its founder a peasant of Galilee, the son of a humble carpenter, who took for his assistants twelve low-born men, twelve ignorant and illiterate fishermen. These words *the son of a carpenter!* *twelve fishermen!* many times repeated, gave offence to my audience, which was entirely composed of native christians; and the sermon was no sooner finished than three or four of the principal among them came and informed me, that the whole congregation had been highly scandalized by hearing me apply to Christ the appellation of *the son of a car-*



pen^{ter}, and to his apostles that of *fishermen*; that I could not be ignorant that the casts both of carpenters and fishermen were two of the lowest and vilest in the country; that it was highly improper to attribute to Christ and his disciples so low and abject an origin; that if pagans, who sometimes come through motives of curiosity to their religious assemblies, heard such objectionable accounts of our religion, their contempt and hatred of it would be considerably increased, &c. &c. Finally, they advised me, if in future I had occasion to mention in my sermons the origin of Christ or his apostles, not to fail to say that both were born in the noble tribe of *kshatrys* or rajahs, and never to mention their low profession.

Another instance of the kind happened to me a few years ago in this part of the country, when, in explaining to the congregation the parable of the Prodigal Son in the Gospel, I mentioned the circumstance of the prodigal's father having, through joy, killed the *fatted calf* to regale his friends, on account of the return of his reformed son. After the lecture some Christians told me, in rather bad humour, that my mentioning the *fatted calf* was very improper, and that if, as sometimes happened, pagans had been present at the



lecture, they would have been confirmed, on hearing of the fattened calf, in the opinion they all entertained of the Christian religion being a low or pariah religion. They advised me, in the mean time, if in future I gave an explanation of the same parable, to substitute a lamb instead of the *fatted calf*.

In fact, even with our native Christians, we are careful to avoid all that might wound their feelings to no purpose, and increase in the public mind the jealousy and contempt entertained against them, and their religion. For example, as the use of intoxicating liquors is extremely odious to all well-bred Hindoos, and considered by them as a capital sin, when we explain verbally or in writing the sacrament of the eucharist, we are cautious not to say openly that the materials of this sacrament are bread and *wine*, or *charayam*, (literally, wine), which would prove too revolting to their feelings; we have therefore the precaution to soften this coarse term by a periphrasis, saying that the materials of the eucharist are wheaten bread, and *the juice of the fine fruit called grape*; which expressions become more palatable to their taste.

But should the translation of the Bible into the various languages of the country, and circulated among the Hindoos, be able, through



their intrinsic worth, to overcome, by little and little, all their prejudices, and fix their attention to this divine book (which supposition I am far from admitting), a great difficulty would yet remain; that is, a close and accurate version of the work. All persons the least familiar with the dialects of the country and their style, will agree with me, I think, that they are so different from those of Europe, that a literal translation of the Holy Scriptures into any of them is impracticable.

I was not a little surprised when I saw, a few years ago, announced with much emphasis in all the newspapers by the missionaries at Serampore, the design of undertaking the translation of the whole into eighteen or twenty Asiatic languages, the Chinese not excepted. To persons unacquainted with the difficulty, not to say impossibility of such a task being faithfully and accurately performed, the project must have appeared dazzling and worthy to be encouraged: for my part, I could not conceive how a small society of five or six individuals (every allowance for their talents and learning being made,) should seriously think of compromising themselves with the public by so herculean a labour; which, to be fairly and properly executed, would occupy



for half a century, all the learned to be found in India.

It is a well known fact, that when England separated herself from the church of Rome, not finding the version of the *Vulgate*, till then used, sufficiently exact, the first care of her reformers was to procure a translation of the whole Bible, from the original Hebrew into English. In consequence, one was produced with great trouble, in the reign of the young king Edward the Sixth; but this version, on a close investigation, proving abundant in errors, was finally laid aside, and a second undertaken in the reign of queen Elizabeth. This also could not withstand criticism, and was found, on the whole, very incorrect and defective; a third version was therefore begun in the reign of James the First, which (if I am not mistaken) is that now used and approved by the established church. In order to render this as exact and correct as it was possible, the best scholars to be found in the kingdom were employed in the execution of it, and it is well known that this version, carried on by the joint labours of so many learned persons, took up a period of about sixteen years, for its completion; and yet modern criticism has found many errors and mistakes in it, although obtained by so much trouble and care.



Now, if even in Europe, with all the assistance that learned translators were enabled to obtain, from enlightened criticism, &c. it proved so difficult, and required such great labours to obtain a genuine version of this work, what are we to think of the project of five or six individuals, who, without the assistance of any criticism whatever, suppose themselves able to execute genuine translations into intricate languages, with which they, after all, can possess only an imperfect acquaintance? *

* Since writing these pages, I have learned, with some surprise, that the missionaries at Serampore have surpassed the most sanguine expectations of the public, by translating the Scriptures, within the short period of nine or ten years, into no less than twenty-four Asiatic languages. This brilliant success has not in the least dazzled me, nor altered my opinion, or diminished my scepticism on the entire inadequacy of such means to enlighten the pagans, and gain them over to Christianity, and I would not certainly dare to warrant, that these twenty spurious versions, with some of which I am acquainted, will, after the lapse of the same number of years, have operated the conversion of twenty-four pagans. I have, on the contrary, every reason for apprehending that these low translations, if the natives could be prevailed upon to peruse them, (which, in my opinion, will never be the case,) will, by exposing the Christian religion and its followers to the ridicule of the public, soon stagger the wavering faith of many hundreds of those now professing



It is on all hands admitted, that before a translation from one language into another be undertaken, it is absolutely necessary to possess an entire and thoroughly grammatical acquaintance with both. Now, where are the Europeans who possess so perfect a knowledge of the idioms of India? and again, where are the natives who possess the same advantage with respect to the European dialects? if persons of this description are to be found any where in this country, they are in very small numbers indeed.

Some partial translations of the Scriptures are, it is true, to be found in the country; but in my humble opinion they have entirely missed their object. I have by me a copy of the New Testament, translated into Tamul, executed by the Lutheran missionaries; but the translators, by endeavouring to make it literal, have generally used such low, trivial, and, in many instances, ludicrous expressions, and the style is, besides, so different from that of the Hindoos, that persons unaccustomed to it, cannot (as I have witnessed in repeated instances) read over four verses without laugh-

Christianity, hasten the epoch of their apostacy, and accelerate the downfall of the tottering edifice of Christianity in India.



ing at the manner in which the work is executed.

In my last journey to the coast, I saw a letter on the subject, from a missionary in Travancore, to a person of the same description at Pondicherry, in which were the following expressions :—

“ Many hundred sets of the New Testament, translated into the *Malayan* dialect, have been sent to us (without our asking for them), to be circulated among our Christians. I have perused this performance : the translation is truly piteous, and only worthy of contempt : one cannot peruse four verses without shrugging up the shoulders. This large collection of New Testaments now in our hands places us in a very awkward situation : if we leave them to rot in our apartments, we fear to expose ourselves to the displeasure of those who supplied us with them, who appear anxious to have them circulated, and if we follow their instructions on the subject, we cover ourselves with ridicule.”

I remember an instance of the kind, which will not appear foreign to my subject. About twenty-five years ago, the French missionaries, in the province of Sutchuen in China, were earnestly requested by the congregation *De Propaganda Fide* at Rome to translate the



Gospel into Chinese, and send a copy to them. The missionaries answered, that as the Chinese language did not admit of a literal translation, they had, a long time before, compiled a work in Chinese containing the history and moral of the Gospel, for the use of their congregations, and that nothing more could be satisfactorily executed on the subject; yet, as the request was urgent, they prepared, with the assistance of their best informed proselytes, a translation of the gospel of St. Matthew, a copy of which they sent to Rome, informing, at the same time, the congregation *De Propaganda*, that the translation of this gospel alone, obtained with the assistance of many well-educated natives, had cost them considerable labour and trouble; adding, that this literal translation differed so widely from the Chinese style, that even their converts would hardly refrain from laughing in perusing it.

Now, it is not a little curious to observe that what European missionaries, who had passed the greatest part of their lives in China, judged next to impossible to execute even with the assistance of many well-educated natives, an unassisted Armenian, of the name of *Lassar* at Serampore, should imagine himself able to perform; and it is not only the trans-



lation of a single gospel he has undertaken, — the whole Bible literally translated by this individual has been emphatically promised by the missionaries to the curiosity of the public.

Many unprejudiced and unbiassed Europeans, acquainted with the idioms of the country, with whom I have had opportunities of conversing on the subject, and who happened to have perused some parts of the translations of the Scriptures now extant, I am happy to say, perfectly coincided in opinion with me, that such low and vulgar versions of our holy books ought carefully to be concealed from the sight of the pagans, in order that their aversion to Christianity may not be increased, and the European character injured.

In fact, a translation of the Holy Scriptures, in order to awaken the curiosity, and fix the attention of the learned Hindoo, at least as a literary production, ought to be on a level with the Indian performances of the same kind among them, and be composed in fine poetry, a flowery style, and a high stream of eloquence, this being universally the mode in which all Indian performances of any worth are written. As long as the versions are executed in the low style in which we find these, you may rest assured that they will only ex-



cite contempt, and tend to increase the aversion already entertained by the natives against the Christian religion.

But, to conclude, let Bibles, as many as you please, in every shape and in every style, be translated and circulated among the Hindoos; let them, if you wish, be spread in every village, in every cottage, in every family; let the Christian religion be presented to these people under every possible light, I repeat it with deep sorrow, in my humble opinion, (an opinion grounded on twenty-five years of experience,) the time of conversion has passed away, and, under existing circumstances, there remains no human possibility to bring it back.

The Christian religion has been announced to the natives of India, without intermission during the last three or four centuries, at the beginning with some faint hopes of success, but at present with no effect. In the meantime, the oracle of the Gospel has been fulfilled with respect to the Hindoos. The Divine Founder of our religion has, it is true, announced that his gospel *should be preached all over the world*, but, to the best of my knowledge, he has never affirmed that it should be heard, believed, and embraced by all nations.

This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the awful and unfathomable mystery



of *predestination*, to scrutinize the apparently obscure ways of the Supreme Wisdom on this subject, to ask the common Father of mankind why, in his all-ruling providence he has vouchsafed to impart the heavenly light of his divine word only to a part of his children, whilst he has withheld this, the greatest of all divine favours, from the other part, and left them immersed in the deepest darkness of the most extravagant idolatry. The thing is so, therefore there must be reasons for its being so. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" Let every one among us, with becoming humility, acknowledge, in what concerns him, the greatness of the gift, and preserve in his heart a due sense of gratitude for it, without presuming to investigate the apparent partiality of the Giver.

Has not St. Paul forcibly and satisfactorily answered this question, by the masterly manner in which he treats the subject of the gratuitous election of God, when writing to the Romans he says, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid! For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. — Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he



hardeneth. — O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

But to return to our subject, and in support of what I have above stated, that Christ had nowhere promised that his divine religion should be unexceptionably embraced by all nations; but, that rather opposition to the evangelical truths on the part of several nations was foreseen by him. This will appear from his own sacred words; for in the admirable and truly divine instructions he gave to his disciples (Matt. x. Luke, x.), when he invested them with full powers to preach his divine religion to all people, and when he sent them on the work of proselytism, he warned them that they must be prepared to meet hatred, and in many instances open resistance. It is true that he utters, at the same time, dreadful threats against the obdurate unbelievers, who shall shut their ears to the word of God; but he takes upon himself the punishment of their obduracy on the day of retribution: all that he recommends his disciples in such circumstances is, not to be stiff or too troublesome, not to insist and strive to



enforce by all means the impugned truth on the minds of their hearers ; but rather to yield, to submit by a patient resignation and forbearance ; quietly to quit the places and countries so ill disposed to hear the truth, and to leave these people in their hardness of heart : “ And (says he) into whatever city or town you shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy ; and there abide till ye go thence : and when ye go into an house, salute it, and if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it ; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, take off the dust of your feet.” (Or as Mark and Luke relate,) “ Go your way into the streets, and say, Even the dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city.” (Matt. x. Mark, vi. Luke, ix. and x.)

Happy would it be, indeed, had the divine instructions given by Christ to his immediate disciples, in these chapters of his divine work, been followed by a great many of those styling themselves their successors. We should not now have to deplore the dreadful calamities which have convulsed the world for so long



a period, nor the violent struggles which have deluged Europe with blood, by sacrilegiously abusing the name of a religion, which in every page of his divine code holds out peace, charity, benevolence, and forbearance.

That the apostles faithfully conformed themselves to these divine instructions, appears clearly from several passages of our holy books. The most zealous among them, *Paul*, having many times, by his insinuating eloquence, convinced the Jews assembled in their synagogues at Jerusalem, Antioch, and other places, of the truth of the Christian religion, in so masterly a manner as to draw upon himself their reluctant applauses, without, however, being able to overcome entirely their prejudices; nay, ending by having to encounter the hatred and open resistance of the zealots of the opposite party, confounded as they were at the sight of his virtues, and at his unrivalled eloquence. On such occasions, what does the apostle? He yields, he submits, he resigns himself, he conducts himself according to the rules laid down by his divine employer. Behold his conduct under such trying circumstances as related in the following passage:—

“ But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy against those things, which were spoken by Paul, contradicting



and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you ; but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.—But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came into Iconium.” (Acts, xiii.)

As a most sincere, and most undisguised believer of the divine origin of the Christian religion, and firmly persuaded that this religion alone can render man happy in this life, and in that to come, my most earnest wishes have always been to see it believed and professed by all mankind, and extend its dominion, its mild and genial influence, all over the world, and among all nations.

Some persons seem to be of opinion, that should the civil government of the country give proper support and encouragement to the Christian religion, it might be rescued from the state of contempt and degradation into which it has fallen, and prosper. In my humble opinion, this might have been the case in former times ; but under existing circumstances, when the prejudices of the Hindoos against it have reached so great a height, I question whether all practicable support on the part of government could materially ad-



vance its interests, and whether such an interference would not rather prove detrimental to it, by increasing the jealousy and distrust of the natives.

Some others think that the intercourse of Europeans with the natives ought sooner or later to bring about a revolution in the religion and manners of the latter. But in order to produce such an effect, this intercourse ought to be more close, more intimate, and confidential than it is now or has ever been. Has the intercourse of the Mahometans with the Hindoos, during a period of nearly a thousand years, although more familiar than that which prevails between the latter and their European rulers, been able to bring about such a revolution, and overcome the prejudices of these people against all foreign institutions? and have the Mahometan rulers during so long a period made converts to their religion and manners, otherwise than by coercive and violent measures?

It is a well known fact, that it is precisely those of the Hindoos who are most familiar, and most connected with the Europeans, who manifest the strongest disgust and aversion for the religion and manners of the latter. In proof of this assertion, I appeal to all the officers, both civil and military, serving under



the three presidencies in India. Have the latter never discovered among their numerous army a single sepoy, with perhaps the exception of a few drunkard drummers and pariahs, who shewed the remotest inclination to turn a Christian? and has any collector or judge, or other civil officer of rank, to boast to have found out a single native under his control, who was not prejudiced in a particular manner against the Christian religion and the European customs and education?

As for me, whenever I have been exposed to any contradiction in the public exercise of my religious duties, I have found that they always originated with the natives serving in a public capacity, in any of the offices of government, and never with the peaceable inhabitants of the country, among whom I have everywhere met with the greatest tolerance.

In my opinion, the Hindoos will remain the same in this respect, after another thousand years, as they were a thousand years ago. Their reserved and distant intercourse with Europeans, will always continue the same, and their abhorrence of the religion, education, and manners of the latter, as well as their other leading prejudices, will continue undiminished.



At the same time, should the intercourse between the individuals of both nations, by becoming more intimate and more friendly, produce a revolution in the religion and usages of the country; it will not be to turn Christians that they will forsake their own religion; but rather, (what in my opinion is a thousand times worse than idolatry,) to become perfect atheists; and if they renounce their present manners, it will not be to embrace those of the Europeans, but rather to become what are now called pariahs.

Such would be, in my humble opinion, the sad results of this revolution, if it were ever to take place.

I remain, &c. &c.

August 7th, 1815.



LETTER II.

To the Rev. G. B.—*Bombay.*

My dear Sir,

SINCE I had the pleasure of seeing you at ———, having constantly journeyed from one place to another, on my visits to the several congregations of the native Christians living in this part of the country, I had until now no leisure to give you the abridged sketch you are anxious to have of the state of Christianity in these provinces, in addition to what I wrote before on the subject. I now take the first moments of leisure I can spare, to gratify your curiosity, and give you as far as my information goes, the further details you wish to have on this interesting topic.

I have nothing, or very little to add to what I stated in my former letter, concerning the few congregations of native Christians of the Lutheran persuasion. The management of those congregations has to these times



been intrusted to the care of Lutheran missionaries, sent from Denmark and Germany, whose principal establishment was till now at Trankbar, from whence missionaries were sent to attend the subordinate congregations settled at Madras, Tanjore, and Trichinopoly.

The management of by far the more numerous congregations of Christians of the Roman catholic persuasion dispersed over the country, from the banks of Krishna to Cape Comorin, is intrusted to the superintendance of two titular archbishops, two titular bishops, and three bishops *in partibus*, with the title of apostolic vicars.

The two archbishops are those of Goa, the metropolitan of India, who also takes the title of primate of the East and of Cranganore on the Malabar coast. The latter has been vacant during the last forty years, and the archbishopric has during that period been administered by a general vicar, appointed by the archbishop of Goa.

The two bishopricks are those of St. Thomas near Madras, and Cochin, both vacant also during the last fifteen or sixteen years; the distracted state of Europe, and other circumstances, not having yet allowed the court of Portugal to fill up these three vacant sees. In the interval, the two latter have been ad-



ministered, as well as the former, by general vicars, appointed by the metropolitan archbishop of Goa, who is at present the only survivor among the four titular bishops in India.

These four bishops were at all times appointed by the court of Portugal, which always claimed the exclusive right of patronage over the religious affairs of India, and endeavoured to prevent the catholic missionaries of other countries from being sent to Asia on the work of proselytism, judging itself alone adequate to the undertaking, and using all the means in its power, after having lost its once formidable temporal influence in the country, to preserve in it a kind of spiritual authority, and an absolute and exclusive monopoly in the conversion of the heathens, the salvation of souls, and the opening of the gates of heaven.

However, these pretended rights were overlooked by the Holy See, which, from the beginning, used its paramount authority in spiritual matters, and in spite of the often-repeated protestations of the court of Portugal on the subject, appointed bishops *in partibus*, with the title of apostolic vicars, in several parts of Asia, under the immediate control of the congregation *de propaganda* at Rome, and



quite independent of the titular bishops appointed by the court of Portugal.

These apostolic vicars, holding their religious authority from the congregation *De Propaganda*, are three in number in this peninsula. One is settled at Bombay, another at Verapoly near Cochin, and the third at Pondicherry; each of them has a small body of missionaries, both Europeans and natives, to visit and attend the congregations under their control. The European missionaries are at present few in number, and all old or infirm, as the distracted state of Europe, during these past twenty-five years, did not allow new supplies of persons of this description being sent to Asia. On this account the missions are threatened with a speedy extinction; the native clergy being altogether unqualified to preserve them, if left to their own resources, and deprived of the countenance of the European missionaries.

You therefore see that there are in all seven catholic bishops in India to manage the interests of the Roman catholic worship.

To commence with the archbishop of Goa, he has under his jurisdiction the largest number of Christians of all descriptions. I have been credibly informed, that the aggregate number amounted to 300,000 souls; and when it is considered that two-thirds at least



of the population in the Portuguese establishments are Christians, and that out of 160,000 to be found in the Island of Ceylon, two-thirds are of the catholic persuasion*, under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Goa, I am led to believe that this number is not exaggerated.

The archbishop has a native clergy, educated in the seminaries at Goa, and composed, I have been told, of about 1,500 priests, monks, and friars.

After the archbishop of Goa, comes next in rank the archbishop of Cranganore, a see still vacant. This mission was once flourishing, and seventy or eighty years back it reckoned under its jurisdiction, which extended to Madura and other countries, to the very shores of the Krishna, above 200,000 native Christians. At the present time, for the reasons stated in another letter, the number is reduced to about a third of this number.

The bishopric of Cochin contains a little more than 60,000 Christians.

The bishopric of St. Thomas near Madras, has under its jurisdiction about 50,000 Christians, natives, and half-castes.

Among the three apostolic vicars, who are

* The remainder are Calvinists, attended by the Dutch Calvinist missionaries.



independent of the titular bishops, the bishop of Bombay has the least numerous mission, all the Christians under his jurisdiction not exceeding 10 or 12,000, chiefly half-castes. This mission is attended by Italian Carmelite friars.

The apostolic vicar at Pondicherry exercises his spiritual jurisdiction over the Carnatic and Mysore, in which countries are to be found about 35,000 Christians.

The mission under the control of the apostolic vicar of Verapoly near Cochin, is also attended by Italian Carmelites, and is the most flourishing of the three. It chiefly extends in the Travancore country. This mission reckons 120,000 Christian natives, immediately attended by about a hundred native priests, educated by the Carmelites, now three or four in number, in their seminary at Verapoly. It has under its jurisdiction Syriac and Latin priests to officiate in the congregations of both rites, settled in the Travancore country. It is at present the only mission in which converts are still made amongst the heathen inhabitants. I have it from good authority, that between three and four hundred pagans are yearly christened in it, and that this number might be increased, were the missionaries to possess adequate means



for the purpose. The principal cause of such extraordinary success, which is not to be met with elsewhere in India, is the following:—

The Travancore country is chiefly inhabited by the tribe of *Nairs*, who are of all Hindoos the most particular and severe in the observation of their usages and domestic regulations, and who, for the most trifling transgressions of these, expel the offenders from the caste. These outlawed persons being left without help in society after their expulsion, and shunned by all as degraded men, are under the necessity of forming new connexions, and have no other resource left for the purpose, than that of becoming converts to Christianity or Mahometanism. The greater part prefer the latter, the Mahometan religion holding out to them greater temporal advantages, and not imposing on them so many restraints as Christianity.

As I am speaking of the Christians living in Travancore, this will be the place to give you such information as I possess, upon the till now supposed *Nestorian congregations* settled in that country, who boast themselves to be the offspring of the converts made there by the Apostle St. Thomas.

Several, and in many respects contradictory accounts of this sect have of late been



published, some writers supposing them *Nestorians*, and others asserting them to be *Eutychians*. But the fact is, that they do not know themselves to what sect they belong. The disturbances which have arisen among themselves during these last two centuries, have rendered them so unsettled in their religious tenets, that you will scarcely find the most intelligent among them agreeing in the exposition of their faith. It appears however, from the best information I have been able to obtain on the subject, that they are divided into two sects, a part being Nestorians, and another part Eutychians.

However, there is little room to doubt, that when they were first visited by the jesuit missionaries about two centuries ago, they all were found obstinately to adhere to the tenets professed by *Nestorius*, whose errors, condemned at first in the general council of Ephesus, and afterwards in that of Chalcedon, when renewed by *Dioscorus*, were the subject of so many controversies in the church, from the sixth to the end of the eighth centuries.

Their chief error relates to the mystery of incarnation. They reject the authority of the first four general councils, which are the first council of Nice, the first of Constantinople, that of Ephesus, and that of Chalcedon, in



which councils, the Christian faith about the incarnation was clearly defined and vindicated against the new-fangled doctrines of Arius, Nestorius, Eutychus and other sectaries; and their leading error was, to admit with Nestorius, a single nature and two distinct persons in Christ; while the Eutychians acknowledge two natures and two persons.

They above all deny the Blessed Virgin the title of *Theo-tocus*, or *Mother of God*, asserting that the Son of God did not assume a soul and a body in her womb.

This sect has preserved the ecclesiastical hierarchy, consisting among them of a patriarch, bishops, and an inferior clergy. The Nestorians own obedience in religious matters to the patriarch of Babylon, and the Eutychians are said to acknowledge the authority of the patriarch of Antioch. Their bishops derive their authority from either, and they ordain the inferior clergy by the imposition of hands.

They admit seven sacraments, in common with the catholic church. They have the mass, and admit the real presence of Christ in the eucharist. They have not the auricular confession, but they admit purgatory, prayers for the dead, and invocation of saints.

They have numberless fasts during the



course of the year; they use candles, tapers, incense, and have many more external ceremonies than the catholics in the exercise of their religious functions; but they altogether reject the worship of images, except the bare cross, which is set up in all their churches, and to which they pay worship. Their waste of frankincense is very considerable, as they perform no religious ceremonies in their churches and at home, without being surrounded by clouds of smoke of incense.

Their clergy lived till lately in celibacy; but I have heard that some protestant missionaries had recently prevailed upon many of them to marry, and that it was the only success they had to boast of.

The Catholic, Nestorian, and Eutychnian clergy among them use the Syriac in their liturgy and religious ceremonies; but as all their learning on the subject consists in the ability to spell it, without understanding it, I cannot see of what utility your project of supplying them with Syriac Bibles could be. No one among them is capable of understanding that ancient language.

Besides the above mentioned missions, there is another at Madras, under the direction of Italian capuchins, having for their superior an apostolic prefect, and holding



their spiritual powers from the congregation *De Propaganda*. This mission contains ten or twelve thousand Christians of several descriptions, natives, half-castes, &c. living at Madras and its vicinity.

The same Italian capuchins endeavoured also to form religious establishments in the provinces of Bengal, Oude, Bahar, &c. They penetrated as far as Nepal and Thibet; but they met with only trifling success in those several countries. They had formerly a small congregation in Nepal, and they have still chapels at Agra, Lucknow, Patna, and three or four other places in the province of Bahar; but their places of worship in these several countries are very thinly attended, and the few people who frequent them are chiefly half-castes.

In fact, it has been remarked that the prejudices to be met with every where among the Hindoos, and which at every period proved an insurmountable obstacle to the introduction of the Christian religion in India, were still more deeply rooted in the provinces bordering upon the Ganges than elsewhere. In more favourable times the congregation *De Propaganda* sent successively several bodies of missionaries to that country, in order to diffuse over it at least some gleams of the



evangelical light. The French jesuits, the Portuguese Augustinians, the Italian capuchins, were sent in succession for that purpose ; but they could make no impression ; at last all their endeavours proving abortive, and being baffled in all their attempts, the undertaking was laid aside.

I have made no mention in this sketch of the Armenian clergy settled at Madras, because they at no time attempted to make proselytes among the Hindoos, and their only business has always been to attend the Armenian congregation settled at that place. This sect of Christians does not disagree very much in its religious tenets with the catholic church. Indeed the only substantial difference I was able to remark, is, that their clergy are allowed the state of marriage, and that they reject the supremacy of the pope, acknowledging allegiance only to a patriarch of their own, in spiritual matters ; for the rest, they profess nearly the same faith as the catholics, admitting in common with them, the seven sacraments, the mass, transubstantiation, the worship of images, invocation of saints, &c. &c. Their liturgy is in the Armenian language.

From this short general sketch of the several missions in the peninsula, you will perceive that the number of Neophites, although re-



duced to no more than a third of what it was about seventy years ago, is yet considerable; and it would afford some consolation, if at least a due proportion amongst them were real and unfeigned Christians. But, alas! this is far from being the case. The greater, the by far greater number, exhibit nothing but a vain phantom, an empty shade of Christianity. In fact, during a period of twenty five years that I have familiarly conversed with them, lived among them as their religious teacher and spiritual guide, I would hardly dare to affirm that I have any where met a sincere and undisguised Christian.

In embracing the Christian religion, they very seldom heartily renounce their leading superstitions, towards which they always entertain a secret bent, which does not fail to manifest itself in the several occurrences of life; and in many circumstances where the precepts of their religion are found to be in opposition to their leading usages, they rarely scruple to overlook the former, and conform themselves to the latter.

Besides, in order to make true Christians among the natives, it would be necessary before all things, to erase from the code of the Christian religion, the great leading precept of *charity*; for try to persuade a Hindoo



that this religion places all men on equal footing in the sight of God, our common Maker and Father; —that the being born in a high caste, authorizes nobody to look with indifference or contempt on the persons born in a lower tribe; —that even the exalted Brahmin, after embracing Christianity, ought to look upon the humble pariah as his brother, and be ready to bestow upon him all marks of kindness and love in his power; —try to prevail upon the christian Hindoo to forgive an often imaginary injury, such as would be that of being publicly upbraided with having violated any one of their vain usages; —try to persuade even the low-born pariah, that after turning a Christian, he ought for ever to renounce the childish distinction of *Right and Left Hand*, upon which he lays so much stress, and which he considers as the most honourable characteristic of his tribe; —tell him that as that distinction of *Right and Left Hand* proves a source of continual quarrel, fighting, and animosity, it becomes wholly incompatible with the first duties imposed upon him by the Christian religion, and must altogether be laid aside; —try to prevail upon parents, in opposition to the established customs, to permit a young widow, their daughter, who, on account of her youth, is exposed to dishonor, both her-



self and family, to marry again; so to act in opposition to any of their leading usages and practices; your lectures, your instructions, your expostulations on such subjects, will be of no avail; and your Christians will continue to live the slaves of their Antichristian prejudices and customs.

When their religious instructors become too troublesome to them, by their importunate admonitions on such subjects, they often put themselves in a state of insurrection, revolt against them, and bid them defiance, by threats of apostacy.

On the other hand, the practical virtues of Christianity are almost unknown to them. Many among them are tolerably well acquainted with the doctrine and morality of their religion; but by far the greater number live in the grossest ignorance on these points, and the religion of all consists in little more than a few outward practices, and the occasional recital of some forms of prayer, accompanied, it is true, with many external grimaces, but without any inward or practical spirit of religion. Indeed, all their exercises are either a mere routine, or practised from a respect to appearances, so as not to be exposed by too marked a negligence to the animadversions of



their religious guides, rather than from a consciousness of duty towards God.

The Hindoos are a people so peculiarly circumstanced, that I consider it next to impossibility to make among them real and sincere Christians. The force of prejudice is known to all; and every one knows, also, that no people in the earth were ever such slaves to education and customs as they are. It is well known, also, that the introduction of any new usages and regulations, either religious or civil, among them, has at all times baffled the utmost endeavours of all their fierce conquerors, their attachment to their own institutions has always been invincible, and their horror of every novelty insurmountable.

The Hindoos are a people entirely different from all others. You may, if you choose, exercise over them the most despotic sway; you may oppress them by every kind of tyranny; you may overload them with taxes, and rob them of their property; you may carry away their wives and children, load them with chains and send them into exile:— to all such excesses they will perhaps submit; but if you speak of changing any of their principal institutions, either religious or civil, you will find a quite ungovernable people, never to be overcome on this point; and it



is my decided opinion, that the day when government shall presume to interfere in such matters, will be the last of its political existence.

This force of custom is remarked among the native Christians, as well as among the pagans. The former shew in all their religious concerns an apathy or insensibility, a dullness bordering in most instances on stupidity. Indeed, the education of all Hindoos renders them incapable of acquiring new ideas, and every thing which varies from the established customs is rather odious, or at least indifferent to them. It is not that they want wit, penetration, and aptness in the matters in which they were brought up, or those in which their temporal interests are compromised; but it is impossible to instil new principles, or infuse new ideas into their minds.

Besides that, surrounded on all sides by a religion which speaks to the senses, allures and bewilders its votaries by all kinds of sensual gratifications in this life, and in that which is to come, their minds are too gross to understand a religion which speaks only to the spirit, exhibits to them only inscrutable mysteries, and promises them chiefly spiritual enjoyments.



The Hindoos are constituted in such a manner by their education and customs, that they are quite insensible to all that does not make a strong impression on the senses. Fully aware of their dispositions, the impostors who contrived their monstrous form of worship, consulted in doing so the peculiar temper and character of these nations, and as they had to deal with a people who, they perceived, were only to be stirred up and roused by monstrosities, they in consequence gave to them a monstrous religion.

In fact, in discoursing upon the Christian religion with the Hindoos, your hearers will readily agree with you upon all that you say ; but they will feel nothing. When you discourse upon such topics, either among the Christians or pagans, your hearers sitting down on their heels, or cross-legged, will patiently, and with frequent assenting nods listen to you. But after preaching to them in this manner for several days, ask them for an account of your sermons, or moral instructions, and you will find that they have comprehended nothing, and that you have laboured in vain, because instead of speaking to their senses, you endeavoured to speak to their minds.

Seeing the empire of the senses over these



people, and that their imagination was only to be roused by strongly moving objects, the first missionaries among them judged that some advantage might result to the cause of religion by accommodating themselves, as far as possible, to their dispositions. Agreeably to this idea, the ordinary pomp and pageantry which attend the catholic worship, so objectionable to the protestant communions in general, were not judged by them striking enough to make a sufficient impression on the gross minds of the Hindoos. They in consequence incumbered the catholic worship with an additional superstructure of outward shew, unknown in Europe, which in many instances does not differ much from that prevailing among the gentiles, and which is far from proving a subject of edification to many a good and sincere Roman catholic.

This Hindoo pageantry is chiefly seen in the festivals celebrated by the native Christians. Their processions in the streets, always performed in the night time, have indeed been to me at all times a subject of shame. Accompanied with hundreds of *tom-toms*, (small drums,) trumpets, and all the discordant noisy music of the country; with numberless torches, and fire-works: the statue of the saint placed on a car which is charged with



garlands of flowers, and other gaudy ornaments, according to the taste of the country, — the car slowly dragged by a multitude shouting all along the march — the congregation surrounding the car all in confusion, several among them dancing, or playing with small sticks, or with naked swords: some wrestling, some playing the fool; all shouting, or conversing with each other, without any one exhibiting the least sign of respect or devotion. Such is the mode in which the Hindoo Christians in the inland country celebrate their festivals. They are celebrated, however, with a little more decency on the coast. They are all exceedingly pleased with such a mode of worship, and any thing short of such pageantry, such confusion and disorder, would not be liked by them.

I at several times strove to make those within my range sensible of the unreasonableness of so extravagant a worship, and how opposite it was to true piety; but my admonitions proving every where a subject of scandal rather than of edification to my hearers, who in several instances went so far as to suspect the sincerity of my faith, and to look upon me as a kind of free-thinker, and a dangerous innovator, merely on account of my free remarks on the subject, I judged it more



prudent to drop the matter, and overlook abuses it was out of my power to suppress. I cannot but declare that the necessity under which I stood to wink at such, and (in my opinion) many other no less reprehensible abuses, proved to me at all times a subject of great vexation and disgust.

I may perhaps appear to many, too severe in my criticism of the processions, and other outward ceremonies performed by the Hindoo Christians. Some persons of my profession, for whose talents and virtues I entertain the utmost regard, with whom I discussed *the subject*, and to whom I frankly expressed my undisguised dislike of such pageantry, differed entirely from me in their view of the *case*, and asserted that in this circumstance, as in every other, a due allowance ought to be made for the education, the character, and the genius of the Hindoos; of a carnal people who were entirely enslaved to the empire of the senses, and whose imagination was only to be roused by strongly moving objects, &c. Their opinion may be right, and mine wrong. In support of their opinion, it might be said that our holy books afford us instances of solemn processions performed in the streets among *the chosen people*, which on the whole, according to our modern ideas of decorum,



would appear to us no less objectionable than those of the Hindoo Christians. We have a full account of one of those processions, on the occasion of the transferring of the ark from the house of Abinadab, to that of Obededom, and from thence to the city of David. (2 Sam. c. 6.—1 Chron. c. 15.) David and all the people were assembled for the occasion. The ark placed on a new car made for the purpose; “and David, and all the house of Israel, played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir-wood, even on harps and psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals,” &c. &c. The holy king himself, over-powered with joy, and forgetting the gravity and decorum due to his exalted rank, “danced with all his might before the Lord,” &c. “So David, and all the house of Israel, brought up the ark of the Lord *with shouting*, and with the sound of the trumpet,” &c. &c.

In the mean time, the tolerating of such abuses, partly contrived, it appears, to allure the gentiles, by making an adequate impression on their senses, has missed its object; all this pageantry is at present beheld with indifference by the Hindoos, and the interests of the Christian religion have not been improved by what some may be disposed to term mere priest-craft.



If any one among the pagans still shews a desire to turn Christian, it is ordinarily among out-casts, or quite helpless persons, left without resources or connections in society, that they are to be found. They, generally speaking, ask for baptism from interested motives. Few, if any of these new converts, would be found, who might be said to have embraced Christianity from conviction; and I have every reason to apprehend, that as long as the usages and customs of the Hindoos continue unimpaired, it is perfect nonsense to think of making among them true and sincere proselytes.

In order to give you a striking idea of the religious dispositions of the Hindoo, and as a strong instance of what I asserted above, that there was to be found among them, nothing else but a vain phantom of Christianity, without any real or practical faith, I will with shame and confusion quote the following scandalous instance.

When the late Tippoo Sultan sought to extend his own religious creed all over his dominions, and make by little and little all the inhabitants in Mysore converts to Islamism, he wished to begin this fanatical undertaking with the native Christians living in his country, as the most odious to him, on the score of



their religion. In consequence, in the year 1784, he gave secret orders to his officers in the different districts, to make the most diligent inquiries after the places where Christians were to be found, and to cause the whole of them to be seized on the same day, and conducted under strong escorts to Seringapatam. This order was punctually carried into execution; very few of them escaped, and I have it from good authority, that the aggregated number of the persons seized in this manner, amounted to more than 60,000.

Some time after their arrival at Seringapatam, Tippoo ordered the whole to undergo the rites of circumcision, and be made converts to Mahometanism. The Christians were put together during the several days that the ceremony lasted: and, oh shame!—oh scandal!—will it be believed in the Christian world?—no one, not a single individual among so many thousands, had courage enough to confess his faith under this trying circumstance, and become a martyr to his religion. The whole apostatized *en masse*, and without resistance, or protestations, tamely underwent the operation of circumcision; no one among them possessing resolution enough to say, “I am a Christian, and I will die rather than renounce my religion!”



So general a defection, so dastardly an apostacy, is, I believe, unexampled in the annals of Christianity.

After the fall of the late Tippoo Sultan, most of those apostates came back to be reconciled to their former religion, saying that their apostacy had been only external, and they always kept in their hearts the true faith in Christ. About 2,000 of them fell in my way, and nearly 20,000 returned to the Mangalore district, from whence they had been carried away, and rebuilt there their former places of worship. God preserve them all from being exposed in future to the same trials; for should this happen, I have every reason (notwithstanding their solemn protestations when again reconciled to Christianity) to apprehend the same sad results, that is to say, a tame submission, and a general apostacy.

I have yet said nothing of that class of Christians in India commonly designated Portuguese, although most of them have no more relation by birth, or otherwise, to that people, or to any other European nation, than to the Tartar Calmucks. They are partly composed of half castes, the illegitimate offspring of Europeans, and a few descendants of the Portuguese; whilst the majority of them are the offspring of Hindoos of the lowest



rank, who, after learning some one of the European dialects, put on a hat, boots, and the European dress, and endeavour to copy European manners. In my humble opinion, and as far as I can judge from my personal observations, this class of Indians, composed of catholics and protestants, is in many respects inferior to the other classes of society. It has been remarked, (I apprehend with truth,) by many observers of the character of these people, that most of them possessed the vices and bad qualities, both of Europeans and Hindoos, with but very few of the virtues and good qualities of either ; and that amply stored with the laziness, apathy, and indolence of the natives, they, on the other hand, were destitute of the spirit of temperance and sobriety, self-command, patience and forbearance of the Hindoos, and also of that dignity and independence of mind which characterizes Europeans in the several circumstances of life.

The causes of such an inferiority are above all a neglected education, bad examples, and bad company. Most of them are born of a pagan, a Moorish, or a Pariah woman, or of a common prostitute, under whose tuition they remain to the age of 12 or 15 years. If a small proportion of them be sent to the public schools under the protection of government, where care is



taken to give them a Christian education, many go to them after their morals have been already corrupted, and their manners thoroughly vitiated by the early bad education, and still worse examples of their parents, and heathen servants; and yet, the greater number cannot have the advantage of those public schools, and are in consequence fostered at home under the tuition of a Pariah concubine, and attendants of the lowest description, who instil into the minds of those youths all the vices peculiar to themselves, and leave their rising passions without control. We must, therefore, cease to be surprised at the looseness of manners, and other irregularities exhibited by this class of Indians. They generally live in distressed circumstances, and most of them are considerably in debt. The causes of their poverty are the vices peculiar to themselves; above all, a want of foresight, a love of show, and a spirit profusion, is common to all.

Some well wishers to this class of Indians have thought that the circulation of bibles among them was alone sufficient to produce the wished-for improvement in their condition, and I have many times been requested to lend my assistance for the purpose. I beg leave to observe, that among the native Christians,



Portuguese, or others, most of whom are immersed in the grossest ignorance on the subject of religion, it is not bibles which are wanted, but rather elementary works, such as catechisms, short and familiar instructions, plain explanations of the creed, of the ten commandments, simple lectures upon Christian duties, upon the principal virtues, upon charity, temperance, self-command, the forgiveness of injuries, &c. &c.

After having prepared their mind by such elementary works, the reading of the Holy Scriptures, chiefly the New Testament, would become more intelligible and useful. But if you begin to exhibit all at once, without previous preparation, the naked text of the Bible to their uncouth and ignorant mind, you will, in my humble opinion, derive very little advantage; no more indeed than from shewing light to a dim-sighted person before removing the opacity which prevents his organs from seeing clearly.

In fact, from what I have already stated, you will easily perceive, that all classes of Indians must be treated as mere children in matters of religion. They must, therefore, be fed with milk of the lightest kind. If you hazard to give them all at once solid food, their weak stomach will reject the whole,



and their constitution, instead of being improved, will on the contrary be deteriorated, and entirely ruined by the frequently repeated experiment.

When I said that the class of Hindoos known under the appellation of Portuguese was inferior to the rest, I wished it to be understood that I only meant the majority of them; and this censure admits of very numerous exceptions. A great many, indeed, are to be found among them, whose minds have been cultivated by an early good education, and who conspicuously distinguish themselves from the others in society by their morals, the purity of their manners, their industry, their general deportment, and some by their gentleman-like conduct. But even in these you will always discover something Indian. They can never divest themselves entirely of that apathy, indolence, and dullness which seem to be the unavoidable lot of all people born under a vertical sun; and in spite of all their endeavours to imitate the Europeans, something is always remarked in them which discovers their origin, and seems to justify the old saying of Horace —

“ *Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.* !”

The surest mode of improving the con-



dition of this too much neglected class of Indians, which is daily increasing, would be in my humble opinion to give them more encouragement to excite their emulation by promoting the most worthy and best disposed among them to places and situations which many of them could occupy with ability, and which could render them respectable in society. At the present time, to add to the other sources of discouragement, they live despised by all, and almost forgotten. Spurned by the Europeans, spurned by the natives, who decline every familiar and confidential intercourse with them, they are necessarily thrown into a state of despair, which cannot fail to deaden in them all noble sentiments, and all kind of emulation.

From this picture of the state of Christianity in India, you will perceive how very trying must be the profession of a missionary in that country, and to how many dangers he is exposed in the arduous discharge of his professional duties, among a people so circumstanced, lying often, as he does, under the sad necessity of winking at their reprehensible practices, and overlooking usages which his conscience reprobates. You will also, I believe, agree with me, that of all professions this is the most distressing, and that much more than



an ordinary share of resolution and courage is required to persevere in it.

What I have stated, will, I think, be sufficient to enable you not only to judge of the state of Christianity in India, but also of its very inadequate influence on the minds of those who have embraced it. I am, however, far from adopting the opinion of those who think that in such circumstances, and with a people of such dispositions, Christianity is of no avail at all ; for, should it produce no other effect than that of altogether detaching so many thousand natives from the worship of idols, and the monstrous kind of idolatry prevailing all over India, to inculcate into their minds even nothing else but the merely barren and speculative knowledge of only one true God, and that of his only son our Lord and common Redeemer Jesus Christ ; this alone, ought, in my humble opinion, to be sufficient to wish for, and encourage its diffusion by all practicable means. Such means, however, will, I fear, never be found, while the Hindoos are fettered by their prevailing institutions, and above all, by that relating to the distinction of castes ; this alone will always prove an insurmountable bar to the conversion of the gentiles, and baffle the utmost efforts of the most zealous well-wishers to the cause of Chris-



tianity ; and the very same causes which prevent us from improving the religious condition of the unfortunate Hindoos, will also, I apprehend, baffle all the efforts of a humane and benevolent government to improve, (at least in any material degree) their temporal interests.

I am still farther from admitting the bold opinion of many prejudiced or misinformed Europeans, who contend that the native Christians are the worst of all Hindoos. There is something savouring of blasphemy in this assertion ; for, should that be the case, it would tend to nothing less than to prove that the Christian religion, so far from improving the condition of man, renders him on the contrary worse than pagans.

That on account of the peculiar prejudices under which all natives in India stand, it has but a very inadequate influence on their morals, manners, and general behaviour, will appear from what I have already stated. That most of them have nothing more of a Christian than the name, and, if not worse, are not yet much better than pagans, I am very reluctantly forced to admit ; but that the Christian religion renders those who have embraced it worse than the worshippers of idols, is an untenable paradox, contradicted by experience ; and will, I



trust, be disavowed by every candid and impartial observer : and I must add, in justice to truth, that I am acquainted with many among them who are in their morals, probity, and general behaviour, irreproachable men, enjoying the confidence even of the pagans ; and into whose hands I should not hesitate to intrust my own interests.

This statement will, I think, be sufficient to make it appear that my profession has not biassed my judgment on the subject, or rendered me over-partial to the Hindoo Christians ; but notwithstanding all this, it is my opinion that if a parallel for honesty and probity were drawn between them and pagans, the former would have the advantage.

I will refrain from entering into details on the low state of Christianity among the Europeans living in this country, as this part of the subject is your province rather than mine. I will content myself with saying, that if their public and national virtues are a subject of praise and admiration to all the castes of Hindoos, the bare-faced immorality, the bad examples, and disregard of every sense of religion exhibited by a great many amongst them, are not the least among the many obstacles which oppose the progress of their religion in this country, by increasing the



prejudices of the natives against it, and rendering it particularly odious to them, when they see it so ill observed by those who were educated in her bosom, and who come from countries where this religion alone is publicly professed. They think that there can be no advantage in embracing a religion which seems to have so little influence on the conduct of those who profess it: nay, a great many among them, judging from outward appearances, question whether the Europeans living among them have any religion whatever. I have been many times challenged to bear testimony on this fact, and very seriously asked by them whether the Frangy (Europeans) acknowledged and worshipped a God.

The causes just mentioned unfortunately operate very powerfully on the minds of the native Christians themselves, and by confounding and staggering their wavering faith, occasion the apostacy of many.

This, dear Sir, is an abridged sketch of the low and abject state of the Christian religion in India. In such discouraging circumstances, without any apparent human means to improve the cause of Christianity in this country, there only remains to the persons of our profession to look up with calmness and resignation to Him who holds in his hands the hearts



of men, changes them when he pleases, and is able, even of stones, to raise up children to Abraham, when the time appointed by him for the purpose arrives.

In these deplorable times, in which scepticism and immorality threaten to overwhelm every nation, and every condition, it only remains to us to weep, *between the porch and the altar*, over the iniquities of the people; to water the sanctuary with our tears; to bewail, like Jeremiah, the general corruption; to edify the people by our lessons and examples; to look to the Father of mercies; to pray to him to bring about better times; to spare his people, and not to give his heritage to reproach: and if our interposition cannot stem the torrent, and our altars are finally to be overthrown by the sacrilegious hands of modern philosophy, let us have, as our last resource, resolution and fortitude enough to stand by them to the last, and allow ourselves to be crushed down, and buried under their ruins.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

December, 1815.



LETTER III.

To the Rev. G. B.—*Bombay.*

My dear Sir,

As in our last interview you were so kind as to say that you would, at all times, be glad to receive any farther communication I might wish to make on the state of Christianity in India, and the means, (if any existed,) of improving Christian knowledge in this country, in addition to what I formerly wrote on the subject, I indulge the hope that the new elucidations I am about to give will meet with your favourable reception.

I will chiefly insist on the two leading topics already treated in my former letters, and which have attracted the attention of well-wishers to the cause of Christianity; viz. Are there any human means of improving christian religion among the Hindoos?—Will the Holy Scriptures translated and circulated among them, by fixing their attention to this sacred book, awaken their curiosity, and excite in them a spirit of enquiry, or a desire to know the truth?



I must confess that, whenever I reflect upon this subject, I cannot help experiencing feelings of regret and despondency. The experience I have gained through a familiar intercourse with the natives of all castes, for a period of twenty-five years entirely passed in their society, during which I lived like themselves, conforming to their customs and prejudices, in order to gain their confidence, and endeavouring by these means to insinuate myself among them as a religious teacher, has made me thoroughly acquainted with the insuperable obstacles that Christianity will ever have to encounter in the deep-rooted and quite invincible prejudices, and in the invariable usages, customs, and education of the Hindoos of all castes; and it is my decided opinion, that not only the interests of the Christian religion will never be improved among them, but also that it will by little and little lose the small ground it had gained in better times; and, in a short period, dwindle away to nothing.

The Hindoos may be divided into two classes—the impostors, and the dupes. The latter include the bulk of the population of India; and the former is composed of the whole tribe of Brahmins. Now, in a society composed of such materials, we can entertain



but very faint hopes of improving the interests, or extending the benefits of the Christian religion.

The Brahmins, in framing their system of imposture, and in devising the monstrous worship prevailing all over India, not only used every artifice in their power to adapt it to the dispositions of a simple and credulous people, but, above all, they employed all possible means to establish in this way, in a permanent and indisputable manner, the high power and uncontroverted control they have always exercised over the other tribes. In order that their artifice in establishing throughout the body of society the most downright imposture which ever prevailed among any nation on the earth, might not be questioned, they had the precaution to incumber the people with those numberless institutions, which, at the same time that they secure the permanent superiority of the Brahmins, render the other tribes incapable of reasoning, or of any mental exertion which might enable them to emerge from that state of intellectual degradation in which they are held by their unchangeable usages and customs.

It is indeed, it may be remarked, true that all impostors who introduced or propagated false religions contrived to answer only human



and temporal purposes in the world, and when the leaders of the popular faith had recourse to the same artifices with the Hindoo Brahmins, and used, in common with them, every kind of cunning and craft to prevent the people from discovering their imposture, their end was the same; and that it is peculiar to the Christian religion to lay open to all, both friend and foe, its documents, its records and principles; because, this alone being founded on truth, this alone can boldly challenge the enquiries and attacks of the severest criticism, both ancient and modern.

To this I will answer, that no one among the contrivers and leaders of false religions was ever able to devise so well-framed a system of imposture as the Brahmins have done, in order to preserve unimpaired their religious control over the other castes, and to keep the latter in that state of stupidity and ignorance in which they are immersed. It is a sin, it is a crime, a sacrilege in every Hindoo who is not born a Brahmin to endeavour to emerge from that state of ignorance, and to aspire to the lowest degree of knowledge. It is a sin for him even to presume to calculate on what days fall the new and full moon. He is obliged to learn this and similar matters, and to be guided in the



most common occurrences of life by his religious teachers. He is forbidden by his institutions to lay any claim whatever to either sacred or profane science, or to intermeddle in any way with the one or the other. His religious leaders have engrossed, as their absolute and exclusive inheritance, all that is included within the term *science*, fearing lest if an access, even to profane science, were given to the other tribes, this, by causing them to exert their own reason and judgment, should lead them to discover the heap of religious absurdities and extravagancies imposed upon their credulity by an interested priesthood.

Among the arts, the Brahmins have left to the other castes only those whose exercise depends more upon bodily than on mental exertion; such as, music on windy instruments, painting, sculpture, and mechanics; and even these they have beset with so many sources of discouragement, that they have remained in their infancy, and none of them has ever approached perfection, they all being at the present time the same as they were two or three thousand years ago.

The well-wishers to the cause of Christianity in Europe, who know nothing of the insuperable difficulties to be encountered every where



in the dissemination of evangelical truths among the Hindoos of all castes, may indulge on this subject such speculations as they please, and such as their religious zeal may suggest to them. They may exclaim that "the Gospel is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" that the truth, in its silent and slow, though steady march, must get the better of error, win the supercilious, soften the obdurate, fix the fickle, and overcome every obstacle that impedes its progress. Such pleasing dreams may be indulged within the precincts of a closet; but I would have those well-intentioned persons, who entertain them, to exercise my arduous profession only for a period of a few months, when I have no doubt they would become thoroughly convinced of the utter impossibility of carrying into effect their benevolent speculations among a people circumstanced as the Hindoos are.

That truth must open its way every where, and get the better of error and imposture, may be the case in ordinary circumstances, among persons whose reason and judgment are not perverted by unnatural passions and practices; among a people who silence their passions, and whose minds are open to argument and persuasion; or among persons dis-



posed to know the truth, like the pious pagan Cornelius; "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway," (*Acts*, x.): but this, I fear, will never be the case with a people like the Hindoos, whose minds seem to be hermetically shut to the voice of truth, and to the rays of light; and whose judgment is led astray by their passions, and most of their public and private institutions. I have, alas! nowhere met, among the Hindoo Brahmins, another Cornelius, "whose prayers and alms are come up as a memorial before God." I have to this day remarked amongst them nothing but pride, self-conceit, duplicity, lying, and every kind of unnatural and anti-Christian vices.

The sun, by its brilliancy, dispels darkness, and irradiates the world, but it is only when its rays are not interrupted by any interposing cloud. Truth, in like manner, produces its effects, but it is only after men have silenced those passions and prejudices which impede its march.

Well-wishers to the cause of Christianity will say, "Are we then to be discouraged by difficulties, and altogether to desist from imparting to our Hindoo brethren the most valuable of divine favours — *Revelation?* and



must we continue to see them immersed in the grossest idolatry without, at least, endeavouring to exhibit to their view the source and origin of the divine light? Shall we continue to be indifferent and cold spectators of the infamous worship of the Lingam? Shall we continue to behold, with apparent indifference, the prostitutions practised at Teroopatty in honour of *Vengattassuara*, the sacrifices of human victims often renewed in Orixá in the temple and in honour of *Jagnat*, and the frequent immolations of widows on the funeral pile of their deceased husbands; and must we continue to have our reason and understanding insulted by the serious recital of the most extravagant fables?

“ You speak, Sir, in your letters, of the difficulties and contradictions to be met every where in India in the dissemination of evangelical truths; but were not the same difficulties met with in every nation where the Gospel has been preached? Did not Christ warn his followers that they should be hated, contradicted, and persecuted in every way, and in all manners? Did not the apostles and their successors disseminate the evangelical light amidst every kind of discouragement? Were they not ‘ buffeted, reviled, persecuted, and defamed?’ Were they not made ‘ a



spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men?' Were they not made 'as the filth of the earth, and the offscouring of all things?' Was it not amidst all kinds of disadvantages that they preached the Gospel with such amazing success to kings and people, to the learned and the ignorant, to the barbarian and the polished; and laid the unshaken foundation of that faith of which Christ himself is the corner-stone, against which 'the gates of hell shall not prevail, and which shall last to the end of the world?'

"You speak of the Hindoos as an ignorant and unreflecting people; but is not the Christian religion that of the wise and the unwise, of the Greek and the barbarian? and is not its simple doctrines within the reach of the meanest capacity? On the other hand, does not christianity accommodate itself to all characters, and civil institutions? Has not its divine Author, by commanding men to 'render unto Cæsar what is Cæsar's,' accommodated it to every form of government? In short, is it worthy to be the religion of all climates, countries, and people?

"You mention the strong opposition to be met with on the part of an interested and crafty priesthood; but were cunning and craft peculiar to the priests of Seeva and Vishnoo?



Had not the first preachers of the Gospel the same difficulty to contend with in every pagan country? Did the priests of Mithra in Persia, of Osiris in Egypt, of Cérès and Cybele in Greece and Italy, the druids among the Celts, the priests of Odin in Scandinavia, &c. &c. yield their ground without strife and resistance? Did not the christian religion, without any other weapons than the Gospel, and without any other means but those of a mild persuasion, overcome every difficulty, and flourish amidst the severest persecutions? Did it not, within a short period, bring under its standard the polished Greece and the proud Italy? and was not the cross planted on the ruins of the Areopagus, and on the very summit of the capitol? Did it not bring under its laws the swarms of barbarians who, during many centuries, invaded and desolated the *lower empire*? and did not the ferocious Vandals finish by bending their necks under the yoke of the Gospel? Did not this holy religion overturn and supplant the druidical worship prevailing among the Cantabrians, the Gauls, the Britons, and the Germans, and establish itself among the fierce Scandinavians, on the ruins of the worship of Odin, and push its spiritual conquests to the polar circle, and the extremities of the world?



“ Has it not had nearly similar success in modern times among pagan nations, to whom it was announced for the first time? Had it not the effect of civilizing, and bringing to habits of industry, the numerous hordes of savages who formerly wandered, with wild beasts, on the vast plains of Paragay? and was it not, at the beginning of the 17th century, on the point of altogether supplanting the worship of the Bowzes in Japan, and becoming there the national religion on the ruins of that of *Xaca* and *Amyda*? In short, was not the Gospel, in every country where it was preached, a bright light, which altogether dispelled the deep darkness of idolatry, of error, and imposture, to make shine in its place the truth in all its splendor and purity; as a shining sun whose bright beams pierce through the thickest mist, dissipate it, and purge the atmosphere of its noxious vapours?

“ Why, then, should we despair of imparting to our Hindoo brethren the greatest of all benefits, and lay aside the design of rendering them happy both in this life, and in that to come? and why should this be the only nation on earth which should oppose insuperable obstacles to the introduction of the true religion among them, and among whom the word of God should fail of producing its



effects, now chiefly when our holy religion is sheltered from open and direct persecution, and is enjoying a full toleration under the auspices of an enlightened and liberal government?"

So, no doubt, will the well-wishers to the cause of Christianity reason in Europe, and on those, or similar arguments, will they ground their benevolent hopes of the success of Christianity in India.

To all these speculations, I will briefly and in general answer, that in no country in the world has the Christian religion had to encounter the stupendous obstacles that are to be met with in India. In no country was the struggle so desperate; in none had it to deal with a people so completely priest-ridden; in none had it to oppose a system of cunning and priestcraft so deep laid, and so well calculated to baffle all the attempts of that divine religion to gain a solid footing; but, above all, in no country had it to encounter any difficulty resembling that baneful division of the people into castes which (whatever may be its advantages in other respects) has always proved, and will ever prove, an insurmountable bar to its progress. In consequence of this fatal division, nowhere but in India is a father reduced to the cruel and unnatural



necessity of separating himself for ever from a beloved son who happens to embrace this religion; or a son to renounce for ever a tender father for the same reason. Nowhere is a spouse enjoined to divorce, for the same cause, a cherished husband; or an unmarried young person, after having embraced Christianity, doomed to pass the rest of his life in a forced state of celibacy. In no other country is a person who becomes a Christian exposed, by doing so, to the loss of kindred, friends, goods, possessions, and all that he holds dear. In no country, in short, is a man, by becoming a convert to Christianity, cast out as a vagrant from society, proscribed and shunned by all: and yet all this happens in India, and a Hindoo who turns Christian must submit himself to all these, and many other no less severe trials.

Let us also consider the wide difference which exists, in many other respects, between the Hindoos and the other nations of the world, and let this consideration teach us not to be misled in this matter by precedents, or by arguments *à pari*, or *à fortiori*.

Among other nations, both ancient and modern, civilized and savage, there always existed a chain of communication, which taught them that each of them formed only a part of



the great body of society, and that they stood in want of each other. They, in general, were disposed to profit by the improvement of each other; and although their priests and religious leaders had generally engrossed the whole of the mysteries of religion, and of religious knowledge, which they were careful not to communicate injudiciously to the vulgar, yet the other individuals were allowed to judge for themselves in profane matters, or at least in their private and domestic concerns. They were, moreover, allowed philosophical and many other pursuits, which gave them ample room to exert their intellectual faculties. They were fond of new discoveries, and their minds were open to argument, reasoning, and persuasion.

The Hindoo, on the contrary, has been bereft of his reason and understanding by his crafty religious guides; he cannot (as has been already observed) in any circumstance judge for himself, not even in his domestic concerns, or the most trifling occurrences of life. All is invariably ruled by his unchangeable institutions. Imparting or receiving knowledge is a crime, and listening for the purpose to any other but his religious leaders, the Brahmins, is considered as a heinous transgression.



An Hindoo, and above all, a Brahmin, by his institutions, his usages, his education and customs, must be considered as a kind of moral monster, as an individual placed in a state of continual variance and opposition with the rest of the human race; as a being sequestered from mankind, with whom he is forbidden all free and confidential intercourse, nay, whom he is obliged to shun, to scorn, and to hate. The crafty Brahmins, (in order that the system of imposture that establishes their unmolested superiority over the other tribes, and brings the latter under their uncontrolled bondage, might in no way be discovered or questioned,) had the foresight to draw up between the Hindoos and the other nations on earth an impassable, an impregnable line, that defies all attacks from foreigners. There is no opening to approach them, and they themselves are strictly, and under the severest penalties, precluded from access to any body for the purpose of improving themselves, and bettering their actual condition, than which, as they are firmly and universally persuaded, nothing on the earth is more perfect.

On the other hand, it will be acknowledged, I believe, by every unbiassed observer, that as long as we are unable to make impression on the polished part of the nation, on the leaders



of public opinion, on the body of Brahmins in short, there remain but very faint hopes of propagating Christianity among the Hindoos; and as long as the only result of our labours shall be, as is at present the case, to bring into our respective communions here and there a few desperate vagrants, outcasts, pariahs, horse-keepers, beggars, and other persons of the lowest description, the impression made on the public mind cannot fail to be unfavourable, and detrimental to the interests of Christianity among a people who, in all circumstances, are ruled by the force of custom and example, and are in no case allowed to judge for themselves.

Now, there is no possibility to have access, either by word or writing, to the refined part of the nation; the line of separation between us and the brahmins is (as I have just observed) drawn, and the barrier impassable; there is no opening to argument or persuasion: our opponents are strictly bound by their religious and civil statutes to shun, to scorn, and hate us. They are obliged to do so from a sense of duty. To listen to us would be in them a crime, and the greatest of all disgraces.

I have already given an imperfect description of the Hindoo Brahmin by repre-



senting him as a kind of moral monster in the social order ; as a being whose institutions are generally a deviation from the order of nature, and who has nothing to do with the rest of mankind, from whom he has entirely insulated himself.

The leading feature of the education of a Christian, is an universal charity and benevolence towards all his fellow-creatures.

The leading feature of the education of a Brahmin is an universal hatred and contempt towards all the human race.

A Christian is taught to love even his enemies, and to return good for evil.

A Brahmin is taught, if not positively to hate his friends, and to return evil for good, at least to conduct himself through life by quite selfish considerations, and to sacrifice all, without exception, to his private interests, without distinction between friends and foes ; to be entirely unmindful of the services rendered to him, and to consider them, whatever may be their importance and value, as his strict due.

A Brahmin is, moreover, obliged from duty to be selfish, intolerant and proud, insolent and forbidding. He is brought up in the indelible idea that he is the only perfect being on earth, a being of by far a superior stamp



had such extraordinary successes amidst every kind of discouragement and contradiction, that it is quite impossible to account for it but by the supernatural and invisible interference and assistance of the divine agent, who alone was able to overcome the otherwise insuperable obstacles that opposed its progress, and to extend its empire over so large a proportion of mankind. We are obliged, however, to confess, that notwithstanding its early amazing progress, the revealed religion has to this day been that of only the minority of mankind; and that if we except the spiritual conquest it has made in modern times in the new world, and in the Philippine Islands, in which alone the Spaniards are said to have gained over to Christianity about two millions of natives, it has, from a period of about a thousand years, remained stationary in the old, making no sensible progress among the heathen nations during so long a period, and rather losing than gaining ground. Its conquests in Asia, from the epoch of the Portuguese invasion to this day, are rather insignificant, and I apprehend that I am rather over-rating the number of the converts made in this part of the world, by stating them to be twelve hundred thousand; nearly half of this number may be found in the peninsula of



India and the island of Ceylon, and the rest in the kingdoms of Pegu, Siam, Laos, Cambodge, Cochin-china, Tunkin, and in China, in which countries missionaries have been sent, almost without intermission, during the last two or three centuries. Now this number, scattered among a population of perhaps more than five hundred millions of inhabitants, will appear very inconsiderable indeed, and very far from compensating for the heavy losses the true religion has sustained in several other countries, from Mahometan invasions, and other causes.

Now, who has told us that Christianity shall not remain stationary in like manner, and continue to the end of the world to be the religion of only the minority of mankind. Christ (as I mentioned in another letter) has, it is true, promised that “the Gospel of the kingdom shall be published in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” His sacred pledge, in this respect, has been fulfilled, or is still fulfilling, but, at the same time, has he told any one that all nations, or even the majority of them, should be brought under the yoke of the Gospel?

It is true, that in several of the books of the Old Testament, and chiefly in the Psalms of David, in which frequent allusions to the



coming of the Messiah are made, he is represented as extending his spiritual dominion over all the earth, from one end of the world to the other; but most of the expressions used by the inspired writers in those passages of Holy Writ either have a mystical meaning, or are mere metaphors which cannot be taken in their literal import, and whose true meaning cannot be perfectly understood by us.

The ways of God, in his gratuitous election of only a part of his creatures, are to us (as I observed in a former letter) an unfathomable mystery, a hidden secret, which may never be revealed to us in this life; for "who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" Whenever I reflect upon this awful subject, my weak understanding is quite confounded at the apparent darkness that surrounds it; and, like St. Paul, I stop my wandering thoughts, and fix my irresolute mind, by humbly exclaiming, with him, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How just are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

"Many widows (says Christ, in allusion to this mysterious subject,) were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when general



famine was throughout all the land, but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow ; and many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elijeus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." (Luke, iv. 25, 26, 27.)

Faith, and other supernatural virtues, are merely a gratuitous gift from God, which he bestows on whom he pleases, when he pleases, and on what conditions he pleases. He may, therefore, without even an appearance of injustice, require as a condition from those to whom the boon is tendered, that they shall throw no unnatural obstacles into his way ; that they shall not pervert the use of their reason by unnatural passions ; that they shall not run into extravagancies which reason loudly reprobates, and against which all nature bears testimony ; and that they shall not allow themselves to be misled by a religious worship, the folly of which heaven and earth loudly and openly proclaim. But still more, the dispositions of God, and above all, his hidden system of election and reprobation, are quite out of the reach of our weak understanding.

From the beginning of the world, the true religion has journeyed from one country to another. It has passed from one people to



another; it has been in several instances taken away from one nation, and transferred to another: several people who had been enlightened by the light of Revelation fell into the darkness of idolatry or Mahometanism. While, on the other hand, "the people who sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light sprung up." "Qui non viderant, viderunt, et qui viderant cæci facti sunt." (John, ix.) Amidst all these changes of abode, amidst the revolutions which occasioned them, the true faith continued unstained, and received no blemish, no more, indeed, than does the bright and glowing sun, when, leaving one hemisphere in darkness, he passes to the other to irradiate it with all his splendor.

We have seen in ancient and modern times Christian and heathen nations, which, having filled up the measure of their iniquities, and gone far beyond the limits of divine forbearance, have been cursed, reprobated, and finally exterminated under the divine wrath. We have striking examples of this in our sacred records: nothing short of the utter extermination of the wicked nations which peopled the land of Canaan was able to satisfy divine justice. All the worshippers of Moloch and Belphegor were under the same



anathema, and all that profligate race were doomed to a general and total destruction.

Are the worshippers of the Lingam less culpable than those of Belphegor? and is the worship of Jagnot and Teroopatty less nefarious than that of Moloch? Are we not warranted, on beholding the unnatural and odious worship which prevails all over India, in thinking that these unhappy people are lying under an everlasting anathema; that by obstinately refusing to listen to the voice of the heavens, which "declare the glory of God," they have for ever rendered themselves unworthy of the divine favours; that by obstinately rejecting the word of God, which has been in vain announced to them without intermission, during these last three or four centuries, they have "filled up the measure of their fathers," have been entirely forsaken by God, and (what is the worst of divine vengeance) given over for ever to a reprobate mind, on account of the peculiar wickedness of their worship, which supposes, in those among whom it prevails, a degree of perversity far beyond that of all old Pagan nations?

In fact, the inferiority of the Hindoo Brahmins to all other Pagan nations, with respect to religion, is the more striking, as they have not been able to distinguish what is



a virtue, and what is not, since they in general suppose it much more meritorious to render service to beasts than to men. A pious Hindoo Brahmin, who will make it his imperative duty to share his frugal meal with fishes, snakes, monkeys, and birds of prey, will, on the other hand, behold, with the coldest indifference, a poor wretch starving at his door, without thinking of assisting him.

Instead of that great leading precept of Christian charity, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour like thyself," which is calculated to convert the whole of mankind into a community of brothers, it might be said that the leading precept of the Brahmins is this, "Thou shalt love brutes like thyself."

It is true that the Hindoos, in general, are by no means strangers to most of the moral and social virtues which are innate in our natures, and common to all civilised people; but they have been unable to apply those virtues to their proper objects, or when applied to suitable objects, they have robbed them of their intrinsical merits by the most selfish motives, or the most childish vanity. To practise a virtue from quite disinterested motives, and only to enjoy the inward satisfaction of doing good, are things above their comprehension. Ask a rich Hindoo who



spends the whole or a part of his fortune in erecting or repairing places of religious worship, in building choulteries, as a shelter for the weary traveller, or in lining public roads with trees, to refresh them by their shade; in digging wells and tanks for the benefit of the public, and in such like charitable undertakings; what are his motives for so doing, his answer will almost invariably be, that he does so to be publicly praised as a virtuous man during his life, and to transmit his name to posterity after his death.

Let it not be supposed that I indulge in this strain of speech to abuse or revile the unhappy Hindoos; far be from me even the naked thought of insulting them on the score of their errors in religious or other matters, how monstrous soever they may appear to me. Their blindness and obstinacy on this subject have at all times excited in my mind only feelings of compassion at their misfortunes. In beholding the extravagance of their idolatrous worship, I cannot help exclaiming with the prophet king, and with the liveliest sense of gratitude to Heaven; "Beatus homo quem tu erudieris Domine, et de lege tua docueris eum." And when I behold them prostrating themselves before their gods of stone and brass, I exclaim, "Such were our ancestors,



and so did they, and so would we ourselves do, had not God, through his infinite mercy, taken us out of such an abyss of darkness, in order to illumine us with the bright light of his divine Revelation! Let everlasting thanks be returned to Him, for this the greatest of all his divine favors in this life."

But it will be said, will the actual extensive intercourse of the natives with the Europeans be of no avail to the former with respect to their religious improvement; will it not at least excite in their minds a spirit of enquiry, and a desire to know the truth; dispel by little and little the thick clouds of ignorance that hang over them, and bring them back to sounder notions on religion?

I cannot refrain from smiling at the idea that the conduct and examples of the existing race of Europeans of any nation whatever, will be able to bring the Hindoos to just notions on this subject, and instil into their minds principles of morality and religion. The reverse has to this day been the case, and (as I stated in a former letter) it is most certain that the intercourse of the Hindoos with the Europeans has proved the last blow to the interests of Christianity in India, and that the repeated invasions of the country by the latter, have put a stop to all further



conversion, and only contributed to make apostates among the old converts, by rendering them objects of universal contempt among all classes of Hindoos.

It is, I believe, generally admitted, that the invasions and conquests which the Europeans, prompted by avarice and an unextinguishable thirst of dominion, have not ceased to make in the old and new world during the last three or four centuries, have, in most cases, proved rather a curse than a blessing, and have, on the whole, produced more evil than good. Not to speak of the flood of blood through which those conquests were made; and the European dominions established, the invaders, among many other evils, have supplied the savages with fermented poisonous liquors, with the use of which they were formerly unacquainted, and which have increased their natural ferocity to a considerable extent.

They are become the general carriers, and almost the exclusive monopolists of that poisonous drug called opium, whose effects are to produce complete madness; and from an insatiable thirst for gain, they have shamelessly smuggled that poison all over Asia, in open violation of the wise prohibitions of the rulers of several countries to prevent so



pernicious an article from being introduced into the states under their sway. They have had the horrid distinction of teaching the half-civilized people their infernal system of warfare, and supplied them with the most destructive kind of weapons, the more effectually to destroy each other. They have, in general, by their bad examples, polluted their minds, and vitiated the simplicity of their manners. They have poisoned their bodies by loathsome and incurable diseases, till then unknown to them; but, perhaps, with a few exceptions, they have to this day operated no material improvement in their morals or religion; on which points, the conquered are found to be, at present, rather in a worse condition than they were when their fierce invaders, stepping over the immense barriers by which nature seemed to have separated them for ever, and violating their territories and their natural rights, made their first appearance among them.

During the long period I have been in India, I have visited places inhabited by Europeans of several nations, by English, French, Dutch, Danes, and Portuguese. In none of those places have I been able to remark any amelioration or improvement in the morals and religion of the natives. Any



changes I have observed in this respect, were rather for the worse. If their intercourse with the Europeans has operated any alteration, it has been to prompt them to lay aside and disregard all that was good and justifiable in their usages, retaining all that is bad and exceptionable.

Nobody can deny that the Hindoos have to this day copied nothing of the Europeans besides their vices and their follies. They have been at all times but too well disposed to imitate their bad examples, whilst, on the other hand, their virtues, the spirit of charity, of liberality, of compassion and benevolence, which characterise most Europeans, have not even been noticed by the Hindoos in general.

This circumstance may be distinctly noticed by every observer, who travels over the country. Let him go to the coast, or any other place inhabited by Europeans, he will find there the natives in general, selfish, arrogant, impertinent, impatient of control, obtrusive, insolent towards Europeans, ever ready to injure or insult them, when they think they may do so with impunity. Let him call for any purpose in those parts of the country on any native who in speaking to him lies under no restraint, or is not overawed by interested considerations, and who thinks that he may



without danger to himself deal freely with him, he will easily remark in his words and his countenance how very conscious he is of his high superiority over him. He will observe in his forbidding looks, or in his affected sneer, the expression of the inward contempt he entertains towards him, as forcibly as if he said openly in his face, "I am a civilised man, and thou art a barbarian; I am in my country, and thou art a foreigner; I am in my place, and thou art an obtruder; if thou art my superior in physical force, I am thine in education and every kind of intellectual endowments."

Let the same person go into the inland country, or into places where the Europeans are not at all, or but little known, and he will in general find a people, shy it is true, but docile, peaceable, unassuming, submissive, serviceable, respectful to Europeans, and ready to render them service, whenever the latter betray nothing forbidding in their manners and behaviour.

So far from the intercourse of the Europeans with the natives making a favourable impression on the latter, on the score of religion, this very circumstance produces (as I mentioned in a former letter) a quite opposite effect.



On the whole, it is my decided opinion, that as long as we have no warmer promoters of the cause of Christianity than the existing race of Europeans of any nation whatever, we can entertain but very faint hopes of Christianity gaining ground in India. As long as a native Christian, who happens to fall in the way of an European, shall (after having been surveyed with a stern and scornful countenance) be welcomed by him with this insulting reproach, "Why hast thou forsaken the religion of thy forefathers to embrace a foreign worship?" so long as the name of a native Christian and a rogue shall sound as synonymous in the ears of a prejudiced European; so long as the deluded victims who devote themselves to the most arduous of all professions, forego all worldly prospects in life, and sacrifice their repose, their health, and their lives, for the purpose of imparting to their fellow-creatures (what they consider as the most valuable of all blessings,) the knowledge of the only one true God, and of the worship due to him by all his creatures, shall be branded with the appellation of fanatics, idiots, and other the like opprobrious epithets; so long as the Hindoos shall hear the Europeans themselves, making in several instances their own religion, and its sacred



records, the subject of their paltry sarcasms and raileries; so long as the natives shall behold the precepts and morals of that holy religion openly violated without shame or scruple by those who were educated in its bosom; in short, so long as the Christian religion shall have to struggle with so many domestic and foreign obstacles, it would, in my humble opinion, be perfect nonsense to flatter ourselves with the hope of its ever gaining any solid footing in the country.

I will now say a few words on the project of enlightening the Hindoos, by the translation of the Holy Scriptures, and their circulation among them. But as I have already treated this subject in a former letter, what I have to add shall be confined to a few short remarks.

It appears to me, that we are a little too much disposed to over-rate the effects that we fancy the naked divine work ought to produce on the mind of an ill-disposed heathen nation. We judge of the effects it ought to produce on them, by those it produces on ourselves, who have been brought under its instructions; who received it in our early years from Christian parents; and who have perhaps made it our principal study in our maturer age.



To start in the work of proselytism by exhibiting at once to the view of the pagans of any nation whatever our holy books, is in my opinion to commence our labours where we ought to finish them ; it is to build an edifice before having laid its foundations ; it is the same as to require from an apprentice in mechanics to form a complicated machine, without supplying him with tools for the purpose ; it is worse, it is to call upon a man, just come out of the hands of nature, upon a savage, whom we would wish to make a perfect mechanic, and to whom, after showing a model composed of a great number of complicated wheels and springs, we should say, " Here is your model ; learn your trade from it : when you have succeeded to imitate it, we will receive you into the profession of a mechanic. We say nothing more to you on the subject. Take the model in your hand, and shift for yourself ; commence by finding out iron mines, extract the iron from the ore, make your axes, your saw, and other tools, fell your trees, work your timber, your wheels, and your springs, and finish your machine." Would not the savage, on hearing such language, be disposed to think that his master intended to make a jest of him ? or if he believed that he spoke



seriously, would he not be appalled at the task imposed on him, and in his despair would he not break in pieces the model left in his hand, and fly again to his forest and native wilds?

We have many instances of Christians accustomed to read and interpret the Holy Scriptures, passing from one sect to another, and endeavouring to justify this change by the meaning, or the liberal interpretation of the word of God; but I have never heard of a single instance of a pagan having been converted to any sect of Christianity by the simple reading of the naked text of our sacred books. This is certainly the primitive source from which our faith is derived, and the foundation on which it is built; but it is so far above the comprehension of our unprepared understanding, that it would be unreasonable on our part to expect an uncultivated and unassisted mind to be able to decide for itself, and to build his faith on it alone.

Our holy records afford us a striking instance of the insufficiency of this means alone to build up one's faith in the example of the Eunuch of Candace, (*Acts viii.*) who probably was not a man of common parts or education.



He was returning from Jerusalem, and, sitting in his chariot, was reading on his way Esaias the prophet. Philip, warned by an angel, passed on the same road, and prompted by the spirit, he ran to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Hear now the candid answer of the Eunuch: "And he said, How can I (understand it), except some man should guide me? And he desired that he would come up, and sit with him," &c. &c. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and preached unto him Jesus," &c. (See the whole of this edifying occurrence in the quoted chapter.)

Far be from me the thought of failing in the least in profound respect and veneration for the sacred word of God, or of detracting a single particle from the salutary effects it is calculated to produce on a well-disposed person, who makes it his study, with the intention of becoming acquainted with his duties as a man and Christian. But I repeat it, to exhibit the Scriptures to an unprepared pagan, to build up his faith upon them, or even to excite in his mind a spirit of enquiry or a desire to know the truth, is, in my humble opinion, an absurd proceeding.

I believe that I may without presumption, assert the same with respect to the native



Christians in general. I have now under my religious control between 7000 and 8000 persons of this description; and I should be very much perplexed indeed, were I among so large a number desired to point out four individuals capable of understanding the meaning of the Bible, and to whom the reading of the naked text of the Holy Scriptures would prove of the least utility.

I have composed for the instruction of this my large flock, a short catechism comprised within ten or twelve pages, explanatory of the principal truths of the Christian religion. This small composition is worded in the simplest and plainest manner, and to make it better understood, I have also repeatedly explained it in various ways to my congregations; yet I find that after so much trouble, the great majority of them do not understand it. Now, I beg leave to ask of any candid and unprejudiced person, of what utility can the Holy Scriptures be to persons unable to understand a short catechism of ten pages, composed in the plainest style?

Nobody is better persuaded than myself of the quite disinterested intentions of the Bible Society. I feel that it would be extremely impertinent in me to make insinuations in the least offensive to that learned body; but I



cannot help saying that their endeavours to enlighten the Hindoos, or to make the least impression on them through the translation of the Holy Scriptures circulated among them, are, in my opinion, quite lost trouble, and will be of no avail. I cannot moreover help declaring, that the money spent for the purpose would be better and more meritoriously employed in feeding the hungry and clothing the naked.

It is of no utility to distribute Bibles if you have not well-founded hopes that they will be read, and their meaning be understood. Now, I have every reason to apprehend, that as long as they shall be translated into the almost unintelligible style in which we see the versions already executed, there is not the remotest hope of their being of the least utility even to the best disposed persons, and that (as I observed in a foregoing letter) those loose and spurious versions will only tend to increase the contempt of the prejudiced natives against Christianity, and prove on the whole detrimental to its interests.

In fact, if one of the many proofs of our holy books being of divine origin be derived from their intrinsic worth, from their noble, inimitable, and majestic simplicity, there is, alas! on the other hand, but too much room



to fear that the Hindoos will form a directly opposite judgment on the subject, when they behold the quite ludicrous and vulgar style of the versions at present circulated among them; and that even the most reasonable and best disposed, on perusing the Scriptures under such a contemptible shape, so far from looking upon them as the work of God, will, on the contrary, be strongly impelled to consider them as mere forgeries of some obscure, ignorant, and illiterate individual, and of course as a downright imposture,

Among many instances which are come within my personal notice of the effects produced on the minds of the natives by the versions of the Holy Scriptures into the idioms of India, I will content myself with relating the following only: —

Being in a neighbouring village, three or four months ago, I received there the visit of some Christians living in the *Bellary* district, in a place called *Talairu*, where between 30 and 40 *Tilinga* Christian families reside. After the ordinary marks of respect, and the usual compliments, one of my visitors took a book out of a small bag, and without uttering a single word, laid it at my feet. On opening it, I found it was a translation into *Tilinga* of the Gospel of St. Matthew; and before saying



any thing about it, I wished to be acquainted with the opinion of my visitors on the work. Having interrogated them for the purpose, the person who had delivered it to me began the following curious account, saying that some months back two Christians of their village went to Bellary on some business, and hearing that a European *gooroo*, or priest, (whom from their account I understood to have been a protestant missionary,) was living in that place, they went to pay him a visit; that they had been very kindly received by him, and that after a good deal of conversation, chiefly on religious subjects, the gooroo, on dismissing them, had made them a present of the book, strongly recommending them to have a chapter of its contents read every Sunday in their chapel to the assembled congregation; that there being only five or six individuals among the congregation who could write and read, on their return they had called on them, and delivered the book to them; that these persons had assembled together for the purpose of reading it, and becoming acquainted with its contents; but that they were unable to understand the meaning of a single chapter; that in their perplexity they had applied to some pagans living in the same village, to assist them in expounding the book; but no



one among them had been able to understand any thing about it; that they were then disposed to believe that the foreign *gooroo*, who was not their own, had given them such a work to make a jest of them, and that in this persuasion, some were of opinion, that it should be thrown into the fire; but the majority wishing to become acquainted at least with the outlines of the work, called for the purpose on a brahmin *poorohita*, or astrologer, living in their neighbourhood (which circumstance of Christians having recourse to a pagan astrologer, to expound the gospel to them, is not the least curious); that the *poorohita* having perused one or two pages in their presence, told them that it appeared to him to be a curious book, but that it was written in so loose and incoherent a style, and in so obscure a manner, that it would require some days to become acquainted with the whole. He therefore dismissed them, telling them to come back after a few days.

When the Christians returned, the *poorohita* gave them the following curious answer, assuring them, in a low tone of voice, that he had thoroughly perused the work with attention, and that it was nothing more or less than a treatise upon *magic*; adding, that it was worked up in obscure and incoherent



sentences, quite unintelligible to *sudras*; "as is always the case," said he, "with works treating upon occult and pernicious sciences;" and strongly recommending them to destroy, or otherwise get rid of it, as it was a great sin to keep so pernicious a book in their possession.

Such is the account those poor simple fellows gave me of the gospel of St. Matthew. The fact is, that the *poorohita* himself had been unable to understand any thing about it; but as he was unwilling to confess his ignorance before *sudras*, he thought he had better give them this awkward explanation. This anecdote will give you some idea of the versions of the Holy Scriptures now extant in the country, and of their utility.

In fact, it was not in that way that the first missionaries, who made their appearance in the country more than three hundred years ago, gained some ground, and got a hearing. It was not by circulating amongst the natives spurious, and almost unintelligible versions of our sacred book, that they made some impression in those early times; it was chiefly by scrupulously conforming themselves to the usages and customs of the country; it was by becoming Hindoos in their habits and manner of living, that they insinuated themselves amongst these people. In the mean-



while, as, notwithstanding the precautions they employed to obtain a free and quite unrestrained intercourse with the natives, their colour, their being foreigners, and other circumstances, excited distrust; in order to remove this obstacle to their successes, they had recourse to the following means: —

After having made a certain number of proselytes, they selected the best-disposed, and most intelligent among them, and established schools for the forming of catechists, or native religious teachers. The missionaries superintended and directed those schools of catechists, and made it their principal study to give them an education suited to their intended profession. They, in consequence, composed several religious tracts explanatory of the Creed and of the Ten Commandments; whilst other tracts were also written containing some plain and short proofs of the existence of the only true God, an explanation of his divine attributes, and a refutation of the idolatry prevailing in the country. After the catechists had properly become acquainted with these matters, they were taken into the service of the missionaries, and taught the manner of introducing themselves by good manners among the natives.

These native catechists introduced them-



selves easily every where ; into the markets and other places of public resort ; into private houses and elsewhere ; as physicians, merchants, and under other denominations, without exciting any distrust. In their free intercourse with the world, they were taught by their employers dexterously to provoke discussion upon religion ; and so to manage such disputes, as that in making a display of their own learning they should in no way excite suspicion. When they perceived that they were listened to without disapprobation, they returned, and continued their discussions, without any pretensions to superior information. When they saw that they had made an impression on any one of their hearers, they prevailed upon him to accompany them to the missionary, who finished the work.

Such was the manner of proceeding of the first missionaries, and the way by which they gained some ground in this country in better times. Those schools for forming good catechists were the only ones established by the missionaries, and under their immediate superintendence. They continued, without interruption, to a late period, and were finally suppressed about fifty years ago ; nearly at the period when the European invasions taking place rendered (as I have remarked in another



letter) the Christian religion an object of universal opprobrium all over the country; and no means whatever remained of getting from the pagans a further hearing on the subject, either through native catechists or otherwise.

Warned by long experience, I repeat it, with feelings of the deepest sorrow, that there remain, in the present circumstances, no human means of improving Christian knowledge among the natives of India. The concerns of the Christian religion are in a quite desperate state; from a long period, all missionaries who are come to India for the purpose of making proselytes, have found themselves deceived on their arrival in the country, have experienced nothing but the most distressing disappointments in all their pursuits, and all their labours have terminated in nothing.

For my part, I cannot boast of my successes in this holy career during a period of twenty-five years that I have laboured to promote the interests of the Christian religion. The restraints and privations under which I have lived, by conforming myself to the usages of the country; embracing, in many respects, the prejudices of the natives; living like them, and becoming almost a Hindoo myself; in short, by "being made all things to all men, that I



might by all means save some,"— all this has proved of no avail to me to make proselytes.

During the long period I have lived in India, in the capacity of a missionary, I have made, with the assistance of a native missionary, in all between two and three hundred converts of both sexes. Of this number two-thirds were pariahs, or beggars; and the rest were composed of *sudras*, vagrants, and outcasts of several tribes, who, being without resource, turned Christians, in order to form new connections, chiefly for the purpose of marriage, or with some other interested views. Among them are to be found some also who believed themselves to be possessed by the devil, and who turned Christians, after having been assured that on their receiving baptism the unclean spirits would leave them, never to return; and I will declare it, with shame and confusion, that I do not remember any one who may be said to have embraced Christianity from conviction, and through quite disinterested motives. Among these new converts many apostatised, and relapsed into Paganism, finding that the Christian religion did not afford them the temporal advantages they had looked for in embracing it; and I am verily ashamed, that the resolution I have taken to declare the whole truth on this subject forces me to make



the humiliating avowal, that those who continued Christians are the very worst among my flock.

I know that my brother-missionaries in other parts of the country, although more active, and more zealous, perhaps, than myself, have not been more fortunate, either in the number or the quality of their proselytes. For my part, I have, until now, struggled, though in vain, with the numberless difficulties stated in these letters, and exerted myself to the utmost not to sink under so many disadvantages. If a great many persons of my profession have discharged their duties with more ability, I believe that I may boast that few have done it with more patience and perseverance than myself; and in spite of every kind of disgust and contradiction, in spite of the inutility of my pursuits, I am determined, after having embraced the profession of a missionary, to continue the desperate struggle, and persevere in it to the last.

In fact, the conversion of the Hindoos, under existing circumstances, is so hopeless a thing, and their prejudices against it are so deeply rooted, and so decidedly declared, that I am firmly persuaded, that if (what has never been the case) the Hindoo Brahmins were animated by a spirit of proselytism, and sent to



Europe missionaries of their own faith, to propagate their monstrous religion, and make converts to the worship of Seeva and Vishnoo, they would have much more chance of success, among certain classes of society, than we have to make among them true converts to the faith in Christ.

But, to conclude, let the beholding of the monstrous worship which prevails all over India — let the blindness and hardness of heart of a people immersed in such an abyss of darkness, be a warning to those who have the happiness of being born under a religion which gives them such sound, and such pure notions of the Divinity. The spectacle of whole nations still immersed in the most extravagant and obstinate idolatry, forcibly apprises us of the total incapacity of unassisted human reason, to make to itself a reasonable system of religion, and of the necessity of a foreign divine light, to guide us aright in this important path ; it reminds us, also, of the great obligations under which we stand to the divine Author of revelation, the common Father of all mankind, for having, without any previous deserving on our part, chosen us, among so many idolatrous nations, to be his adopted people. What ought not our gratitude to be to him for this, the greatest of all his divine favours ?



Many persons who come from Europe to India, with unsettled and wavering religious principles, finish, on beholding the variety of worships prevailing in the country, by laying aside what they term the prejudices of education, becoming free-thinkers, and adopting the broad principle of modern philosophy, that all religions are equally acceptable to the Deity, and conduct to the same end.

For my part, I rejoice that these fallacious notions have never been mine: I always viewed the subject in a quite different manner; and the sight of the monstrous worship prevailing in India, so far from staggering my faith, has, on the contrary, contributed in a high degree to strengthen it. In fact, whenever I compare the majestic simplicity of our Scriptures, the unspotted sanctity of our gospel, the impressive solemnity of our religious worship, with the heap of impertinent, absurd, and obscene tales contained in the pooranes and legends of the Hindoos, and with the extravagant, barbarous, and, in many instances, horrid worship of the country, the Christian religion alone appears to me stamped with the seal of divinity. In these circumstances I forcibly experience feelings of the liveliest gratitude for the blessing of being born under a religion, the only one on earth



which gives us sound and pure notions of the Deity, his divine attributes, and the worship due to him by all reasonable creatures. Impressed with these feelings, I cannot help exclaiming with the holy legislator of the Hebrews, "What nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day." (Deut. iv. 8.)

I will say nothing about the leading feature of the printed report, a copy of which you sent me, relating to the improving of the condition of the unhappy offspring of the Europeans of the lower classes, left quite destitute and helpless in society, and exposed to every kind of danger, both spiritual and temporal. This important subject is so ably and so forcibly treated in the sermon you delivered on the occasion, that nothing more need be said about it. I observed, with the greatest gratification, that the sad condition of those unfortunate beings had at last attracted the attention it so well deserves, of sensible and benevolent persons; that much for their improvement had already been done, and much more was in contemplation. I hope, and sincerely wish, that your humane, generous, and religious endeavours, and those of your worthy associates in the cause of humanity, may be



accompanied with success, and that the happiest results may follow from these your labours. It is a subject which had long called for the attention of sensible souls, preferably to any other charitable object ; for it might be said with truth, morally and physically, of these helpless children, in the words of Jeremiah, " The young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them."

I will now close the discussion I have carried on in this and the foregoing letters. When I commenced them, I did not imagine I should go so far into the question. I was induced to enter into so many details by the consideration that elucidations on this interesting subject, by a person of my profession and experience, might prove of some advantage to the public, among whom, it appears, much ignorance and misapprehension prevails, and whose opinion has been in a high degree misled by imperfect, and, in many instances, erroneous statements, published of late, at home, by persons led astray by a misguided religious zeal, and who took upon themselves to treat of matters with which they were scarcely at all, or but very imperfectly acquainted.

In fact, on perusing the reports of those gentlemen, persons unacquainted with the



subject might be induced to suppose, that the Hindoos are a people quite prepared for a revolution in their religious system, and ready to break to pieces and trample upon their gods of stone and brass. One would think, in hearing them, that these fields "*are white already to harvest,*" and that it is only necessary to come with sickles and baskets to cut down and gather an abundant crop.

For my part, as an experienced veteran in this kind of sacred militia, engaged for a long period in the same kind of holy warfare, thoroughly acquainted with the character, the dispositions, and resources of the common foe, and with all the difficulties which are to be met with in the contest, I beg to be allowed to entertain the most serious doubts of the truth of those pompous and all-promising reports, until more unbiassed and more impartial evidence shall have removed my scepticism.

It only remains to me to solicit your kind indulgence, chiefly on account of the bad style in which these letters are written; and moreover to express to you my regret that it is not in my power to do more ample justice to the subject, owing to a want of ability, and also to the difficulty I had to contend with in discussing the matter in a



language which is not my own, and with which I am but very imperfectly acquainted.

I have stated with candour, with simplicity, and freedom, all that I thought capable of interesting the public, and all that appeared to me worthy of being known, as I supposed that a person of my experience might speak without restraint on a subject which is his peculiar province, and on which many have already given much erroneous information to the public.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

16th November, 1816.



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VINDICATION

OF THE

HINDOOS,

BOTH MALES AND FEMALES,

IN ANSWER TO THE ATTACKS MADE UPON BOTH BY

THE REVEREND _____.



*Extract of a Letter from the Rev. —
to Major W. C. at Calcutta.*

My dear Sir,

I WILL candidly confess to you that the highly exaggerated accounts of the Rev. — and the severity with which he treats these poor Hindoos, are far from being a subject of edification to me. I have, at different times, perused many of the public accounts of the new reformers of several sects, settled of late in several parts of India, communicated to their correspondents in England, and I cannot disguise to you that their exaggerations and misrepresentations (not to use harsher terms) respecting the Hindoos have been to me a subject of much scandal, and have, in several instances, roused my indignation to a high degree.

In fact, from their reports, I see that those gentlemen particularly delight in representing these people under the blackest and most odious colours. With them the Hindoos are nothing but barbarians; a people loaded with



every kind of vice, without a single spark of virtue. Not only their religion, but also their system of civilization, their character, their public and domestic institutions; all their usages and practices are indiscriminately branded with infamy, and held forth to public contempt; and they themselves are abused, reviled, and degraded almost to the level of brutes.

Such is, as far as I can judge from their public reports, the view taken of these people by most of the new reformers at present settled among them.

But I am happy to know that a quite different view of the subject has been taken by a Warren Hastings, a Burke, a Cornwallis, a Robertson, a Sir William Jones, a Colebrooke, a Hawkins, a Wilkins, and many other enlightened persons who had made close and deep researches on all that relates to the Hindoos. I am happy to know that such men of talents, in acknowledging the vices of the Hindoos, had candor enough to acknowledge also their virtues, and to make a just estimate of what was good, and what was bad in their institutions. Now it is a subject of regret to see that the opinions and authority of so many enlightened and independent persons are disregarded, to listen to the suspicious



accounts, and wild theories of men of mediocrity, who have of late undertaken the altogether impracticable task of reforming these nations in their religion, morals, and manners.

I am also happy that, in my humble sphere, and obscure station, an experience of thirty years, passed in an unrestrained intercourse with these people, has taught me a quite different theory, and to view the subject in a much more favourable light. I am happy to the end of my researches to find that, in witnessing among them many disgusting vices, I have been able to discover also many eminent virtues.

It is true that some of my critics have accused me of being tinctured with Hinduism, and strongly biassed in favour of the Hindoos, because in describing their vices and bad qualities I had also presumed to take notice of their virtues and good qualities; but the fact is, that if I have any thing to reproach myself with in my writings on the subject of the Hindoos, it is to have been rather too severe in finding faults with them in matters which would perhaps have been a subject of praise to more unbiassed authors.

In perusing the pamphlet of the Rev. —, I have been sorry to see that able writer so violently prejudiced against the Hindoos. Such



a virulent style as he employs has appeared to me very little becoming a person of his profession. When I see him boldly asserting that "in every relation of man to man, the natives of India are thoroughly depraved;" that "in this pagan nation we have the absence of all virtue, "and the disposition to every vice;" that "in ignorance, in vice, and immorality, the Hindoos are far below the most savage nations:" when I see him making the quite erroneous insinuations, that "a chaste female is almost unknown among the Hindoos;" that "the Hindoo females have not a spark of maternal tenderness towards their offspring;" and many other no less shocking and untenable paradoxes, I am at a loss to account for such misrepresentations,—for such a blindness. It is not the blindness of prejudice or religious zeal; it is the blindness of passion and animosity.

Unfortunately those new reformers come from Europe to India very strongly prejudiced against the Hindoos, and with the presumptuous hope that they shall be able to operate, in the religious and civil habits of the latter, reforms and changes which have at all times baffled the utmost endeavours of the best disposed persons. On their arrival in the country they continue to look at these people with



European eyes, and European prejudices, and to act accordingly; but finding themselves disappointed in all their attempts to make an impression upon them on the score of religion, or otherwise, they, in their fiery zeal, or rather in their despair, avenge themselves by lavishing every kind of abuse and insult not only on their religion, but also on all their institutions both public and private, sacred and profane. I cannot disguise to you that I see with a kind of indignation that these peaceable and submissive people have of late years been made a kind of target, to aim at them the shafts of calumny and malevolence, and to debase them by the most unfair means.

On the other hand, the methods devised by the new reformers to make an impression upon these pagan nations, are, in my humble opinion, the most absurd, and most ridiculous which could be contrived. Fancying that in order to convert the Hindoos to Christianity, it was only necessary to lay the Bible before them, they at their first outset made extremely incorrect, and almost unintelligible translations of our sacred books into the several idioms of the country. Our disfigured Holy Scriptures were profusely diffused among the inhabitants under such a contemptible garb, and upon this only foundation the latter were



angrily required to shift for themselves, to build their faith, and reform their religion, civilization, and manners.

I will confess that I understand nothing of such a mode of improving the condition of the senations. Alas ! it is not Bibles the poor Hindoos want or ask for. It is food and raiment. When the belly is empty, and the back bare, the best disposed even among the Christians feel themselves but very little inclined to peruse the Bible. Every day some of my distressed followers call upon me, the males to show me their tattered *cumbeles*, and the females their ragged clothes, exclaiming "*Samy! bettleyaghee eerootenee bouddy,*" *I am naked, please your reverence* ; and soliciting assistance ; but no one comes to say to me that he wants a Bible. If in those circumstances I dismissed them after having made them a present of a Bible, I apprehend that the poor creatures would find the sacred book a very sad substitute for their real wants.

I will not fear to declare, that it is to me a subject of scandal to observe, that while so much anxiety is evinced to supply the Hindoos with Bibles which they never asked for, and which cannot be to them of the least utility, no voice is raised to supply their actual necessities, and procure them food and clothing, which they ask so clamorously.



Our good ancestors, who, with perhaps a little less learning than their offspring, had much more good sense, never thought of improving the condition of the pagan nations, by intruding the Bible among them. They invariably taught us that the exercise of that truly sublime virtue *charity* consisted in assisting the needy, feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked. Now in this age of light, we are taught a quite new theory, and told that there is another charitable duty paramount to all, which consists in circulating the Bible among the pagans; and while thousands are yearly dying from starvation in England and India, hundreds of thousands of pounds are subscribed for the purpose of distributing the Bible among the heathen nations. I am at a loss to account for such an infatuation. It is, in my humble opinion, a new discovery which the 19th century will have very little room to glory in hereafter.

I beg that you will not be scandalized at this frank and candid expression of my sentiments. I thank God that I am as firm, as sincere, and as undisguised a believer in the truth of the Christian religion, and in the divine origin of the holy books from which it derives its sacred tenets, as the warmest supporter of the Bible-society; but the attempts



to enlighten the pagan Hindoos by the circulation of the Bible among them have at all times appeared to me so palpably absurd, that I could never make up my mind to such a mode of bringing them to sounder notions on religion.

It appears, however, that the new reformers begin to be sensible of the impossibility of making an impression on these pagan nations with respect to religion, and in their despair of succeeding in the attempt, they have now altered their plan, and turned their views to another object. Their only ambition at present seems to be to remove the clouds of ignorance which hang over these people, and instil into their minds principles of civilization, morality, and pure manners.

But I will take the liberty to ask those well wishers to the improvement of the natives of India, is it the Hindoos or ourselves who stand in need of reform on these several matters? The former are at present become as fully aware of our vices, our immorality, and looseness of manners, as we are of theirs. What is then, and what will at all times be the answer of a Hindoo of common sense to an Englishman or a Frenchman who will presume to come forward for the purpose of reforming or changing his education and manners, and



to speak to him of morality and of the superiority of his own institutions and civilization?

“ You speak, gentlemen, (will the proud Hindoo reply,) of morality, and of purity of manners, and you boast of a great superiority over me in these respects. But pray, how comes it, that, from the very accounts you are not ashamed to publish even in this my supposed thoroughly corrupted country, it appears, that in each of your respective metropolises, London and Paris, you reckon no less than forty thousand prostitutes who keep public shops of infamy, and live by the most unruly dissoluteness? Look, gentlemen, to Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and see whether you will be able to find such an extensive sink of corruption, and so large a proportion of vice, among the crowded population of these large cities.

“ You speak in high terms of your civilization, of your refined education and manners, but how comes it, that, amidst the advantages you claim over me in these respects, crimes and vices of every kind are more prevalent in your countries than in mine? From whence comes it, that, with the superior education and civilization you boast of, your cities and towns are filled with thieves, sharpers, pickpockets,



swindlers, gamblers, forgers, false-coiners, and other knaves of every description, most of them happily unknown in my supposed thoroughly corrupted country, who set at defiance the most strict vigilance of a very severe police, and whose numbers are daily increasing? How comes it, that your high roads are so much infested by robbers, murderers, and assassins, and that every kind of crime increases to such an alarming extent, that your prisons and houses of correction are scarcely sufficient to contain the number of malefactors every day committed to them?

“ You boast of pure and refined manners, but how comes it, that habitual drunkenness is so prevailing among the lower ranks of your community, and whoredom amongst the higher, without these vices seeming to excite any sense of shame or remorse in those who are addicted to them.

“ Believe me, gentlemen, (will the headstrong Hindoo add,) as long as you continue to exercise your sway over us with justice, moderation, and humanity, you will find us a peaceable and submissive people; but do not speak of intruding your system of civilization, your education and manners on us, because you will never succeed in convincing us, that they are superior to ours; still less will you



prevail upon us to adopt them. We do not stand in want of so wretched a present."

Such is in substance the answer I have almost invariably received from the Hindoos of good sense of all castes, whenever I have presumed to speak to them of our superiority in civilization and education, in morals and manners; and their observations have appeared to me so just and unanswerable, that I have for a long time desisted from obtruding myself on their attention on the subject.

It has at present become a kind of fashion to speak of improvements and ameliorations in the civilization and institutions of the Hindoos, and every one has his own plans for effecting them; but if we could for an instant lay aside our European eyes and European prejudices, and look at the Hindoos with some degree of impartiality, we should perhaps find that they are nearly our equals in all that is good, and our inferiors only in all that is bad.

In my humble opinion, these people have reached the degree of civilization that is consistent with their climate, their wants, their natural dispositions, and physical constitution; and in fact, in education, in manners, in accomplishments, and in the discharge of social duties, I believe them superior to some Eu-



ropean nations, and scarcely inferior to any. In all these respects, I believe them superior to the Turks and Russians, while they are only surpassed by the persons above the middle ranks in other countries, and they are at least equal, if not superior, to the common ranks in England and France. If you will take the trouble to attend to the subject, and examine with impartiality the character and conduct of the persons of the same condition in our countries and in India, and compare husbandman to husbandman, artificer to artificer, mechanic to mechanic, &c. &c., I apprehend that you will find that, in education and manners, the Hindoo shines far above the European.

In order to be convinced of the superiority of the manners of the common ranks among the Hindoos over those of the same description of persons among the Europeans, we only need attend to the conduct and habits of both in their mutual intercourse in society.

Let four Europeans assemble together to transact business, or for any other purpose; their first and common thought, in such circumstances, will almost invariably be an appeal to the bottle, in which they will, in most instances, indulge to excess. Their most trifling business, as well as their social



intercourse, must always be carried on in the midst of cups, to which they will recur, until, being deprived of the use of their reason, their assemblies degenerate into the most disgusting scenes of confusion, and often terminate in quarrels and fighting.

Let a European of common rank, who has rendered you service, call upon you to receive his reward. After you have paid him his just salary, he will seldom fail to make an appeal to your generosity, and ask you a further remuneration. Ask him for what purpose. To drink, will he answer, or, in other terms, to get drunk.

Look, on the other side, at the conduct of the Hindoos in the very same circumstances; their only anxiety, their only delight will be to have a few leaves of betel, and they will be fully satisfied by chewing this exhilarating aromatic plant. This harmless gratification is the only sensual enjoyment they covet in their social intercourse. The proposal alone of using intoxicating liquors would be considered by all as the grossest of insults, and instantly be resented as such. I now ask on which side is the purity of manners?

You can convince yourself, in a still more striking manner, of the superiority of the education and manners of the common classes



of society in India over the same classes in Europe, by comparing the conduct and habits of our soldiers and sailors with those of the sepoys and ship's lascars; the former, like beasts, cannot be kept within the bounds of duty but by blows, and the severest discipline. They cannot, in general, be allowed the least indulgence, or the least degree of freedom, without abusing it, by giving themselves up to excesses. On the other hand, their private low habits, and their total disregard of all decorum, are a subject of disgust, not to say of horror, to the vile pariahs themselves, who are the only class of Hindoos who dare approach them.

Behold, on the other side, your sepoy and ship's lascars, and you will at all times find his behaviour, both public and private, orderly, peaceable, and becoming; and seldom will you find him offending against public decorum.

Even amongst the lowest rabble, with the Hindoos, you will never witness any thing approaching to those shocking scenes of scandal, to that total disregard of decency and decorum, which are daily exhibited in ale-houses and gin-shops in England, and in *cabarets* and *gargotes* in France.

On the other hand; the Hindoos are not in want of improvement in the discharge of



social duties among themselves. They understand this point as well as, and perhaps better than the Europeans. They might even be said to be rather excessive in this respect in several instances. They will never suffer the needy who has implored their charity to go unassisted. Their hospitality among themselves, it is well known, has no bounds. Even the humble, the distressed pariah, as long as he has a measure of grain in his possession, will cheerfully share his pap of millet with the weary traveller of his caste who may happen to take shelter in his hut; and in all their wants and distresses the Hindoos, of all castes, will readily assist each other more effectually than the Europeans would do in the same circumstances. What the European possesses he keeps for himself. What the Hindoo possesses he is always disposed to share with those who have nothing. In fact, it might be said that a wealthy Hindoo considers himself as the depositary, or the distributor, rather than the proprietor of his fortune, so greatly prone is he to acts of charity and benevolence; and it is chiefly from this cause that those frequent revolutions in the fortunes of the Hindoos, and those frequent passages from extreme opulence to extreme poverty, arise.



It cannot, however, be denied that the Hindoos are more generally disposed to knavery, dishonesty, and their concomitant vices, than the Europeans. The propensity of most of them to pilfering, for instance, is almost irresistible; and, in general, if a native can avoid discovery in being dishonest, he will be so as often as his own interests require it. I cannot, however, attribute these evils to a perversity of character peculiar to themselves; and, in my humble opinion, these vices have their origin only in the extreme poverty common to the great majority of the Hindoos. To persons in the least acquainted with human nature, it is needless to say that there is no stronger incitement to dishonesty than poverty. Europeans, in general, are more honest than the Hindoos, because they live comparatively in easier and more independent circumstances; but, on a close attention to the subject, it will perhaps be found that, among an equal number of distressed people, the proportion of determined rogues is greater in Europe than in India.

Your modern reformers seem to be of opinion, that in order to render these people happy and virtuous, it is only necessary to civilize and enlighten them. But the history of ancient and modern times bears testimony



that it is not always the best civilized and most enlightened nations that are the most virtuous and the most just.

“ Ignorance (says the Rev. —) is the parent of poverty, &c.” It might be said with equal justness, “ Poverty is the parent of ignorance.” Such a reasoning is nothing, merely a *petitio principii*, or *circulus vitiosus*, to which I can perceive no opening or issue. The reverend gentleman’s reasoning would have been more logical and satisfactory, had he said, “ The poverty of the Hindoos, and the vices derived from it, originate in their natural indolence and apathy, and the latter proceed from the climate or elements under which they live, and over which we can exercise no kind of control or influence.”

The Rev. — asserts, that “ dishonesty is so familiar to the natives, that a Hindoo will never trust another.” This assertion, especially the latter part of it, is one of the most unfounded that was ever brought forward against these people. If any well grounded accusation may be brought against them on this head, it is that they are rather too confident, and too little distrustful in their transactions and dealings with each other.

It is a known fact that those who are in easy circumstances among them often lend



money, sometimes to a large amount, to persons of their acquaintance, without witnesses, and without written bond or other vouchers; and it is uncommon to see a debt contracted in this private manner denied even by a debtor in distress. He will, it is true, use every kind of cunning and craft to avoid payment, or to obtain a delay from his creditor. He will, perhaps, furtively run away to escape from his molestations; but rarely will he altogether deny the debt.

It is also a known fact, that merchants are obliged to sell their goods privately at credit, to at least a half of their customers, but it is rare to see the latter, although reduced to the last degree of misery, deny their obligations to the merchant.

It is likewise a known fact that servants, on a salary of eight or ten shillings per mensem, are often intrusted by their masters with large sums of money, and sent to their correspondents at a distance of, perhaps, two or three hundred miles or further, to purchase goods, or for other purposes; and instances of persons in such circumstances running away with the money intrusted to their care, or otherwise embezzling it, are very rare.

It is also a known fact, of which repeated instances have come within my personal ob-



ervation, that people in time of alarm, or of great disturbances, in the places of their residence, being under the necessity of emigrating to more settled countries, secretly deposit, before their departure, in some place of safety, under the charge of some person of their acquaintance, money, jewels, and other valuables, sometimes to a large amount, and breaches of trust on the part of the latter, by embezzling the property secretly deposited with them, happen very seldom. I have known many instances of persons in such circumstances returning after an absence of several years, and finding their property untouched, although intrusted to the charge of persons who were themselves living in a state of distress.

Such instances are not, certainly, proofs of distrust in the one, or of dishonesty in the other.

From what I have heard or read from time to time, it would appear that a ferment is now at work in Calcutta, and a revolution in the habits and manners of the Hindoos near at hand. If it be really the case, I apprehend that that ferment is rather of a mischievous kind, and that it will operate a change for the worse. For my part, I shall certainly be the last man to interfere with the civil usages and



habits, with the social institutions and manners of the Hindoos, and will never join those who employ themselves to make the extremely perilous experiment of changing their national customs and manners for those of Europe; and as a friend of yours, my dear Sir, I shall surely never advise you, after the knowledge I have obtained of the character of the Hindoos, to trust, in any capacity whatever, a native who has renounced, or who slights the usages of his caste, or the prejudices of the country. I shall, above all, never advise you to make such a man your butler, or your treasurer. In the former case, you would soon find that your liquors were fast wasting, and in the latter, you would, ere long, find a large deficit in your chest. For, you may at the first outset, and without farther enquiries, judge, that a person of this description is a quite lost character, and that his first steps to improvement, after having renounced the usages and prejudices of his caste, will be to turn a drunkard and a rogue. The more nice and scrupulous a native is in the observance of his usages and practices, both religious and profane, the more worthy will he prove of your trust and confidence. Such is the result of my observations on the subject during a period of more than thirty years.



In the mean while, I can hardly believe, that the ferment which is said to agitate the mind of the public in Calcutta, and some other places, works to such an extent as some people conceive ; still less can I expect from this source any amelioration in the condition of the Hindoos. In our last interview, you mentioned to me, I believe, that the agitation produced of late in the public, on this subject, was in a great measure owing to the exertions of the learned Brahmin, Rammohun-Roy, to enlighten and enlarge the minds of his countrymen. I have perused a few of the essays of that Brahmin ; they are only an exposition of the doctrine of the school called *Védantam*, the most followed of the six sects, into which are divided the Hindoos who make profession of learning. Rammohun-Roy teaches us nothing new, when he says, that the present worship of the Hindoos differs widely from the primitive religion of their ancestors. This is a fact pretty generally known at present. At the same time, the prevailing worship of India is so deeply rooted, that it would require other powers, and other means, than those possessed by that Brahmin, to bring back the bulk of the nation to the much less unreasonable worship of their first ancestors.



In the mean time, from what I have seen of the writings of that reformer Brahmin, I apprehend that his talents have been much over-rated, and the unqualified encomiums bestowed upon him from several quarters very little deserved; but, when I observed him, at an entertainment he recently gave to the Spaniards living in Calcutta, presuming to give a decided opinion on the late revolution in Spain, and emphatically boasting, in an elaborate speech, published with an equal emphasis in most of the public papers at that presidency, the advantages of religious and political *freedom*, (a word, the meaning of which, I apprehend, he does not understand,) he sank still lower in my estimation. In fact, to see a Brahmin decorated with the *treble cord*, that indubitable badge of the most oppressive and most degrading despotism, turn the apostle of freedom, is so shocking an anomaly, that persons acquainted with the subject will find it difficult to reconcile themselves to such a contradiction.

On the other hand, the anxiety evinced by the natives (as you observe in your letter) to attend the schools set up in several places, does not prove, in my humble opinion, that they are desirous to attain real learning, and improve their minds by literary endowments.



They go to those schools for the sole purpose of attaining a competent acquaintance with the English language, in order to be able, by this means, to gain a livelihood, as this accomplishment is at present the only way to attain an honourable and advantageous situation in the several offices of government. As soon as they have attained their object, all is over with your books of science and morality, they never more cast a look at them during their lives.

You may convince yourself of this fact by your own observations. There are, I suppose, in Calcutta, many hundred natives of all castes, who can read, write, and speak English well; among them, I am persuaded, that you will not be able to find ten independent individuals who are ever seen with an English book of science in their hands.

Public schools were also established about a century ago at Pondicherry, by the French Jesuit missionaries, and at Trankebar by the Protestant ones, for the purpose of teaching the natives both the European and the native languages, and they are still in existence; but I have never heard of this mode of instruction having operated any material change or reform in the national prejudices, or in the



habits and manners of the pupils educated in those schools.

Respecting the schools set up in many parts of the country, for the purpose of teaching the native languages, I am of opinion that the natives are by no means deficient in this respect, and that they do not stand in need of our interference on the subject. There are very few villages in which one or many public schools are not to be found. If you object to me that the system of instruction pursued in those schools is defective, without entering into a discussion on that point, I will content myself with answering, that the students learn in them all that is necessary to their ranks and wants, and all that is taught to persons of their condition, in the village-schools set up in our respective countries, namely, reading, writing, and accounts; no more is certainly necessary for ninety-nine hundredths of the vast population of India; and their extreme poverty will not allow the great majority among them to attain even these humble accomplishments.

If you object to me that what I have stated in this letter seems to be in several points at variance with what I have stated in my former writings, in which I have not in several cases



expressed so favorable an opinion on the Hindoos as I do at present, I will answer, that in my former productions most of my censures, if not all, are directed, first, against the Brahmins, or other persons who like them live by imposture, and the whole of whom do not form a twentieth of the population of India. In all times, and in all countries, imposture and knavery have almost always been inseparable companions.

Secondly, my censures are also directed against the enormities of the monstrous worship prevailing in the country, to which it has at all times been impossible for me to reconcile myself.

However, if it were in our power, through fair means, to take off from the religion of the country several monstrosities which are truly a disgrace to human nature, I would forgive them all that is only extravagant in their worship. Those monstrosities are but too well known to me. Nobody deploras them more bitterly than I do, and few have laboured more hard than I have to remove them; but seeing all my efforts for the purpose of no avail, I have contented myself (according to the instructions of our divine teacher on the subject) with "wiping off the dust of my shoes on those obstinate unbelievers," and



with recommending them to the paternal care of the Father of mercies, leaving their final judgment in the hands of him to whom alone the professors of all religions are accountable for their faith. In the mean while, the blindness and obduracy of my hearers so far from exciting my hatred, have, on the contrary, given rise to feelings of compassion and good will towards them.

I have just hinted, that if it were in our power, through fair means, to take off from the religion of the Hindoos its enormities, we ought perhaps to stop there, and overlook all that is only extravagant in their worship, because the minds of these people are composed of such materials, that they cannot be roused except by extravagancies; and, after all, we must be disposed to overlook in others the defects from which we are not entirely free ourselves; for, what is the kind of worship upon which extravagancies, under some shape or other, may not be charged by the opposite party? You, for instance, as a Protestant, cannot fail to find out, in the Catholic religion, tenets and practices which will prove to you a subject of censure, while they are to me, a most sincere Catholic, a subject of edification.

But I believe that you, a sober Protestant, and I, a tolerant Catholic, shall agree in ex-



pressing our common disgust, or at least our dislike, at several striking extravagancies prevailing among some Christian sects, and which appear an open insult to good sense. I believe, for instance, that we should scarcely be able to keep a serious countenance, if we witnessed the groans, the grimaces, and wild convulsions, the jumpings, kickings, howlings, &c. which are observed in the religious assemblies of the Jumpers, Shakers, Methodists, Quakers, Ranters, &c. For an account of the latter, the *Ranters*, who are a new sect sprung up of late in England, see the *Monthly Magazine* for May, 1820, p. 297, 298.; and if you wish to have a curious account of the religious exercises of the Quakers, see the *Quarterly Review*, No. XLI., p. 145, 146.; and after you have perused so disgusting an account, I boldly defy you to find out any thing among the bands of Baheraghees, Dassaroo, Andy, and other Hindoo fanatics who flock to the temples of Teeroopatty and Jagghernat, which may be compared with the scenes of extravagance and madness, exhibited by that sect of Christians in their religious assemblies; and yet these enthusiastic Christians are a very honest people, and rather scrupulous in the discharge of all moral and social duties.



Let it not, however, be supposed that I mean to excuse or palliate the grossness of the Hindoo idolatry, or to deny that the credulity of these nations, in religious matters, is carried to a degree of debasement and stupidity, which has scarcely any parallel; but even on this point I dare to maintain that we outdo them in several instances; and I am of opinion, that it ill behoves us to deride the Hindoos on the score of absurd credulity, when we see, in this very century, a country which boasts of holding the first rank in civilization, education, learning, and manners, give birth to a pseudo-prophetess of the name of Johanna Southcote, who, after announcing herself as the woman destined to crush the head of the serpent mentioned in the Scriptures, and as being pregnant with the Messiah, gained over to her party thousands of proselytes, among whom were to be found several persons of rank and education. I question whether an instance of more debasing and stupid credulity could be quoted among the most superstitious Hindoos.

I have also many times heard prejudiced Europeans endeavouring to vilify the Hindoos, and supporting their opinion on the subject, by the looseness of manners, and lascivious deportment of the country dancing girls.



Nothing appeared to them more indecent, or better calculated to pollute the mind and corrupt the heart, than the postures and the dances of those courtezans. I have sometimes been under the necessity of witnessing the song and dances of those prostitutes in public assemblies, but I do not hesitate to declare, that none of their steps or postures have appeared to me so intentionally lascivious, and so shamefully indecorous, as those of our actresses, when performing their parts on our stages; and you will, perhaps, smile at my simplicity, when I venture to say that none of their dances have appeared to me so highly indecent as that new European dance, known under the name of Waltz, at present become a favourite in our countries.

It is thus that we are always disposed "to behold a mote that is in our brother's eye, but consider not the beam that is in our own eye."

" Il y a, (says Montesquieu, *Esp. des Lois*, lib. xxiv. ch. 24.) beaucoup des lois locales dans les diverses religions, et quand Montezuma s'obstinoit à dire que la religion des Espagnols étoit bonne pour leur pays, et celle du Mexique pour le sien, il ne disoit pas une absurdité; parcequ'en effet les législateurs



n'ont pu s'empêcher d'avoir égard à ce que la nature avoit établi avant eux."

I am far, very far indeed, from admitting all the consequences which might be drawn from the principles laid by that illustrious author in the quoted passage, by which he seems to hint, that religion is a mere matter of geography. Let nobody suppose that I have quoted the above words, as if I considered the monstrous religion of the Hindoos as a matter of necessity or indifference. I again repeat, that I pity, I love, I cherish the idolatrous Hindoos; but I abhor their idolatry. The fact is, however, that the very words of Montezuma to the Spaniards have been repeated to me a hundred times by the Hindoos, Brahmins, and others, in my religious controversies with them. It was ordinarily by the words of that Mexican emperor they put an end to the dispute, exclaiming with much emphasis, "After all, your religion is good for your country, and ours is good for India."

On the whole, from all that has come within my knowledge, I observe, with sorrow, that the interference of the new reformers to improve the condition of the Hindoos has thus far produced more evil than good. In support of this assertion, I will content myself



with citing the two following striking instances.

The first relates to the burning of widows on the pile of their deceased husbands. It is an indubitable fact, fully confirmed by the official reports of the local magistrates, that since the clamours raised in Europe and India, and since the country-government has judged fit to interfere, to a certain degree, in order to render it less frequent, it has come more into fashion, and more prevalent. I have seen lists of the victims devoting themselves to that cruel superstition; and I have observed, that in the districts of Calcutta and Benarez, where the horrid practice is most common, the number of victims has been of late much greater than it was about twelve years ago, when the natives were left to themselves, and nobody presumed to interfere with their customs.

The second instance is more within my province and personal observation. It is a certain fact, that since the new reformers have overflowed the country with their Bibles and religious tracts, the Christian religion, and the natives who profess it, have become more odious to the heathen than ever. Formerly the native Christians, when known, were, it is true, despised and shunned by the pagans;



but, on account of their small numbers, they were scarcely noticed. Now the religious tracts, dispersed with profusion in every direction, have brought them into public notice, and rendered them an object of universal opprobrium; and, I apprehend, that this very cause would already have given rise to an open persecution, were it not for the awe inspired by a government, which is well known to extend an equal protection to all religious worship.

All know that nothing is better calculated to produce irritation, opposition, and resistance, than contradiction; above all, when the contradicted party is the strongest and most obstinate. Now, such is precisely the effect produced by the interference of the new reformers with the prejudices of the Hindoos; and I have reason to apprehend, that the opposition of the latter will increase in proportion to the extent of the contradictions to which they may be exposed, until it shall finish by some explosion, which may make all India a theatre of confusion and anarchy, to which it will be in the power of no government to apply a remedy.

Such is, my dear Sir, the view I have taken of the subject. I could go to a much fuller extent; but, as you have already seen my



writings on the same matter, and as you told me in our last interview, that you expected to have an opportunity to peruse my new manuscript on the Hindoos, in which you will find more satisfactory details, I will conclude this already too prolix letter, to which you are at full liberty to give such publicity as you wish. I only regret that I am not endowed with sufficient talents to do more ample justice to the subject, and vindicate with more ability the wrongs of the too much abused and injured Hindoos.

I remain, &c. &c.

*From my Mata near Seringapatam,
15th December, 1820.*



Vindication of the Hindoo Females.

To Captain M. C.

My dear Sir,

We had, until these latter times, been almost uniformly taught by both ancient and modern historians, who have written on India and its inhabitants, to look on the Hindoos as a mild, sober, industrious, forbearing, patient, and submissive people, who although possessing a system of political government quite original, and having no parallel in any other nation on earth, had, nevertheless, reached a reasonable height on the scale of civilization, cultivated the arts with some success, made tolerable progress in some branches of the highest sciences, such as astronomy, philosophy, ethics, &c. &c., established among themselves, through the division of castes, a system of subordination and order, which, by assigning in the most precise manner to each individual his rank and duties in the great



community, allowed nobody to remain idle, and provided in the most efficacious manner for the wants of the whole ; as a people living under a form of government founded on so solid a basis that no human effort, no kind of opposition or oppression had been able to subvert, or even to shake it.

The enquiries of many enlightened and judicious authors of several nations, who in more modern times had visited the country, and made an attentive study of the character, manners, and customs of these people, as well as of the system of civilization established among them, had generally served to strengthen the favourable opinion already entertained of them ; and I am happy to have it in my power to declare, that close and impartial researches on the subject, during a period of thirty years of free and unrestrained intercourse among the natives of all ranks and classes, have had the effect of producing the same favourable impressions on my own mind.

It was reserved for a few enthusiasts, who have of late years made their appearance in the country, under the imposing title of reformers, to reverse this pleasing picture, by giving us the most shocking accounts on the subject, and by holding out to our view, the



mild and inoffensive Hindoos, as a people wholly polluted by every kind of wickedness; as a race of barbarians sunk into the deepest abyss of ignorance and immorality; as a people far below the most savage nations, and approaching nearer, by their beastly habits and unnatural vices, to the brute than the human creation.

If you have perused the pamphlets published of late at home, by the Rev. —, and above all, his address to the ladies of Liverpool, you will have observed, that all these and many other no less degrading, odious, and false notions are fully upheld, and boldly professed by that gentleman.

Having in a former letter adverted to another attack, made by that author on the Hindoos in general, I will content myself in this, with reviewing his illiberal aspersions of the Hindoo females.

The Rev. Gentleman begins his attacks on the Hindoo fair sex, by stating, that “women in India are in a state of ignorance and degradation, which has no parallel in the history of tribes the most savage and barbarous;” and some lines farther he says, that “a Hindoo female is, in fact, a mere animal kept for burthen or slaughter in the house of her husband. Her life spent in an inanity and



idleness, which prepare her for a life doomed to be spent in superstition and vice," &c. &c.

Let us consider now with a mind unbiassed by passion or prejudice, whether the Hindoo females deserve the odious aspersions cast upon them by that author, and whether they are held in that low state of degradation, ignorance, and inanity, which would render their condition scarcely superior to that of brutes.

No one can be more displeased than I am, with that austerity of manners which has drawn so marked a line of separation between the two sexes, and denied women in India a due share in the social intercourse and a proper attention to the improvement of their intellectual faculties; but it is well known that the same line of demarcation between the sexes, and the same austerity of manners, have from the earliest to the present times existed among all oriental nations. The conduct of the latter in this respect may originate in physical and moral causes till now unexplained, or but imperfectly known to us, and perhaps also to that spirit of jealousy and stubbornness common to all weak minds, and inherent in a particular manner in all oriental people.



The Rev. — affirms that this exclusion of women from a free social intercourse with men is peculiar to the pagan nations, and does not exist amongst any people who have been enlightened by the light of Revelation. This assertion is inaccurate: it is a known fact that the same exclusion prevails, with nearly equal rigour, among all the Oriental Christian nations. It prevails among the Armenians, Georgians, Abyssinians, the Copts of Egypt, and the Greeks; and it prevailed, with more or less severity, not more than fifty or sixty years ago, among the Spaniards and Portuguese. It was only in those chivalrous times which originated in the Crusades, and were afterwards so much enhanced by the French *Troubadours*, that the females began to be put on a footing of equality with the males in the best civilized countries of Europe; and that system of courtship to which the refined modern manners have added so many charms introduced: but these improvements in the condition of the European females have nothing, or very little, to do with Christianity.

On the other hand, it may be said, with truth, that so far are the Hindoo females from being held in that low state of contempt and degradation in which the Rev. — repeatedly describes them in his letter, that, on the con-



trary, they lie under much less restraint, enjoy more real freedom, and are in possession of more enviable privileges than the persons of their sex in any other Asiatic country. In fact, to them belong the entire management of their household, the care of their children, the superintendence of the menial servants, the distribution of alms and charities. To their charge are generally intrusted the money, jewels, and other valuables. To them belongs the care of procuring provisions, and providing for all expences. It is they also who are charged, almost to the exclusion of their husbands, with the most important affair of procuring wives for their sons, and husbands for their daughters; and, in doing this, they evince a niceness, an attention, and foresight, which are not certainly surpassed in any country; while, in the management of their domestic business, they in general show a shrewdness, a savingness, and an intelligence which would do honour to the best housewives in Europe.

In the mean while, the austerity and roughness with which they are outwardly treated in public, by their husbands, is rather a matter of form, and entirely ceases when the husband and his wife are in private. It is then that the Hindoo females assume all that empire



which is every where exercised, in civilized countries, by the persons of their sex over the male part of creation ; find means to bring them under their subjection, and rule over them, in several instances, with a despotic sway. In short, although outwardly exposed in public to the forbidding and repulsive frowns of an austere husband, they can be considered in no other light than as perfectly the mistresses within the house.

The influence of the Hindoo females on the welfare of families is so well known, that the successes or misfortunes of the Hindoos are almost entirely attributed to their good or bad management. When a person prospers in the world, it is customary to say that he has the happiness to possess an intelligent wife, to whom he is indebted for his welfare ; and when any one runs to ruin, it is the custom to say that he has for his partner a bad wife, to whom his misfortunes must chiefly be attributed. In short, a good-natured and intelligent wife is considered, by all castes of natives, as the most valuable of all the blessings which could be bestowed on a family, and a bad one as the most dreaded of all curses ; so great is their influence on the fate of the Hindoo households.

The authority of married women within



their houses is chiefly exerted in preserving good order and peace among the persons who compose their families; and a great many among them discharge this important duty with a prudence and a discretion which have scarcely a parallel in Europe. I have known families composed of between thirty and forty persons, or more, consisting of grown sons and daughters, all married and all having children, living together under the superintendence of an old matron — their mother or mother-in-law. The latter, by good management, and by accommodating herself to the temper of her daughters-in-law; by using, according to circumstances, firmness or forbearance, succeeded in preserving peace and harmony during many years amongst so many females, who had all jarring interests, and still more jarring tempers. I ask you whether it would be possible to attain the same end, in the same circumstances, in our countries, where it is scarcely possible to make two women living under the same roof to agree together.

It is true that the same spirit of concord between an old Hindoo matron and her daughters on one side, and her daughters-in-law on the other, does not prevail in an equal degree in all households; but instances of



such union and harmony are by no means uncommon, and they last to the death of their parents; when, ordinarily, the brothers divide the heritage, separate with their several families, and each one shifts for himself.

The Rev. — remarks, that a Hindoo female “is despised as soon as born by her parents and friends, disappointed that the child is not a boy,” &c. If he had contented himself with merely stating that the birth of a boy causes, in general, more joy to parents than that of a girl, I should have overlooked this passage of his letter; as it is a weakness common to all nations, and from which the Hindoos are not exempt, to hail with more exultation the birth of a male than that of a female, and Hindoo parents are in a greater degree under the influence of this feeling, because they derive more support from a son than from a daughter; but it is untrue that a female is despised and spurned by her parents as soon as born. Parents, chiefly mothers, foster their children, both males and females, with an equal tenderness. So far from females being despised while living under the paternal roof, their parents and brothers are often seen submitting themselves to severe privations for the purpose of procuring trinkets and jewels for their daughters or sisters, in order that



they may be able to appear in public with decency and advantage, while the males are seen in rags or half naked, and live forgotten at home.

The principal care of parents is to procure suitable establishments for their daughters, over whom mothers continue to exercise a kind of paramount authority, even after their marriage, being particularly attentive to check that despotic sway which so many mothers-in-law are but too well disposed to exercise over their daughters-in-law.

The Rev. Gentleman alludes again and again in his letter to the state of contempt and degradation in which, in his opinion, the Hindoo fair sex in India is held.

I have already observed, that that apparent contempt was nothing but a matter of form, and merely ceremonial; and I will now add, that in no country are women in reality more respected in public than in India.

In fact, among the Hindoos the person of a woman is sacred. She cannot be touched in public by a man, even with the end of the fingers. How abject soever may be her condition, she is never addressed by any body, not excepting the persons of the highest rank, but under the respectful name of *mother* (*umma*). A dwelling in which only females



are to be found, even the hut of the most helpless widow, is an inviolable asylum into which the most determined libertine would never dare to penetrate; or, should he do it, his audacity would not remain unpunished. A woman can frequent the most crowded places without being exposed to the least insult. A male who would stop merely to gaze on a female who is passing by, as our loungers in Europe are accustomed to do, would be considered by all as an insolent and uneducated person. Even a mere look designed to insult a woman would be resented and avenged. In short, the least insult by words or otherwise, the least mark of disrespect offered in public to a female, is instantly resented and avenged by her husband, her sons, or her brothers, who would expose themselves to all dangers rather than overlook an offence offered to their wives, their mothers, or sisters, or see them treated in public with disregard.

“What mothers! (exclaims the Rev. —) without a knowledge of the alphabet, and unacquainted with all the employments of females in a civilized country.”

To be sure, they will not dance *waltzes*, or deliver in any other way their persons into the arms of another man. They are too well



aware of what they owe to their husbands, and to the modesty of their sex, to allow themselves such gross violations of decorum; but what I have already stated, and what I am still about to state, will prove that although "without a knowledge of the alphabet," they are dutiful daughters, faithful wives, tender mothers, and intelligent housewives; and they are not in fact, as shamelessly asserted by the Rev. Gentleman, "mere animals kept for slaughter or for burden in the houses of their husbands."

In fact, there is perhaps no kind of honest employment in a civilized country in which the Hindoo females have not a due share. Besides the management of the household, and the care of the family, which are (as already noticed) under their controul, the wives and daughters of husbandmen attend, and assist their husbands and fathers in the labours of agriculture. Those of tradesmen assist theirs in carrying on their trade. Merchants are attended and assisted by theirs in their shops. Many females are shopkeepers on their own account; and *without a knowledge of the alphabet*, or of the decimal scale, they keep by other means their accounts in excellent order, and are considered as still shrewder than the males themselves in their



commercial dealings. Several shops entirely kept by females, without the help of males, may be seen in large towns in every bazar street. I have sometimes observed female shopkeepers sitting down cross-legged in their shops, and serving their customers with the greatest ease and affability. A greater number are seen selling fish, betel, flowers, vegetables, fruits, and sundry articles of subsistence or furniture. The poor classes, which unfortunately form the majority of the population, let themselves as servants or journey-women, or earn otherwise a scanty subsistence by selling grass, fuel, straw, &c. &c. In short, there is no kind of work, no kind of trade, in a civilized society, in which the Hindoo females are not seen actively engaged, and occupying a conspicuous place. I am acquainted with industrious widows, who, having undertaken a small trade with a trifling capital of forty or fifty rupees, have, by their economy, their labours, and industry, increased it, within these past ten years, to the amount of five or six hundred.

Such are, however, the individuals, whom the Reverend —, is pleased to represent, as “ spending their lives in inanity and idleness, and as mere animals kept for slaughter or for burden in the houses of their husbands.”



I am happy that a long experience has taught me on the subject a theory quite different from his, and to view the Hindoo fair sex in a much more favourable light. At the same time, I believe that it may be said without giving offence, that the Europeans are not qualified to form a fair judgment on the subject, on account of the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of holding a free and confidential intercourse with the respectable part of the Hindoo females. All their knowledge in this respect is derived from their criminal connections with concubines, ordinarily of the lowest tribes, or other females of the most dissolute dispositions. Hence arise the false notions of the Europeans. The knowledge I have attained on the subject is not hearsay, but from personal observations. My profession has afforded me repeated opportunities to become acquainted with the character of the Hindoo females, and by living with them on a footing of paternal familiarity I have had numberless opportunities of conversing with them without restraint. Their conversation on subjects connected with their internal economy and domestic concerns was not certainly destitute of interest, and on all other subjects within their reach I have



generally found them communicative, gay, and lively.

I do not mean that they are free from the defects of their sex. They are, in common with the females of all countries, exceedingly fond of jewels and *parure*, covetous, obstinate, irascible, vindictive, capricious, fickle, talkative to excess, slanderous, and in too many instances quarrelsome.

In another of his productions, the Reverend — had, by a sweeping phrase, indiscriminately branded the Hindoo fair sex with lewdness, by insinuating that “a chaste female was almost unknown among the Hindoos.” I can confidently affirm that this shameful accusation is unfounded. Knowing that the same unjust suspicions respecting the virtue of the Hindoo fair were entertained by many prejudiced and misinformed Europeans, I have made diligent enquiries to know how far such an injurious slander was grounded on fact; and as my profession has enabled me to live on a certain footing of familiarity with the persons of both sexes, and to entertain with them a confidential intercourse, I think that my information may be depended upon. I have generally observed that amongst *good castes*, the Hindoo females in general, and married women in particular,



were worthy to be set forth as patterns of chastity, and conjugal fidelity, to the persons of their sex in more enlightened countries. I do not mean that breaches of those virtues never occur amongst the former; but I believe that they happen still more seldom with them than with the persons of their sex in countries which boast to have reached a much higher degree of civilization.

Such is the result of my own observations; and I am confident that every unprejudiced person, who will attend to the subject with the same impartiality, and disinterestedness, as myself, will render the same homage to the virtue of the Hindoo fair sex.

The Reverend — finds fault also with the Hindoo females, because they are unacquainted with needle-work: “they are unable (says he) either to make, to mend, or to wash the clothes of their households.” He might have added, “and to make or mend their shoes.”

Is the reverend gentleman ignorant, that there are every where in India, as well as in Europe, tailors, washermen, and shoemakers. That these professions, as well as every other, are exercised by castes, to which they belong exclusively, and that the individuals who compose those castes, both males and females,



are obliged for a trifling salary to discharge the duties of their profession whenever called upon for the purpose by the other tribes? Is he ignorant that the clothes of the females, and those of the great majority of the males, are composed of a single piece without seams, and that needle-work and tailors were of course unknown and useless to them, until comparatively of late years, when the Mahometan dress was partly adopted by small numbers of them, among the persons in office.

But instead of needle-work, which can be of no utility to them, the Hindoo females are almost all acquainted with the art of spinning cotton, and immense numbers get a livelihood by this means. There are few houses in which reels are not to be found, and after having finished their other domestic businesses, instead of spending their leisure "in inanity and idleness," as the Reverend — says, or of passing their time at a card-table, as do most European ladies, they are seen sitting down cross-legged on a mat, and spinning cotton for sale, or for manufacturing the coarse clothes with which they cover themselves, accompanying these simple and useful occupations with some decent song, or playing and prattling with their children. Since hosiery



has become an object of trade, they are acquainted with the mode of knitting stockings, and numbers are at present seen earning a livelihood in this way.

The Rev. — says, in rather bad humour, that “the Hindoo females are obliged to go veiled, when they leave their houses, and that they never mix in public companies.”

These statements are quite incorrect. The Hindoo females were at no period veiled; they always were, and are still seen, both at home and abroad, with their heads, or at least their faces, uncovered. In some provinces they make their appearance in public, with their bodies immodestly exposed, from their heads to their middles; and every where, the Brahmin females in particular, uncover not only their whole heads, but also the hind parts of their legs to their hams, and sometimes higher, in a manner which, to the eyes of an European, appears very indecent.

It is untrue, also, that the women in India are excluded from all public assemblies. So far from this being the case, it is very well known that it is they who are the leaders, and act the principal part in the most solemn family ceremonies, such as those of wedding, of the *cord*, &c. &c., while the males remain, as it were, passive spectators in those crowded



assemblies. It is also well known, that it is they who are the leaders in all the numerous religious feasts celebrated by the Hindoos, in their houses, during the course of the year, such as those of *oogohdy*, the pongol, mahunavamy, &c. &c.

On the other hand, if the reverend gentleman had witnessed any one of those solemn processions performed by the Hindoos, in the streets, he would have remarked that the females, in several instances, composed the majority of the crowd that attended them. If he had had a sight of the places of worship, during the celebration of the mysteries of the religion of the country, he would have observed that they were attended by a number of females, nearly equal to that of the males. If he had been present in the market-streets when any farce or other public spectacle is exhibited by quacks, jugglers, and other mountebanks, he would have seen that in several instances the women formed the majority amongst the spectators. In a word, with a little more attention to the subject, and a little less prejudice, he would have observed that the Hindoo females were to be met with every where, and had their full share in most public assemblies, both religious and profane; and would have paused before he



uttered these reprehensible words, that they were in fact mere *animals*, kept “for slaughter, or for burden, in the houses of their husbands.”

The Rev. — returns again to the stale subject of the burning of the Hindoo widows, on the pile of their deceased husbands, and quotes the lamentable fact of seven hundred and six victims having devoted themselves to that barbarous superstition, in the course of the year 1817, in the presidency of Bengal. It is a well-known fact, (as I observed in a former letter,) that these nefarious sacrifices have increased of late years; but the reverend gentleman is not perhaps apprized, that many persons of good sense, who have made enquiries about the causes of this increasing evil, have been of opinion, that its aggravation was in a great measure owing to his intemperate zeal, and that of many of his associates in the work of reform. He is not, perhaps, aware, that owing to their abrupt attacks on the most deep-laid prejudices of the country, the zeal of the Hindoos had been roused to a determined spirit of opposition and resistance, when they saw their most sacred customs and practices publicly reviled, laughed at, and turned into ridicule, by words, and in writing, in numberless religious tracts, circulated with



profusion, in every direction, all over the country.

Those horrid suicides, called *Suttees*, have unfortunately prevailed from the earliest times to the present in the country, chiefly in the north of India, and the putting a stop to them altogether, by coercion, appears a measure too pregnant with danger to be attempted. In the moral order, as well as the physical, we are often reduced to the sad necessity of tolerating great evils not to be exposed to greater ones.

Those execrable sacrifices occur but seldom in the south of the Peninsula. I suppose that the population of the country on this side of the Krishna, does not fall short of thirty millions, and I am persuaded, that the number of *suttees* does not amount to thirty in a year. But thirty *suttees* in a year, in a population of thirty millions, are certainly by far too many; and nobody deplores, more bitterly than I do, those horrid excesses of superstition and fanaticism.

But, after all, is suicide confined to the Hindoo widows; and are our countries free from such detestable excesses? So far from this being the case, I am persuaded that more persons perish in France and England, in a month, through suicide and duelling, than



during a whole year in India, through *suttees*. The only difference I can remark, between the one and the other, is, that the deluded Hindoo widow commits suicide from misled religious motives, and from what she considers as an indispensable duty of conjugal devotion; whilst the European suicide puts an end to his existence, in defiance of every religious restraint, and in open violation of his most sacred duties towards God, and towards men.

Shall, therefore, our whole compassion be engrossed by the Hindoo widow, and shall we not reserve a tear, or a sigh, for our still more guilty and more unfortunate countrymen?

Are suicide and duelling in Europe less nefarious than *suttees* in India? Why, then, is the deluded Hindoo widow arraigned with so much severity, while the laws against duellists are dormant, and the tribunals of justice generally under the necessity of overlooking those deliberate and malicious murderers?

The Rev. —, in order to render the Hindoo females more and more abject and despicable, quotes two or three shocking stories, which, if they are not altogether false, are at least misrepresented and exaggerated to such a degree as to render his accounts



entirely unworthy of credit. He says, for instance, that "parents, in some cases, marry fifty or sixty daughters to a single Brahmin." I question whether a single case of such turpitude might be cited among the thirty millions of inhabitants, who people this side of the Peninsula; and I am persuaded, that if such instances occur in Bengal, they are rare, and that the few Brahmins who may allow themselves such open transgression of the usages of their caste, are spurned and shunned by the individuals of their tribe who preserve any sense of honour; for polygamy is strongly discouraged by the Hindoo customs among all castes, and above all, in that of the Brahmins, among whom marriage is generally confined to the pair.

"Every mother (exclaims the reverend gentleman) among the tribe of Rajahpoots puts her female child to death as soon as born."

This odious paragraph is one of the most shocking slanders contained in the author's letter. There is a good proportion of married Rajahpoot sepoy in every battalion of the native army. I appeal to all the British officers of each battalion, serving under the three presidencies, and I boldly defy them to quote a single instance of this horrid kind.



There are, in every province of the Peninsula, numbers of Rajahpoot families. I have been acquainted with many individuals of this high-minded tribe, and I am quite sure that there is no one who would not shudder at such an execrable imputation.

I have, indeed, been informed, that this detestable practice formerly prevailed to a certain degree in some districts in the north of India, among two or three subdivisions of Rajahpoots, for this tribe, as well as every other, is subdivided at least into twenty others; but the Reverend — cannot be ignorant that owing to the mild, humane, and insinuating exertions of the late Governor Duncan, (a circumstance which will shed an unperishable lustre over the memory of that excellent man,) a stop was put to those abominable murders.

On this subject, the Reverend — adds the following horrid story: “While in Bengal (says he) *I was informed* of the case of a Rajahpoot taking his daughter aside, and with a hatchet cutting her to pieces.”

I am firmly persuaded that the informer of the Reverend — imposed a downright falsehood on his credulity, or, if the fact proves authentic, it originated in causes quite different from those alleged by that author.



Among the domestic regulations peculiar to the tribe of the Rajahpoots, one of the most remarkable is that by which adultery (as was the case under the Mosaical law) is punished with death ; and I have no doubt, that if the story related to the Reverend — is authentic, the slaughter of that female by her own father originated in her having dishonoured both herself and family, by giving herself up to foreign loves.

It appears that the Reverend — has chiefly derived his knowledge of the Hindoos from informers, and to this source, above all, I am willing to attribute the many inaccuracies, exaggerations, and misrepresentations which abound in his writings. That writer should have been aware that the Hindoo informers in general, before giving information on any subject, begin by studying the character and temper, the dispositions and bias of their employers, and to give them information accordingly. Those employed by the reverend gentleman, seeing him disposed to blacken and debase the Hindoos by all means, and in all manners, served him according to his taste.

I never employed informers in my researches and enquiries about the Hindoos, my scanty means not allowing me to keep per-



sons of this description in my service. What I have written on the subject is the result of my personal observations, in an unrestrained intercourse with people of all castes and religions, during a period of thirty years almost entirely passed among the natives; and on the subject of this article, I can confidently assure you that the Hindoo parents of all castes, above all, mothers, if equalled by any people on the earth in tenderness towards their progeny, both males and females, are surely surpassed by none; nay, it might be said, that their parental tenderness is rather carried to excess, and owing to that excessive fondness, their children of both sexes are spoiled and rendered vicious.

I have reserved the review of the most audacious paragraph of the author's address for the end of this letter: it is that where he emphatically exclaims, "What must be the state of the female mind, when *millions* are found throwing the children of their vows into the sea?" &c. &c.

I will confess that I could not refrain from shuddering at the perusal of this atrocious paragraph, and I am surprized that the public authorities at home have taken no notice of such a slander; the tendency of which is to cast an indelible stain of infamy on the



country government. Good God! "Millions of females throwing the children of their vows into the sea;" and doing so in the face of day, under the eyes of a government famed all over the earth for its spirit of humanity, of justice, and benevolence! Of what exotic materials must not be composed the mind of that Englishman, when he dares bring forward falsehoods which tend to nothing less than to cast eternal disgrace on his nation, and his countrymen; for, if it were true that "millions of mothers are found throwing the children of their vows into the sea," and the government should remain passive and indifferent spectator of so many horrid murders, such a government would deserve to be held forth to the execration of all Europe, and of all the civilized world, and its memory handed down with everlasting infamy to the remotest posterity.

I will observe here, that a superstition prevails all over the country derived from astrological notions, according to which when children are born under certain stars which are supposed to possess a particularly malignant influence, they are in a very few cases secretly put to death, or thrown into a river; but such instances of horror are fortunately rare, the children born in such inauspicious



circumstances being ordinarily exposed on the high roads, and when found out, are taken by some compassionate person, educated, and fostered by him with nearly as much care as his own progeny.

The Reverend — ought to have stated the fact such as it is, and he ought, moreover, in justice to truth, to have added that the Bengal government (under the presidency of the Marquis Wellesley, I believe,) had no sooner been made acquainted with the existence of this horrid practice than resolutions were passed, by which it was declared that the persons who were guilty of those execrable excesses should, when discovered, be put upon their trials as guilty of wilful murder, and judged according to the severity of the laws. But the reverend gentleman has very uncandidly, and very unmanly, overlooked all these circumstances, as he was determined to represent these poor Hindoos under the blackest and most odious colours.

That author finishes his address to the ladies of Liverpool by a kind of Don-Quixote appeal to their sensibility, and compassion, for the purpose of soliciting their support and assistance towards the establishment of schools to enlighten the Hindoo females.



The ladies of Liverpool are not aware, I suppose, that such a project is merely visionary, and altogether impracticable, the most deeply rooted prejudices of the country being decidedly hostile to its execution.

The ladies of Liverpool are not aware, that even should not the prejudices of the country oppose an almost insurmountable bar to the establishment of schools for females in India, the state of poverty of the latter, and their numerous avocations, would not allow them to attend those schools.

The ladies of Liverpool are not aware, that at least five-sixths of the Hindoo females live in such distressed circumstances, that from the age of eight or ten years, to the end of their lives, they are obliged to labour without intermission from morning till evening, and that, notwithstanding their uncessant labours, they are hardly capable of saving enough to purchase a coarse cloth of the value of five or six shillings, to cover themselves.

If I were to make an appeal to the charity and compassion of the ladies of Liverpool, or of any other town in the United Kingdom, I would advise them to look around themselves, and behold the distressing spectacle of misery which most unfortunately prevails to such an



alarming extent among the lower classes of their own countrymen, and represent to them, as an imperative duty, the obligation of employing all their savings to assist their neighbours, and alleviate by all the means in their power the evils of the distressed persons who live around them. In doing so, I should only enforce the duties of that holy religion which imperatively commands the rich to share his substance with the poor; the affluent to assist the needy. Or if those ladies were disposed to give a more extensive range to their charity and benevolence, and to cause the distressed among the Hindoos to share their liberality, I would advise them to intrust, to the hands of some friend in India, the sums destined for the purpose, recommending him to make a proper selection among the numberless naked, emaciated, and starving individuals of both sexes who are to be found in every place in the country, and to distribute the sums amongst those who were most worthy of compassion.

But I shall certainly never call on any lady, or other individual whatever, to engage him or her to squander away the money in contributing to the (in my humble opinion) absurd project of establishing schools for the purpose of



enlightening the Hindoo females, or of circulating Bibles and tracts which are perused by no one, and are above the comprehension of all.

I remain, &c.

1st October, 1821.



To J. S. Esq.

My dear Sir,

IN my last I informed you, that I would take the first moments of leisure I could spare, to give you my opinion on the printed *Canada* translation, of the first four chapters of the book of *Genesis*, which you did me the honor to submit to my criticism. I have thought that the best way of performing this task, was to send you a literal translation into English from the *Canada* version, in order that you may be able to judge of the merits of the latter yourself; you will see from the accompanying translated chapter, that there is scarcely a single verse in that version, which may be said to have been accurately translated, and that in several instances the meaning of the text is perverted or materially changed.

If you entertain suspicions as to the genuineness of my translation, as there are I suppose, Brahmin writers in your office, acquainted with both languages, you can show them both the *Canada* version, and my English translation, and I trust that they will do justice to the correctness of the latter.



The other chapters are equally incorrect, both as to the meaning and the style. The latter has appeared so low, and so ludicrous, to several natives of good sense, whom I desired to peruse the whole attentively, that they all expressed themselves with marks of contempt and disgust at such a performance; and they all agreed in saying, that if it were intended to render the Christian religion for ever contemptible and odious to the pagan Hindoos, there were no surer means to attain this end, than to exhibit to them our sacred records under such a despicable garb.

I have been so thoroughly disgusted in going through the translation of the first chapter, that I beg you will excuse me the trouble of translating the three others. For I cannot disguise to you, that as a most sincere believer in the divine origin of our Holy Scriptures, I cannot help experiencing the most distressing feelings of indignation, when I see those sublime books, the sacred word of God himself, so basely, so shamefully, so sacrilegiously defaced, debased, and perverted, and held out under such a shape to the very enemies of our holy religion, as the pure word of God.

If one of the many proofs of our holy books being of divine origin be derived from



their intrinsic worth, from their noble, inimitable, and majestic simplicity, there is, alas! on the other hand, but too much reason to fear that the Hindoos will form a directly opposite judgment on the subject, when they behold the ludicrous, vulgar, and almost unintelligible style of the versions at present circulated among them; and that even the most reasonable and best disposed, in beholding our Holy Scriptures under such a contemptible shape, so far from looking upon them as the word of God, will on the contrary be strongly impelled to consider them as forgeries of some obscure, ignorant, and illiterate individual, and of course a downright imposture.

It is, however, to execute such performances, (for the Tamoul and Telinga versions, parts of which I have also perused, have not appeared to me superior to this,) that public credulity in Europe is imposed upon, and immense sums of money are subscribed.

You may rest persuaded, that all those *soi-disant* translations will soon find their way to the bazar streets, to be sold there, as waste paper, to the country grocers, for the purpose of wrapping their drugs in them; and indeed, in my humble opinion, they are fit for nothing else.



I express to you my sentiments on the subject with candour, and without hypocrisy, as you have requested me so to do, and I am ready fearlessly to express the same, in the presence of the Bible Society itself, and of all the universities in Europe; for my opinion, (let them give it the appellation of prejudice, of ignorance, or obstinacy, it is the same to me,) being grounded on an inward conviction, the result of a long and attentive experience, is unalterable.

I remain &c. &c.

11th June, 1821.



*A literal Translation of the Canada Version of
the first Chapter of the Book of Genesis.*

ACCOUNT OF MOSES.

CHAPTER I.

1. IN the beginning God created the earth and the air. (a)

2. But the earth was *uneven* and empty, and there was darkness *over water*; but God's soul (b) was *roaming with delight* (c) on water.

(a) Air is the literal meaning of the word *accossa*, and conveys to the mind a quite different idea from that of the heaven (*cælum*) of Scripture, which ought to be translated by the word *para-loca*.

(b) This expression, *Dewer-attma*, literally, God's soul, is different from the *spirit* (*spiritus*) of Scripture, and must convey to a man unacquainted with the scriptural style, the idea of a corporeal being, composed of a soul and a body.

(c) Such is the literal meaning of the compound verb *lol-ahdovadoo*, to roam or wander with delight (as a spirited horse would when let loose).



3. Next God said, Let *brightness* (*d*) be made! Then *brightness* was made.

4. God seeing that *brightness* was good, he separated *brightness* from *obscurity*. (*e*)

5. God gave to *brightness* the name of day, and to *obscurity* the name of night; and *whereas in this manner the evening and the morning came to pass*, it was the first day.

6. Next God said, Let the *orb of space* (*f*) be made in the midst of water, and let it be separated *from this water, and from that water*. (*g*)

7. *In this very manner* God having created *the orb of space*, He divided the water which was above *the orb of space*, and the water which was below *the orb of space*, and it was made so.

8. He gave the name of *air* to the *orb of space*; and *whereas in this manner* the evening

(*d*) The literal meaning of the word *bilakoo* is *brightness*, in French *clarté*, different from the *light* (*lux*) of Scripture, which should be translated by the word *pracassa*.

(*e*) *Kattlai* literally means *obscurity*, and differs from the *darkness* (*tenebræ*) of Scripture, which ought to be translated by the word *antacara*.

(*f*) Such is the meaning of the words *vissala-mandala*, different from the *firmament* of Scripture, which ought to be translated by the word *gagana*.

(*g*) The meaning of the text is entirely changed in this phrase.



and the morning *came to pass*, it was the second day.

9. *Next* God said, Let the water that is under the *air* collect together in one place, and let the dry earth be seen! and it was made so.

10. God gave to the dry land the name of earth, and to the waters collected together the name of sea, and God saw that it was good.

11. Then God said, Let the earth germinate herbs and plants giving seeds; *and besides that*, let seeds being made, they make germinate according to their species, trees giving fruits! and it was made so. (*h*)

12. Then the earth made germinate herbs, and plants giving seeds according to their species; *and besides that*, trees having seeds and giving fruits according to their species; and God saw that it was good.

13. *And whereas in this manner* the evening and morning *came to pass*, it was the third day.

14. *But* God said, Let there be in *the orb of space, that is air*, light, to divide the day from the night, and let them be to *make*

(*h*) It is not the exact meaning of the text.



known the signs, and times, and nights and days.

15. And let them be lights *in the orb of space, that is air*, for the purpose of shining on the earth, and it was made so.

16. God created two great lights: one great light *to govern* the day, and a smaller light *to govern* the night and the stars.

17. And God placed them *in the orb of space, that is air*, in order to shine on the earth, and *to govern* the day and night, and to separate *obscurity* from *brightness*; and God saw that it was good.

18. And *whereas in this manner* the evening and the morning *came to pass*, it was the fourth day.

19. Next God said, Let there be made in the water *a great many moving aquatic insects*, and the birds which are on the earth and fly *in the orb of space, that is air!*

20. *In this manner* God created a great many *large fishes* which were born in the water, each one according to its own species, and the *moving aquatic insects*, and the several species of winged *tribes*, and the birds of all kinds; and God saw that it was good.

21. Then God blessed them, saying, fishes increase and multiply, *and be in great numbers*



in the water of sea! *all birds* multiply on the earth. (i)

22. *And whereas in this manner* the evening and morning came to pass, it was the fifth day.

23. Next God said, Let the earth give birth to the several species of living creatures, of cows (*k*), of *moving insects*, and to all the tribes of the beasts of forests; and it was made so.

24. In this manner God created the several tribes of beasts on the earth; the several tribes of horned cattle (*l*), and the several tribes of *insects* moving on the earth: and he saw that it was good.

25. Next God said, Let us create a man *similar to us, and having our form!* Let him command the *aquatic insects* of the sea; the birds that fly in the air; the beasts having life; all earth; and *the insects* that move on the earth.

26. In this manner God created a man *having his form.* He created him *having the*

(i) The *italic* words, in this verse, are mere interpolations not to be found in the text.

(k) The word *passoovoo*, when alone, means *cows*. It means animals in general only when the word *pranei* (*passoovoo pranei*) is added to it.

(l) These words are an interpolation not to be found in the text.



figure of God. (m) Moreover, he created him male and female.

27. Then God blessing them, said, Increase and multiply, and filling the earth, *overcome it*; and command the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the air, and all the animals that move on the earth.

28. *Moreover* God said, Lo! I have given you all the species of plants producing seeds, with which *all the earth is filled*, and all species of trees, *namely, trees* producing fruits, and having seeds, they shall be a food for you.

29. And he said, I have given the herbs and plants as a food for all the animals on the earth which have life, and for all the birds that fly in the air, and for all the insects that move on the earth; and it was made so.

30. Then God saw all that he had created, and it was *perfect*; and *whereas in this manner* the evening and the morning *came to pass*, it was the sixth day. (n)

(m) Blasphemous expressions.

(n) *Ex uno disce omnes*. The other chapters are equally incorrect, and abundant in errors. Besides that, the style is quite ludicrous; and there is no Hindoo scholar who can keep a serious countenance in perusing such a performance.

N.B. The words in *italics* are those whose meaning materially differs from that of the text.



To Captain M. C.

My dear Sir,

I return you, with my thanks, the two accompanying curious books*, which I have perused with interest, inasmuch as they clearly make it out, that in this supposed highly refined and improved age, fraud and roguery have taken hold of most professions and trades; and quackery or imposture of most religions and beliefs. The one lays open the impositions practised on the body, and the other those practised on the soul. In perusing the latter, I have been stricken by the similarity I have remarked between the leading tenets of several Christian sects described therein, and those prevailing among the pagan Hindoos. It is a common custom among you Protestants, to upbraid us Catholics with idolatry, on account of our images, processions, holy water, fasts, &c. But I find from Mr. Evans's Sketch, that we could retort on yourselves your arguments on the subject

* Accum on Culinary Poisons, and Evans's Sketch of the Christian Sects.



with great advantage. In fact, in many of your leading tenets and practices, you cannot even claim the merits of originality, since it may be said that you have had the idolatrous Hindoos for leaders and teachers. I find, for instance, that the leading dogmas of the Predestinarians, Necessitarians, Antinomians, and others, have, from time immemorial, been fully upheld and professed by the Hindoos, in the sects or schools known under the name of *Vedantans* and *Mimansam*, of which I have given a short sketch in the new edition of my former work.

On the other hand, I can perceive between the religious exercises of the Quakers, Methodists, Jumpers, Shakers, &c. &c., and those of the Hindoo Dassaroo, Jangoomas, Andys, &c., no difference, unless that the religious practices of the former, surpass by far in in folly and extravagance those of the latter. Both, in their convulsions and contortions, in their wild dancing, jumping, groaning, howling, own a common origin, that is, the inspiration or possession of a supernatural spirit or agent. The only difference is (as I have just remarked) that our European *Energumenes* leave their Hindoo brethren far behind them in the career of extravagance.

But the article which has stricken me most



in that little work, is that of the *Millennium*, which is nothing but an almost literal copy of the tenth *Avattera* of Vishnoo, called *Kalky-avattera*, or incarnation into a horse. * This *Avattera*, of which I give a description in my new edition, is to put an end to the corruption, fraud, and injustice introduced among men by the last *Bouhda-avattera*, and cause virtue, lasting peace, and complete happiness to reign on earth among the human race. Such is exactly to be the effect produced, at the very same period, during the age of the *millennarians*, and when the latter contrived their *millennium*, I cannot refrain from believing that they had a knowledge of the *kalky-avattara*. Both systems coincide so perfectly in their origin, motives, and effects, that the one must have been copied out from the other.

If it were justifiable to jest upon a subject which has at all times filled me with awe, or to slight a religion which I most sincerely and most firmly believe to be the only true one upon earth, I could carry on this disgusting parallel to a much fuller extent; but I will conclude it, as the subject is too serious

* Which is to take place to the end of the Cahly yoogam.



to become a matter of raillery. The only thing that vexes me is the strong hold that all those opposite and jarring interpretations of the unerring word of the God of all truth cannot fail to give unbelievers and other enemies to Christianity.

I remain, &c.

22d November, 1821.

THE END.

London:

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A
REPLY
TO THE
LETTERS
OF
THE ABBÉ DUBOIS,
ON
THE STATE
OF
CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA.

BY THE
REV. JAMES HOUGH,
CHAPLAIN TO THE HON. EAST-INDIA COMPANY, ON THE
MADRAS ESTABLISHMENT.

LONDON:

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1824.



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SECTION I.

THE POSSIBILITY OF CONVERTING THE HINDOOS TO CHRISTIANITY.

IN a work recently published by the Abbé Dubois, late Jesuit Missionary in Mysore, entitled, "Letters on the State of Christianity in India," the Author replies in *the negative* to the following questions: "First, Is there a possibility of making real converts to Christianity among the natives in India? Secondly, Are the means employed for that purpose, and, above all, the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the idioms of the country, likely to conduce to this desirable object?" His negative to both these queries he hesitates not to repeat in various parts of the work; stating it as his "decided opinion, First, that, under existing circumstances, there is no human possibility of converting the Hindoos, to any sect of Christianity: and, Secondly, that the translation of the Holy Scriptures circulated among them, so far from



2. Possibility of converting the Hindoos.

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conducting to this end, will, on the contrary, increase the prejudices of the natives against the Christian Religion, and prove, in many respects, detrimental to it."

"These assertions" he endeavours to support "by such arguments and proofs as a long experience and practice in the career of proselytism have enabled" him, as he conceives, "to adduce." pp. 1, 2.

His "arguments" are founded upon the bad character of the Hindoos, but especially of the Brahmins—upon the extensive influence of the latter over all other castes of Hindoos—upon the nature of their superstitions and the inveteracy of their prejudices—upon the contempt into which Christianity is, from various causes, brought—upon the persecutions to which converts are exposed, &c. &c. (passim)—all of which he regards as insurmountable obstacles to the dissemination of the Gospel in Hindoostan.

His "proofs" are deduced from the total failure, as he asserts, of the means hitherto employed. If there were the slightest probability of success, it must, he thinks, ere this have crowned the exertions of Roman-Catholic Missionaries, who have laboured in India for three centuries back, concealing, with care, every thing in the Christian



Religion likely to wound the feelings or offend the prepossessions of the natives, and endeavouring, in every possible way, to conciliate their minds. And since these means have proved hitherto, and still continue to prove, abortive, he regards it as the wildest of speculations for Protestant Missionaries to think of gaining upon a race of people like the inhabitants of our Eastern Empire, with a mode of worship destitute, as he declares, of all attraction.

From a review of the whole subject, he concludes, that God has predestinated the Hindoos to eternal reprobation!!—that, “let the Christian Religion be presented to these people under every possible light,” “the time of conversion has passed away; and, under existing circumstances, there remains no human possibility to bring it back.” p. 42, &c.

If his reasoning be sound, and his conclusion fairly drawn, we behold, in the millions of human beings who inhabit the vast continent of India, a race of our fellow-creatures in as hopeless a condition as that of apostate angels: and, instead of cherishing the rising sympathies of our common nature, which would move us to stretch forth the hand of charity to raise them from so wretched a prostration of soul, it is our duty to stifle



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every tender emotion that struggles within our bosoms, on beholding their hapless condition; lest we should, involuntarily, speak to them in the accents of mercy, tell them of the dying love of Christ, and thus, before we are aware of it, be fighting against the purposes of Almighty God. If the Author's views be correct, then we are justified in maintaining our sovereignty over the Hindoos, without once offering them that only equivalent compensation which is to be found in the benefits of the Christian Religion!

A question involving such tremendous consequences, to so great a proportion of mankind, demands the most serious deliberation. And after perusing and re-perusing the Abbé's Letters, with that attention which the importance of the subject demands, and carefully comparing his assertions with *my own "experience and practice"* in the Missionary Cause for some years in India, I have arrived at conclusions diametrically opposite to those which he has drawn: and I here pledge myself to prove, First, "the possibility of making real converts to Christianity among the natives in India." Secondly, that "the means employed for that purpose, and, above all, the



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translation of the Holy Scriptures into the idioms of the country, *are likely to conduce to this desirable object.*" There are those who would tell me, that I am committing myself on the very threshold of the discussion; for that, to assert the possibility of converting the natives of India to the Christian Faith, is to betray a total ignorance of their character. I have studied their character; and could, from my own experience, give a description of their moral depravity that would afflict the Christian's soul. But I find that the Abbé, if he thought it convenient to his purpose, would not hesitate to deny the accuracy of any description, how closely soever resembling his own: p. 145, &c.—I shall not, therefore, expose myself to the charge of drawing "exaggerations and misrepresentations respecting the Hindoos," but will describe them in his own terms.

"The Hindoos may be divided into two classes—the impostors, and the dupes. The latter include the bulk of the population of India; and the former is composed of the whole tribe of Brahmins." p. 87.

Contrasting the character of Cornelius with that of the Hindoos, he says, their "minds seem to be hermetically shut to the



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voice of truth, and to the rays of light; and their judgment is led astray by their passions, and most of their public and private institutions. I have, alas! nowhere met, among the Hindoo Brahmins, another Cornelius, 'whose prayers and alms are come up as a memorial before God.' I have, to this day, remarked amongst them nothing but pride, self-conceit, duplicity, lying, and every kind of unnatural and anti-Christian vices." p. 92.

"A Hindoo, and, above all, a Brahmin, by his institutions, his usages, his education and customs, must be considered as a kind of moral monster—as an individual placed in a state of continual variance and opposition with the rest of the human race," &c. &c. pp. 100, 101.

"The leading feature of the education of a Brahmin is an universal hatred and contempt towards all the human race." He "is taught, if not positively to hate his friends, and to return evil for good, at least to conduct himself through life by quite selfish considerations, and to sacrifice all, without exception, to his private interests, without distinction between friends and foes; to be entirely unmindful of the services rendered to him, and to consider them, whatever may

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be their importance and value, as his strict due." "A Brahmin is, moreover, obliged, from duty, to be selfish, intolerant and proud, insolent and forbidding." p. 102.

At pp. 103 and 104, after comparing the Brahmin to "those false philosophers of whom Paul speaks (Rom. i.)," he adds, "In reading this chapter of our holy books, and the forcible style in which the Apostle treats the subject, one would fancy that he had in view the Hindoo Brahmins, when he wrote it. If one would draw up the character of this caste of Hindoos, it could not be better done, than by literally transcribing the 29th, 30th, and 31st verses of this very chapter."

"The inferiority of the Hindoo Brahmins to all other Pagan Nations, with respect to religion, is the more striking, as they have not been able to distinguish what is a virtue, and what is not; since they in general suppose it much more meritorious to render service to beasts than to men. A pious Hindoo Brahmin, who will make it his imperative duty to share his frugal meal with fishes, snakes, monkeys, and birds of prey, will, on the other hand, behold, with the coldest indifference, a poor wretch starving at his door, without thinking of assisting him."



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Instead of that great leading precept of Christian Charity, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour like thyself,' which is calculated to convert the whole of mankind into a community of brothers, it might be said, that the leading precept of the Brahmins is this, 'Thou shalt love brutes like thyself.'" "To practise a virtue from quite disinterested motives, and only to enjoy the inward satisfaction of doing good, are things above their comprehension. Ask a rich Hindoo, who spends the whole or a part of his fortune in erecting or repairing places of religious worship, in building choultries, &c. &c. &c., what are his motives for so doing, his answer will almost invariably be, that he does so to be publicly praised, as a virtuous man, during his life, and to transmit his name to posterity after his death." pp. 112, 113, 114.

Much more to the same effect might be transcribed from the Author's more elaborate work, giving "A Description of the People of India*:" but these extracts, I trust, will be sufficient to satisfy the reader,

* For an exposition of the inconsistency between the Author's description of the immoral character of the Hindoos given in his former publication, and that drawn in many parts of the present Letters, see the Eclectic Review for Oct. and Nov. 1823.



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that the Hindoo is, indeed, sunk into the depths of depravity. He will know, also, what degree of credit is due to the representations of the man, who can himself at one time describe the Hindoo in such appalling characters, and, at another, affect to have his "indignation roused to a high degree," by, what he calls, "the exaggerations" &c. of the late Mr. Ward of Serampore, who nowhere represents the Hindoo as *worse* than a "moral monster." pp. 145, 149, &c.

Taking, then, the natives of India as the Abbé Dubois himself describes them—and in more terrific colours they need not be depicted!—I nevertheless maintain the possibility of converting them to Christ: for the Gospel has been proclaimed to as bad a people, and that with success.

I will not fetch my proofs from Ancient Greece or Rome, Britain or Gaul, the Sarmatæ or Daci, Scandinavians, Goths, or Vandals; though all these, and many other people converted to the Faith, were, as might be easily shewn, as unpromising subjects for the Gospel as the inhabitants of Hindoostan.

The testimony of St. Paul to the character of the Corinthians, previous to their conversion, shall suffice:—"Neither fornicators,



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nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 9—11. See also Eph. ii. 1—5. Coloss. iii. 5—7. &c.)

Then let us not despair of the Hindoo, bad as he confessedly is! The same Almighty Being, who shewed mercy to the depraved Corinthians, is able—and who *dare* say He is not willing?—to deliver "the natives of India" also from the bondage of corruption, and translate them "into the glorious liberty of the Children of God."

Easy were it to prove, that the Hindoos are less culpable before God, than the Israelites who were cotemporary with our Lord and His Apostles. They have as yet manifested little of that perverse temper which led the Jews, at one time, to take offence at the strictness of John the Baptist; and, at another, at the freedom of Christ: (Matt. xi. 16—19.) They have not yet resisted those incontrovertible evidences for the truth of Christianity which were vouchsafed to the



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Jews, who had the testimonies of prophecy, of John the Baptist, of miracles, and of a voice from heaven. Consequently, the Hindoos, in rejecting the Gospel, could not be so culpable as the Israelites were, even though it had been stated to them in its purity, without any admixture of human error or device. Our Lord himself hath declared thus much: (Matt. xi. 20, 21.) Bad as the Hindoos are, they are not worse than the inhabitants of Sodom.—No (M. Dubois may rejoin); but these miserable people, with their city, were destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven.—True: yet our Lord declares, that it shall be more tolerable for them, in the day of judgment, than for the inhabitants of Capernaum, and, consequently, for every other people who rejected Him, notwithstanding the evidence he gave them of His divine character and authority, by performing many mighty works in their presence: (vv. 23, 24.) The more numerous the religious privileges which we enjoy, or the opportunities that we may have for securing our salvation, in the event of our neglecting to avail ourselves of them, the more tremendous will be our doom!

I am, then, at a loss to divine how the Abbé Dubois can reconcile to his mind his



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abandonment of a people under the circumstances of the present inhabitants of India—and from his avowed conviction, that they lie under the irrevocable curse of the Almighty, and are doomed to eternal reprobation! (p. 42.) The gracious Redeemer was much more merciful to the Children of Israel, though their offences were greater, and His own precious blood cried aloud from Calvary in judgment against them. In the prospect of their rejection of Him, and the mercies which he proffered them, He uttered a tender lamentation over their devoted city: (Matt. xxiii. 37.) Ere He bowed His head in death, He breathed forth this pathetic, this compassionate ejaculation, “Father, forgive them! for they know not what they do:” (Luke xxiii. 34.) He commanded the Apostles to begin the preaching of repentance and remission of sins at Jerusalem: (Id. xxiv. 47.) Accordingly, St. Peter, having reproved the men of Israel” for denying “the Holy One and the Just,” and killing “the Prince of Life,” exhorts them to “repent and be converted,” that their “sins may be blotted out;” and encourages them to hope for mercy: (Acts iii. 13, &c.) St. Paul most feelingly lamented their state, with “great heaviness and continual sorrow



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in his heart ;” for “ he could wish himself accursed (separated) from Christ for his brethren,” &c. (Rom. ix .1, &c.) For some time after our Lord’s resurrection, the other Apostles also confined their ministry to the Jews ; and even when, upon the persecution which arose after the death of Stephen, they were scattered abroad, very few of the Disciples travelled beyond the land of Palestine (Acts xi. 19, 20) ; and wherever they went, they invariably addressed themselves, in the first instance, to the Israelites : (Acts xiii. 46, &c.) Nor did they abandon Jerusalem, notwithstanding all they suffered, and the partial success that attended their labours there, until the signal for their departure, which Christ had given them, appeared : (Matt. xxiv. 15, &c.) The destruction of their city and temple was suspended forty-three years after the Crucifixion ; and during the whole of that period, they were admonished, again and again, to look on Him whom they had pierced, if haply the blood which they had shed might wash away their crime.

Such were the feelings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles towards the Israelites—a people, than whom no other nation has been, or can be, placed in a situation to commit the

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greatest of pardonable crimes. To them alone has the Lord of Life and Glory been “manifest in the flesh;” and, consequently, none but they can have had the opportunity of shedding His precious blood.—Then, will any uninspired mortal be so presumptuous, as to pronounce any other nation under heaven to be irrevocably doomed to eternal misery, and that for crimes of inferior magnitude, and committed under less aggravating circumstances? Or, will he be so unfeeling as to act upon that presumption, by ceasing to labour, and by exerting his ability and influence to dissuade others from labouring, to bring them to the knowledge of “the only true God,” and to the faith of the only “Mediator between God and Man?” (1 Tim. ii. 5.)

The Abbé Dubois is aware, that, in order to justify such a conclusion and such conduct, it is necessary to shew that the Hindoos have committed the unpardonable sin; which he, accordingly, endeavours to prove. In what, I ask, does that sin consist? Is it not the attributing of that to the power of Satan, which the reason of every unprejudiced mind were sufficient to convince him that nothing short of Omnipotence could effect? Thus many of the Jews, when they beheld the



mighty works, and heard the heavenly discourses, of Jesus, said, "He hath a devil, and is mad:" (John x. 20.) They accused Him of "casting out devils, by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils:" (Matt. xii. 4.) This crime of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, our Lord did declare to be unpardonable: (Ib. 31, 32.) But no other sin whatever, not even the bitterest invectives or most malicious slanders uttered against Himself, nor the greatest cruelty inflicted upon His sacred person, did He exclude from the hope of pardon.

What facts, then, does the Abbé advance, in proof of the Hindoos having committed this unpardonable offence? "The Christian Religion," he says, "has been announced to the natives of India, without intermission, during the last three or four centuries; at the beginning with some faint hopes of success, but at present with no effect." p. 42.

Admitting, for the sake of argument only, that what he alludes to was the unadulterated Gospel, and that its rejection constituted the unpardonable offence; still he ought to know, that it has been preached to a comparatively small proportion of the hundred millions who inhabit the Indian Continent. How then, upon the principles of Scripture, or common



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justice, or the feelings of humanity, can he reconcile to his conscience his sweeping condemnation of the whole, for the transgression of the few? Neither our Lord nor his Apostles acted thus towards the Jews. Though Jesus declared, that such as had blasphemed against the Holy Ghost could not be forgiven, yet did He continue to labour, and pray, and weep, and suffer for the rest. St. Paul expressly declares, that, *as a nation*, they were not rejected by God: (Rom. xi. 1, &c.) while he and the other Apostles continued to exert themselves, as already shewn, to promote the conversion of their brethren. Then, even though M. Dubois be correct in charging those Hindoos who have rejected the Roman-Catholic mode of faith with committing the unpardonable sin, yet, by what Scriptural authority or precedent does he turn his back upon *all* the other natives of India, and doom them to the irrevocable curse of Almighty God? A revelation from Heaven can alone justify such conduct! St. Paul required no less to divert him from his purpose, when he designed "to preach the word in Asia," and "assayed to go into Bithynia:" (Acts xvi. 6—8.) And I am persuaded that I utter the sentiment of every consistent Christian, when I declare, that nothing short



of a manifestation of the Divine Will, equally unquestionable, should induce Missionaries to abandon the vineyard which they occupy in the East.

The Abbé Dubois seems to think that the instructions given by our Lord to His Disciples, when He sent them forth to preach, (Matt. x. Mark vi. Luke ix, and x.) are sufficient to vindicate his abandonment of the *Hindoos*. "Happy would it be, indeed," he says, "had the divine instructions given by Christ to his immediate Disciples, in these chapters of his divine work, been followed by a great many of those styling themselves their successors." The "instructions" to which he refers are, that they should immediately depart from all who returned not their salutation and rejected their word: (pp. 44, 45.) The Abbé assumes, that the modern Missionary has precisely the same duty to perform, and is placed in the same circumstances, as those Disciples of our Lord; for without this, his argument falls to the ground. But I protest against his assumption. In those chapters, our Lord is not (as the Abbé affirms) investing His Disciples "with full powers to preach His divine Religion to all people." He merely charges them with a temporary office; viz. To an-



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nounce that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. This proclamation He expressly directs them to make to the Jews only; charging them not to go "into the way of the Gentiles," nor even to enter "into any city of the Samaritans;" but to "go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel:" (Matt. x. 5, 6.) He also invests them with power to perform miracles, to prove that their commission was divine: (ver. 8.) Where they were not welcomed, they were forbidden to remain, *only because* they had not time then to stay in order to convince gainsayers. It was a hasty journey; and, therefore, it was not necessary to provide either gold, or silver, or brass, in their purses; nor scrip, nor two coats (a change of apparel), nor shoes, nor yet staves, (vv. 9, 10.) Their time was very limited: consequently, they were not to suffer themselves to be detained unnecessarily, but to move on with the greatest possible speed, in consistency with the fulfilment of their commission. "For verily I say unto you," their Master adds, "ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come:" (ver. 23.)

Should the Abbé refuse to admit this brief explanation of the circumstances under which the Seventy Disciples were sent forth



by our Lord, yet, before he can establish *his* point, he must prove that the cases are parallel—that all the Missionary has to do in India, is, to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand—that he has ocular demonstration to produce of the divine authority by which he speaks and acts—and that circumstances are such as to require him to pass through the country in haste. And when he shall have succeeded thus far, (which he must for ever despair of doing,) still he will have to shew, that the Gospel has been actually preached, with fidelity, to the inhabitants of every town and village in the East—and that it has been pertinaciously rejected by every one of them—before the instructions of Jesus Christ to His Disciples will authorise him to shake off the dust of his feet against the whole race of *Hindoos*.

He further quotes the example of the Apostles, and particularly that of St. Paul: (pp. 46, 47.) But, notwithstanding the obstinacy and cruelty with which they were driven from various places, we nowhere find that they deliberately abandoned the nation of Israel to their obduracy and unbelief. St. Paul, especially, returns again and again to persecuting cities, and even to Jerusalem, though it was testified to him, by



the Holy Ghost, that bonds and afflictions awaited him: (Acts xx. 23. and xxi. 11.) Though the Apostle of the Gentiles by divine appointment, yet he did not consider himself warranted in abandoning the Israelites. When he finds that he can make no impression on them, "he yields, he submits, he resigns himself; he conducts himself according to the rules laid down by his Divine Employer:" (p. 46.) But, in the spirit of "his Divine Employer," he watches for another opportunity to introduce his favourite theme: and when vouchsafed, he avails himself of it, and repeats his message of mercy and redeeming love to those who had hitherto opposed.—And does the Abbé Dubois feel himself supported in his desertion of India by such an example as this?

But he refers to the sovereign purpose of God according to election, in vindication of his conduct: (p. 42—44.) "That God, in his infinite mercy, will have all men 'to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;' and, that Christ died for the salvation of all mankind, and 'came into this world to save sinners;' are truths," he says, "acknowledged by all sorts of Christians, if we except perhaps a few, who maintain the gloomy tenet



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that God is willing to save only the elect or predestined:" (p. 105.) Here he objects to the doctrine of personal election, as a "gloomy tenet." How can he possibly make this quadrate with his own use and application of that doctrine to one hundred millions of human beings? (pp. 108, 109.) Is it possible that he can be so blinded by his peculiar notions, and so determined upon maintaining them in defiance of all consistency, as to think this application of the doctrine less gloomy than its application to a single individual*? I hesitate not to say, that there is no Christian, in whose heart a single spark of the love of Jesus glows, but will feel a thrill of horror pass through his veins, on reading this deliberate consignment of so many of our fellow-creatures to perdition! True, St. Paul does confess, that the purposes and ways of God are mysterious, secret, unsearchable, past finding-out, &c. (p. 109.) And, *therefore, because unknown to us*, he has not the temerity, the inhumanity, so to act upon the doctrine of predestination, as to abandon *any in-*

* Unless he holds the doctrine of personal election, what interpretation does he give to Rom. ix. 18.? And to what purpose does he adopt it as his motto, "Cujus vult miseretur, et quem vult indurat"?



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dividual, not even his bitterest enemy, much less a whole nation, to eternal misery—and that for no other reason, but because he is of opinion that they are doomed to perdition by the divine decree, and that, consequently, it must prove a hopeless task to labour for their conversion to God. Such is the Abbé's persuasion; and under these feelings, he has looked back from the plough to which he had put his hand: (Luke ix. 62.) He informs us, that he has laboured in India two and thirty years in vain; that “everywhere the seeds sown by him have fallen upon a naked rock, and have instantly dried away. At length, entirely disgusted at the total inutility of his pursuits, and warned by his grey hair that it was full time to think of his own concerns, he has returned to Europe, to pass in retirement the few days he may still have to live, and get ready to give in his accounts to his Redeemer:” (Advert. p. vii.) With his *private* reasons for retiring, no one but himself is concerned: but of this, his final step—viz. The endeavour to deter others from embarking in the Missionary Cause—may he consider well, before it be too late, how he *can* render *such* an account as shall prove satisfactory to his Judge!

He desires to know “who has told us that



Christianity shall not remain stationary," and "continue to the end of the world to be," as he asserts it has hitherto been, "the religion of only the minority of mankind:" (p. 108.) I reply, that Jehovah himself has told us, in the most unqualified terms, that the Christian Religion shall one day become universal: (Psalm ii. 8. Isaiah xi. 9. Daniel ii. 44. vii. 13, 14. Hab. ii. 14. Zech. ix. 10.) He admits, indeed, that "Christ has promised that 'the Gospel of the Kingdom shall be published in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.'" This alone, then, is an argument for its promulgation throughout India; until it can at least be proved that all the inhabitants of that land have had a fair opportunity of receiving, or rejecting, that "witness." But he rejoins; "Has He (Christ) told any one, that all nations, or even the majority of them, should be brought under the yoke of the Gospel?" (p. 108.) "He has, it is true, announced that His Gospel *should be preached all over the world*; but, to the best of my knowledge, he has never affirmed that it should be heard, believed, and embraced by all nations." (p. 42.) What, then, did He mean, by comparing it "unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of



meal, till the whole was leavened ?” or what, by the parable of the grain of mustard-seed, “ which indeed is the least of all seeds ; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof ?” (Matt. xiii. 31—33.) What other signification can be attached to these parables, but that they are intended to teach that all nations shall be enlightened by the doctrines, influenced by the principles, and seek refuge from the wrath of God under the peaceful shadow of the Gospel ? Did our Lord utter a word in opposition to the predictions of His universal sway over men, cited above, from the Old Testament ? Did He not imply, in His final command to His Disciples, to “ preach the Gospel to every creature,” that some would “ believe and be baptized,” wherever it was proclaimed ? (Mark xvi. 16.) In short, was it not expressly revealed from Heaven, “ The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and He shall reign for ever and ever ?” (Rev. xi. 15.)

The Abbé Dubois shall himself assist me with another argument, to prove the inaccuracy of his conclusion. Wishing to invalidate the late Mr. Ward’s account of the



immorality of the *Hindoos*, he hesitates not to assert, that their general character is actually superior to that of Europeans: (p. 152—163.) We have already seen how differently he can write, when he has another object in view—that he can represent the *Hindoo* as entirely destitute of charity, if his purpose be to shew the impracticability of converting him from his depraved condition (p. 113); and can go so far as to assert, that, “in order to make true Christians among the natives, it would be necessary, before all things, to erase from the code of the Christian Religion the great leading precept of charity:” (p. 63.) But when he wishes to contravene Mr. Ward’s more charitable and more rational inference from the same premises—viz. The *necessity* for their conversion—he actually asserts, that they are more charitable than Europeans: (p. 159.) I leave it for him to reconcile these contradictory statements; and also to explain how it is possible for a man to be a “*true Christian*,” *without charity*: while I go on to argue, that if he will admit that *some* Europeans have been really converted to the true faith of Christ, the *possibility* of converting the *Hindoos* must follow as a fair and natural conclusion. Supposing that he believes



his own statement respecting their superior virtues to be correct, he cannot fail to perceive that *they* must be more promising subjects for the reception of the Gospel, than the inhabitants of Europe.

Again: "When I behold them prostrating themselves before their gods of stone and brass, I exclaim," he says, "Such were our ancestors, and so did they; and so would we ourselves do, had not God, through his infinite mercy, taken us out of such an abyss of darkness, in order to illumine us with the bright light of his Divine Revelation! Let everlasting thanks be returned to Him, for this the greatest of all his divine favours in this life:" (pp. 114, 115.) Surely the man, who penned this sentence, forgot himself when asserting the impossibility of converting the inhabitants of India! The only legitimate inference from these remarks is—not that of M. Dubois, that the Hindoos cannot be converted, but—that since, by his own shewing, they are no worse than our own ancestors were, the same "infinite mercy" and "bright light of Divine Revelation," which were vouchsafed to these, may, in the day of God's power, be extended also to the idolaters of Hindoostan. And if he rightly appreciates "this greatest of all the divine favours in this life,"



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and feels grateful to God for it, he renders to the Lord a very unsuitable return for so unspeakable a mercy, when exerting his utmost ability to prevent its diffusion throughout the habitable globe. Christ is glorified in the conversion of sinners, from vice and idolatry, to faith, and holiness, and love. M. Dubois would persuade us to extinguish His glory in the Eastern World; to deny Him one jewel from the countless multitudes there, to decorate His crown; to disappoint His anticipation of as goodly a company from the East as from the West, to “sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven:” (Matt. viii. 11.)

The Abbé contends, that in no country in the world has the Christian Religion had to encounter the stupendous obstacles that are to be met with in India;—that the sufferings which Hindoo Converts would have to endure, must for ever operate as an insurmountable barrier to the introduction of the Gospel among them. “By embracing the Christian Religion,” he says, a Hindoo loses his all, Relations, kindred, friends—all desert him. Goods, possessions, inheritance, all disappear. The spiritual tyranny and cunning of the priests, and the baneful division of the people into castes, present (as he asserts)



such impediments to the propagation of Christianity in India, as have never existed in any country whatever: (pp. 13, 14. 97—99.)

Can the Abbé Dubois need to be reminded of the absolute controul held by the Scribes and Pharisees, in the days of our Lord, over the minds of their countrymen? Does he not know how entirely they gave the tone to the public feeling, and led the national opinion? What is there in India that can exceed the mental thralldom in which the Jews were held by their Rabbis? (Matt. xxiii. 4, 13. Luke xi. 52.) In short, we have only to read the account of the character and proceedings of the Jewish Rulers, given in the Four Gospels, to be convinced that every Israelite who embraced Christianity, at its first introduction into the world, had, *at least*, as much to encounter as can possibly await the converted Hindoo: (John vii. 46, &c. ix. xii. 42. xix. 38.)

There is nothing whatever, in the case of the Hindoo Convert, so bad as what our Lord candidly led his Disciples, of every age and country, to expect, as the consequence of their fidelity to His Cause:—"The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to



be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake :” (Matt. x. 21, 22.) “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household :” (Id. 34—36. Mark xiii. 9, &c. Luke xii. 49, &c.) M. Dubois himself knows, that, whatever losses, or privations, or reproaches, the Hindoo may have to encounter on embracing Christianity, his life is protected by the British Laws, which would condemn to the gibbet the murderer of the humblest individual.

Christ forewarns His Disciples, that the time would come, when whosoever killed them would think that he did God service : (John xvi. 2.) Hindoos would persecute a relation embracing the Christian Faith, more out of regard for the reputation of their family and caste, than for the honour of their gods. And I believe it will be generally allowed, that persecutions arising from religious bigotry have always been more obstinate, furious, and cruel, than those which have originated in other causes. The Hindoos therefore, on embracing Christianity, have less to fear than



most of the earlier converts, for they have not much religious prejudice to encounter.

He asks, "Where is the man furnished with a sufficient stock of cynical fortitude to be able to bear such severe trials?" (p. 14.) There have been Cynics, Stoics, and other Heathen Philosophers, such as Socrates and a few more, who have submitted to death, rather than renounce their sentiments: whilst Plato, Seneca, and various Greek and Latin Authors, have, upon philosophic principles alone, taught a good man to endure patiently, in the cause of virtue, the severest bodily tortures that fire or sword can inflict—not considering *what*, but *how well*, he suffers—"Non quærit quid patiat, sed quam bene."

Jesus Christ, however, inspires His Disciples with a nobler principle, than Cynical Fortitude, or Stoical Insensibility. He promised His gracious presence with them, under all their toils, privations, and sufferings: (Matt. xxviii. 20.) viz. the consolations arising from the secret operations of His Spirit, and from the hope of a recompence "manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting;" (John xvi. 1—7. Luke xviii. 29, 30.) His predictions of the persecutions they would endure were fully accomplished; as the Acts of the Apostles,



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and various parts of St. Paul's Epistles, abundantly testify. And under all their afflictions, they experienced their gracious Master's fidelity to His promises. Though "troubled on every side," they were "not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed:" (2 Cor. iv. 8, &c.) Thus did God always comfort those that were cast down: (Id. vii. 5, 6.) They felt as men, indeed; yet were they taught, by the words of the Saviour, and by the spiritual application of those words to their minds, to regard their present afflictions as light, and continuing but for a moment, when compared with that "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," for the enjoyment of which they were intended to prepare them: (Id. iv. 17.)

Nor was this spiritual consolation and support under persecution confined to the immediate Disciples of our Lord. During the first three centuries of the Christian Era, the Church passed through no less than ten persecutions; many of which were conducted with a severity of torture, the very recital of which cannot fail to agonize the heart. Among the martyrs of that period, we read of many persons, young, in health and the



enjoyment of earthly comfort ; or poor, weak, and with every natural inducement to escape from torture and save their lives, by cursing the name of Christ, and burning incense to the gods ; yet, rather than make shipwreck of their faith, they braved death, accompanied by the severest pains which the cruel ingenuity of man could invent. No tortures whatever, as the Younger Pliny and several ecclesiastical authors inform us, could move them from their purpose.

This state of things continued, with but little intermission, until the Emperor Constantine embraced the Christian Faith. And the Abbé Dubois will hardly deny, that these obstacles to the spread of the Gospel were much greater than any which "existing circumstances" in India present. According to his mode of reasoning, then, it were impossible for the Christian Religion to triumph over such stupendous barriers. Yet we find, that the more the Christians suffered, the wider did their faith spread ; insomuch that this apophthegm became proverbial, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." Tertullian says, "We are but of yesterday ; and yet have filled all your places, your cities, islands, castles, towns, councils, even your camps, tribes, bands, your palace,



senate, and forum : in short, we have left you nothing but your temples.*” Arnobius, who wrote a short time before Constantine’s reign, speaks to the same effect.

Then, it may be reasonably asked, why are we not to anticipate similar triumphs for the Gospel in India, where, I maintain, the impediments to its success, arising from the persecutions consequent upon its reception, are far less formidable? I am willing to concede, that persecution is calculated to deter the natives from professing Christianity, unless they be sincere. But this is rather an advantage, than otherwise ; since it will tend to preserve the Church from being crowded by hypocrites. At the same time I assert, that no opposition which *man* may raise *can* impede the advance of true religion, for it is the cause of *Omnipotence!*

One or two instances, out of many, may here be adduced, in proof of the *possibility* of even the Hindoos bearing sufferings and reproach for the sake of Christ.

A recent arrival from Madras brought accounts of a man who had been baptized a short time before, by a Missionary of the

* Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, palatium, senatum, forum : sola vobis relinquimus templa.



Church Missionary Society. When his determination to be baptized became known to his relations, several who lived with him, forsook him, others threatened him, and the wife of his bosom refused to return to his house. After some struggle between natural affection and a consciousness of duty, and having received much appropriate advice from his teacher, he went to him, "quite composed, and with joy in his countenance," saying, "The Lord has given me grace. I cannot transgress against those words which you mentioned. I must love Christ, more than my wife and friends. I will commend all things to God, and trust Him. He will take care of me. I sincerely wish, in the name of the Lord, to be baptized to-morrow." He was baptized accordingly, in the presence of many heathen, besides the usual native congregation. "The same evening," the Missionary writes, "Cornelius (the name he had received at his baptism) was summoned before the Headman of his caste. This man had formerly been very kind to him. When he went, with the catechist, he was asked why he had acted so foolishly as to embrace the Christian Religion: he replied, 'I have not acted foolishly; for I believe that I cannot be saved



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from eternal damnation without the Redeemer, Jesus Christ.' He (the Headman) answered, 'That is your misled mind, which makes you think thus. By what can you know that it is the word of the True God?' His reply was, 'Permit me to say, honey is sweet, but its sweetness is known by him only who has tasted it: knowing no taste, nor what sweetness is, a man cannot conceive, by any description, the sweetness of honey. Read but our True Vedam; and, if you seek earnestly the salvation of your soul, you will then know that it is the word of the True God.' *

The other instance is the following. "A Hindoo Youth belonging to the Mission School at Allepie, on the coast of Malabar, was employed by the Missionary at that Station, who belongs to the same Society, to transcribe portions of the Gospels in the vernacular languages. While thus occupied, he became impressed with a conviction of the truth contained in the Sacred Book, and gradually discontinued the observance of the idolatrous rites of his family. He was removed by his relations into the interior of the country, in order to detach him from the Mission; and violence was threatened, to

* This account has since appeared in the Missionary Register for October 1823, pp. 438, 439.



induce him to conform to the customary practices of his caste. Urged by this treatment, he fled from the country; and coming into the Tinnevelly District, he heard of the Mission near the town of that name, and sought admission into the Seminary there. Prior to receiving him, the Missionaries wrote to his former master at Allepie, to ascertain the truth of as much of the youth's account of himself as that gentleman might be acquainted with; and he so far confirmed its accuracy. The youth has since applied himself diligently to his studies in the Tinnevelly Seminary, preparatory to baptism; and the Missionaries write in terms of entire approbation of his conduct."

I could give many similar instances of Christian fortitude displayed by Hindoo Converts; but these are sufficient for my purpose. They shew, both the kind of persecution to which they are exposed, (which certainly is not to be compared with what innumerable martyrs have endured, from the persecution that arose when Stephen was stoned to death, to the days of the Reformation,) and, also, that it is *possible* for the natives of India to be faithful to their convictions, in the face of such opposition as the Abbé Dubois describes.

He thus explains the kind of influence, or



tyranny, which the Brahmins exercise over all the other castes, and the means by which they obtained it. “ In framing their system of imposture, and in devising the monstrous worship prevailing all over India, they not only used every artifice in their power to adapt it to the dispositions of a simple and credulous people, but, above all, they employed all possible means to establish in this way, in a permanent and indisputable manner, the high power and uncontroverted controul they have always exercised over the other tribes. In order that their artifice, in establishing throughout the body of society the most downright imposture which ever prevailed among any nation on the earth, might not be questioned, they had the precaution to encumber the people with those numberless institutions, which, at the same time that they secure the permanent superiority of the Brahmins, render the other tribes incapable of reasoning, or of any mental exertion which might enable them to emerge from that state of intellectual degradation in which they are held by their unchangeable usages and customs.” “ It is a sin, it is a crime, a sacrilege, in every Hindoo who is not born a Brahmin, to endeavour to emerge from that state of ignorance, and to aspire



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to the lowest degree of knowledge. It is a sin for him even to pretend to calculate on what days fall the new and full moon. He is obliged to learn this and similar matters, and to be guided in the most common occurrences of life, by his religious teachers:" pp. 88—90.

These assertions would lead us to conclude, that the Brahmins keep from the other castes all religious and scientific knowledge. They do, indeed, withhold from them the six principal Sastras, which are considered sacred; and their perusal is regarded as the peculiar privilege of the Brahmins. But I never yet heard of their prohibiting the study of European arts and sciences, and am acquainted with several devoted Hindoos who have a respectable acquaintance with English literature. Some, indeed, have been for a considerable time engaged in translating many elementary works, and even such books as Ferguson's *Astronomy*, &c. &c. into the languages of the East, for the use of their countrymen who do not understand English. Many natives of the first respectability patronize and liberally support several institutions (such as the *School and School-Book Societies*, &c.) established by *Europeans*, at *Calcutta* and *Serampore*, for the diffusion



of knowledge among all classes of native youths and adults. The free school at Benares, founded and liberally endowed by the late Jay Narain, presents a striking instance of liberality in a native, both in a pecuniary and intellectual point of view. The son, also, has shewn his mind to be equally free from Brahminical influence and sordid principle. When his father died, the legal transfer of the property assigned by him for the endowment of the school having never been effected, he very honourably and generously secured to the Church Missionary Society the monthly payment of 200 Sicca Rupees which his father had assigned. The institution of the *Hindoo College*, at Calcutta, "almost entirely founded on the contributions of that class of natives whose appellation it bears," is another encouraging fact, in proof of the freedom of the natives of respectability from Brahminical influence. They are now beginning to encourage schools for FEMALE children also. Native presses, an engine unknown a few years ago to the inhabitants of India, are in active operation. They are even associating with Christians in various charitable undertakings for the relief of suffering humanity. Their different addresses, for some time past, to official Characters, on their leaving



India, evince an expansion of intellect, and a liberality of principle, that can be attributed only to their free intercourse with enlightened Europeans, and their acquaintance with the literature of the West.

But the most remarkable and most recent instance of the triumph of the native mind over Brahminical Influence, is furnished by the formation of the Hindoo Literary Society. A number of natives of the first respectability in Calcutta have formed themselves into a Society of that denomination. The first meeting was held in February 1823. In the Address then read, they deplore the inconvenience attending the want of a public institution for the advancement of learning in that country, amongst its native society; and declare, that the want of such an institution has been long felt. The causes of their depressed condition they ascribe to those very prejudices and superstitions which the Abbé Dubois asserts are insurmountable; but which *they* regard as an evil, to be removed only by the cultivation of literature, and by free intercourse with other people; to promote which, they say, is the express object of their Society. The business at that meeting was conducted with a decorum that would have done credit to an



European Assembly; and the sentiments of the different speakers were delivered with great propriety and freedom. Discussion was invited on literary and even *religious* subjects. Two persons present objected to all political discussion, and abusive exposures of their religion: but they were answered, that should any one publish a work abusing their religion, a defence must be offered thereto.*

These are far from being the only instances that might be adduced, to shew the improvement that has taken place, within these few years, in the feelings and sentiments of the natives of India. The Abbé Dubois greatly calumniates them, when he says, that “to this day they have copied nothing of the Europeans, besides their vices and their follies:” (p. 118.) Freely as I acknowledge, and much as I deplore, the sad influence of immoral Europeans upon the manners of the inhabitants of India, yet there are Englishmen in the service, whose moral conduct is such as to command the admiration of the natives, and who exert themselves to promote the improvement of the Heathen under their controul: while many

* Asiatic Journal, for October, November, and December 1823.
—The Address read to the Meeting is particularly deserving of perusal, though too long for insertion here.



of the Hindoos feel grateful for the service thus rendered to them, begin to shake off the yoke of ignorance and superstition, and to think and act for themselves, with a spirit of independence which they have imbibed solely from their intercourse with respectable Europeans. "These things are not done in a corner." No pains are taken by these liberally-minded Hindoos to conceal their proceedings from the Brahmins: they are regularly published before the world: but never have I heard of a single Brahmin who raised a dissentient voice against the diffusion of literary and scientific knowledge among the other castes.

I fear not to make the same assertion with reference to the Holy Scriptures and other religious publications. There may be instances of an intolerant spirit among the Brahmins, to prevent their circulation and perusal; but such is very far from being the general disposition. I mean not to affirm, that the Brahmins are not as much attached to their peculiar institutions as the interested priesthood of any other nation: but I do say, and repeat it, that, as a *body*, they have hitherto never come forward to impede the progress of Christianity among the other castes.

The Abbé Dubois asserts, that "as long as



we are unable to make impression on the polished part of the nation, on the leaders of the public opinion, on the body of Brahmins in short, there remain but very faint hopes of propagating Christianity among the Hindoos :” (p. 100, &c.)

Enough has been here stated, to prove that the Hindoos have begun to examine into the literature and religion of Europeans, without waiting for the sanction of the Brahmins, or deferring to their judgment and authority. I shall, therefore, merely subjoin two familiar instances, to shew that the Brahmin does *not* hold that commanding influence over the mind and actions of the people which is here pretended.

Will M. Dubois think it possible that a native could, or *would*, in opposition to the Brahmins, introduce a band of European music into their very pagoda; and have it to march and play before the idol, when carried out in procession? Yet this actually occurred at Palamcottah, during my residence at that station. The individual in question is a Moodalyar, a man of a liberal mind, benevolent to the poor, and highly esteemed by all the Europeans at the station. He is also the chief support of the pagoda near his habitation: and, having hired a music-master



to instruct his native musicians, he dressed them *in uniform*, and employed them in the manner I have related. When the Brahmins remonstrated against this innovation, he replied with a smile, and bade them only to listen well to the new music, and observe its vast superiority over their own tom-toms and pipes. For the same purpose, he frequently borrowed the drums and fifes of the native battalion, which are played by *Pariahs*, most of whom are Roman-Catholic *Christians*, and would therefore prove doubly objectionable to the Brahmins. *But their inclination, and even expostulations, he totally disregarded.*

On one occasion, while waiting for the ferry-boat to carry me over the Tambravany, I mingled with the crowd of natives collected for the same purpose, and endeavoured to improve the opportunity, by conversing with them upon the importance of Salvation, and ascertaining who were able to read, and willing to receive religious books. While thus employed, a Brahmin drew near, *notwithstanding the jostling of the crowd*, and seemed curious to know what I had to say, and what the books contained. I accosted him; and, after some conversation, he accepted a book. I then turned to another



man, who was importunate for a tract ; and while reading aloud the one which I had put into his hand, he stopped at a word, which he asked me to explain. It was the name *Jesus*. As soon as the Brahmin heard the sound, he returned the book I had given him. This gave me an opportunity of exposing the absurdity and weakness of his prejudice against a *name*; and while I was speaking, he stole silently away, without uttering a word to influence the minds of the people ; nor did his example diminish, in the least, their attention to myself. While crossing the river, I again spoke to this Brahmin (who was in the ferry with me, and had been joined by another), upon the impropriety of his conduct. He seemed to pay no attention to what I said ; but his companion accepted a small book ; and a respectable native in the ferry begged for the one which the other Brahmin had rejected.

Easy were it to state many other facts in proof of the Brahmins not possessing that controul over the people which the Abbé Dubois attributes to them ; but I shall abstain from crowding these pages with more anecdotes than may be required to support my counter-assertions. I maintain, that the



command which the Brahminy caste may be supposed, at one time, to have held over the rest, is now greatly diminished. I have heard respectable natives, who, in consequence of their affluent circumstances, had crowds of Brahmins living upon them and constantly about their houses, speak with the greatest freedom, and in opprobrious language, of their *drunkenness, debaucheries, &c. &c.* And, as far as I know of the present state of the public feeling towards them, I do assert, that *their* conversion is *not a sine quâ non*, in our calculations and exertions upon the other castes. At, and in the vicinity of, every European and Mission Station which I have visited, and which form a considerable portion of those in South-India, I have found the natives beginning, and more than beginning, to think and act for themselves.

Besides, it is not to a Brahmin, but to the Gooroo, or headman of the caste, that the natives generally refer such questions as affect their religious prejudices and reputation. But could it be proved that the Brahmins have that command over the minds of their countrymen which the Abbé Dubois attributes to them, their conversion would not be in any degree essential to the actual conver-



sion of the other castes. It is the Holy Spirit which must convert the soul to God. He is free in his operations; and influences the heart of one man, without any reference to the character or station of another.

The Abbé repeatedly asserts, that the “attachment of the people of India to their religion and customs is invincible,” and their “religious prejudices insurmountable:” (Advert. p. vi. p. 66, &c.)

He himself knows—and, when endeavouring to divest the late Mr. Ward’s statements of all credibility, acknowledges—that some of the most inveterate of those prejudices have long since given way, before the prudence, the humanity, and the perseverance of British Officers. He attributes to the late Governor Duncan the abolition of female infanticide among the Rajahpoots. That gentleman, when Resident of Benares, adopted every measure in his power for its abolition: but when removed to the government of Bombay, it was left for Colonel Walker to effect that object. Colonel W. persevered, against every obstacle; resisted the remonstrances, entreaties, and (more than implied) threats of the heads of that tribe; until he entirely accomplished his purpose, and that without the least danger to our dominion in the East.



He confesses also, "that the Bengal Government (under the Presidency of the Marquis Wellesley) had no sooner been made acquainted with the existence of this horrid practice" (mothers throwing the children of their vows into the sea, at the mouth of the Ganges, to be devoured by sharks and alligators), "than Resolutions were passed, by which it was declared, that the persons who were guilty of those execrable excesses should, when discovered, be put upon their trials, as guilty of wilful murder, and judged according to the severity of the laws:" (p.205.)

Upon this extract, I merely remark, that these admirable Resolutions were not passed as soon as the Bengal Government became acquainted with the existence of this horrid practice. It was publickly known before, and had long distressed the mind of every man susceptible of compassion. But when the Marquis Wellesley manifested an inclination to abolish this practice altogether, as great an outcry was raised against this, as the Abbé Dubois now raises against every similar interference with the prejudices of the natives. The Noble Marquis, however, was not to be put down by such unfounded clamour. The "Resolutions" were passed in 1802, and entitled, "A Regulation for



preventing the sacrifice of children, at Saugur, and other places." The law was put in force without delay : and, notwithstanding the predictions of dangerous commotions, as the immediate consequence, it was obeyed, without the slightest resistance, or even expression of displeasure.

At the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges at Allahabad, Hindoo devotees were for ages in the practice of drowning themselves. But, not long ago, it was put a stop to, by the Judge simply issuing an order, "that any person found assisting to drown another should be taken up for murder." This had the desired effect: the multitude, collected together on the occasion, dispersed without the least disturbance.

It will, I believe, be allowed, that, in the opinion of a confirmed Hindoo, it is the greatest of all crimes to put a Brahmin to death. No native Rajah or Magistrate ever dreamt of executing one of that caste, whatever were his offence. But the British Government have paid no deference to this prejudice ; awarding appropriate punishments to criminals of every caste, with the strictest impartiality. I very well remember a case in point, related to me by the late R. H. Young, Esq. who was for ten years Judge,

and subsequently Collector, of Tinnevelly. When he was Magistrate of Trichinopoly, a Brahmin was condemned to die, and he, *ex officio*, had to see the sentence carried into effect. It was the first instance of the kind that had occurred at that Station; and all the Europeans there were of opinion, that the populace would not allow the man to be executed, and would rescue him by force, if the attempt were made. When Mr. Young expressed his determination to do his duty, the Commanding Officer wished to support him with a strong escort of soldiers; but this he declined, thinking it of importance to let the natives see that he reposed confidence in his own Peons. He requested, however, that, in the event of a tumult, the military might be prepared to assist in its suppression. The Brahmin was led out in the presence of a vast concourse of people; from whom not a murmur was heard, while preparations were making for his execution, or at the moment of his being launched into eternity: and when the awful scene was closed, they quietly dispersed.

The aversion of the Brahmins to mingle with inferior castes is well known, and was long considered unconquerable. But, for some years past, they have enlisted into our



native battalions, and stand in the line, or march indiscriminately with "vile Pariahs" (as the Abbé Dubois designates them), and even with Chucklers (workers in leather), who are some degrees below the Pariah.

By entering our army, they make another compromise of their ancient prejudices. It is contrary to their superstitions, for any Hindoos, except those of the lowest castes, to use the flesh or skin of any animal: and to have done so formerly, a man would have lost caste. But the whole of our Seapoys, who are composed of all ranks, wear the belts, cartridge-box, bayonet-case, sandals, &c. which are all made of leather. Indeed, many private natives are now accustomed to wear leathern sandals and shoes. A short time previously to my leaving India, I accompanied my Moonshes, one evening, to the door; and, while they were putting on their shoes, desired to know of what they were made. "*Of cow's hide,*" was the reply. I affected to startle with surprise, and asked how they could be guilty of such sacrilege: to which they replied, with a smile, "When we know a little more of you" (meaning European Gentlemen), "we shall lay aside all these notions."

Till within these few years, none but low-



caste Hindoos would embark on board ship : but now, the Seapoys are transported across the ocean, to any distance to which their services may be required, without any objection being expressed on their part, and, on the part of Government, with perfect indifference as to their distinction of caste. And when they return from these expeditions, they are received again by their friends, without the slightest hesitation.

For a long time, the Seapoys refused to wear an uniformity of dress, until it was thought almost dangerous to propose it. But the late Lieutenant-General, Sir Henry Cosby, in the early part of his military career in South India, succeeded in prevailing upon them to receive the uniform which has continued to be worn by them to the present day*.

Numerous other instances could I give, in proof that the Hindoo's "prejudices" are not "insurmountable;" particularly, as in the Seapoy's case, when his *interest* is concerned. But probably the reader will begin to think me prolix †. Trifling as some of these cases

* *Vide* East-India Military Calendar.

† For arguments of greater weight in proof of the practicability of overcoming "the prejudices" &c. of the Hindoos, *vide* Lord Teignmouth's "Considerations" &c.; wherein it is proved, "that



may appear to him, yet the whole system of Hindooism is composed of trifles: and every one acquainted with the importance which they still attach to prejudices and customs equally insignificant, will acknowledge, that there is nothing whatever in their civil or religious predilections, from which they may not be expected, with the same facility, and with as little danger to our Eastern Dominion, to deviate, when the moral state of European Society in India shall improve, and the natives become better acquainted with our scientific and literary productions.

I shall dismiss this part of the question with a reply to what the Abbé Dubois seems to consider an unanswerable objection against every attempt to interfere with the long-established practices of the Hindoo. It is in the case "of the burning of the Hindoo Widows on the pile of their deceased husbands." This he calls a "*stale subject!!*" So is that of the Slave Trade. And many of the advocates for this abominable traffic would gladly

"that millions of Hindoos have been converted to the Mahomedan Faith; and that hundreds of thousands have embraced the doctrines of Christianity"—(viz. within the communion of the Syrian Church, in Travancore; the Roman-Catholic Church, in various parts of India; and the Protestant Church, in South India and Ceylon: (pp. 22—28.) Of these Christian Converts, I shall have frequent occasion to speak in the sequel.



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join the Abbé in endeavouring to pour contempt upon the question so odious to their respective feelings—(feelings! did I say? Can such men possess feelings that are not degrading to human-nature?)—and persuade us to abandon the “subject,” because it is “stale!” If this be argument, then I demand of the Abbé, upon the plea of consistency alone, the abandonment of his outcry against every interference with the customs of India, however inhuman or absurd: for *WHAT subject* can be more *stale* than this!

This objection might be confidently left to be answered by the sympathies of our common nature. I pray to Almighty God, never so to abandon Christians of the West to the prince of darkness, as to permit him to extinguish every spark of humanity that yet glows in our bosoms! *While* the blood of so many victims to Eastern Superstition calls aloud to Heaven for pity, may we open our ears to their cry, and flee to their relief! May the protracted continuance of this abominable custom, instead of blunting the edge of *our* feelings, only increase their poignancy!

M. Dubois acknowledges “that these nefarious sacrifices have increased, of late years:” and he ascribes it, “in a great measure,” to



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what he calls “ the intemperate zeal ” of the late Mr. Ward, “ and that of many of his associates in the work of reform ; ” which, he says, roused “ the zeal of the Hindoos ” “ to a determined spirit of opposition and resistance.”

This insinuation is illiberal and unfounded ! We learn, from the “ Papers relating to Hindoo Widows and voluntary immolations,” published, in 1821, by order of the House of Commons, that the number of Suttees has, indeed, of late years increased. In the province of Bengal, there were—

In 1815	378		1817	707
1816	442		1818	839

Of the different causes assigned for this increase, the following is the most probable. It having come to the knowledge of Government, that many widows were burnt at a very tender age, in a state of pregnancy, and under other circumstances contrary to the Hindoo Laws relating to the subject, an order was issued to prevent the burning of any widow, until the Magistrate had ascertained, that she was above the age of 15, and offered herself a willing sacrifice to the flames. Prior to this regulation, many families refrained from burning their widows, in consequence of the odium which Europeans were



known to attach to those who assisted at those ceremonies. But now, whenever they took place, they seemed in a measure to have the sanction of the Local Government: the natives were, therefore, no longer ashamed of the practice, and hence the increase of these sacrifices. But how unjust to charge the Missionaries with the guilt of occasioning this increase! Whatever were the cause of it, Missionaries were in no way concerned: and had the practice been peremptorily abolished, no such consequences would have followed. To M. Dubois, this "appears a measure too pregnant with danger to be attempted." And he argues, that, "in the moral order, as well as the physical, we are often reduced to the sad necessity of tolerating great evils, not to be exposed to greater ones." Had the Marquis Wellesley, Governor Duncan, and Colonel Walker, consulted with him upon the expediency of abolishing Infanticide, he would, doubtless, have reasoned in the same way against the propriety and safety of the attempt. The natives were as averse to relinquish that practice, as they can possibly be to refrain from burning their widows: and yet none but the happiest consequences resulted from its prohibition.

The fact of the diminution of Suttees in



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consequence of the *private* disapproval of the Europeans, shews the powerful influence of the bare opinion of their rulers over the minds and conduct of the natives: and when all the Honourable Company's Servants shall exhibit to them a faithful specimen of the Christian character, and study to promote their mental and religious improvement, what beneficial effects may we not anticipate from their intercourse with the people whom they govern!

M. Dubois' comparison between the immolating of the Hindoo Widow, *as by Law established*, and the crimes of Duelling and Suicide, as committed in Europe—and which are acknowledged *to be contrary to all Laws both Human and Divine, and discountenanced in every possible way by all who have any sense of religion*—merits no other observation, than that which is elicited by the silent amazement which his remarks cannot fail to excite: (pp. 175, 197—199.)

I shall refrain from dwelling longer on this painful subject; and will merely subjoin the account of two cases of Hindoo Widows, south of Calcutta, who were prevented from burning, without occasioning the slightest disturbance to the public peace.

The former occurred in 1818, in the district



of Tinnevely, when I was resident at that station. Upon the death of a respectable Brahmin, both his widows applied for permission to burn with his body. As this was an unusual circumstance in South India, no orders had been issued by the Madras Government upon the subject. The Magistrate replied to that effect; at the same time forbidding them to burn, until the necessary orders should arrive. As this, however, would occasion too great delay, (in consequence of the sacrifice being considered as divested of its peculiar virtue if offered long after the husband's decease, and the difficulty of preserving the corpse five or six days,) it was burnt alone, without any inconvenience to the public, or the surviving widows.

The other instance occurred at Chicacole, about sixty miles from Vizagapatam. A Lady at that station, shocked at hearing of a woman who intended to burn, and knowing that the wood was prepared for the dreadful sacrifice, wrote to the late Rev. C. Church, at that time Chaplain at Vizagapatam, requesting him to intercede with the Magistrate, to prevent it. That Gentleman replied to Mr. Church, that he could not interpose his authority, but that he would withhold his sanction until



every means had been tried to dissuade her from her purpose. For some time she disregarded every thing that was said to her, and all importunity to save her was resisted by her Friends to the last. She, however, at length overcome by the kind and persuasive entreaties of the Lady in question, retracted. The immediate consequence was, her expulsion from her caste, and loss of all her jewels. But her compassionate Protectress received her, and shewed her every attention she required; and a Subscription was raised for her support. After a time, her Friends, observing the notice taken of her by Europeans, received her back, and she was reinstated into all the privileges of her caste. She frequently visited her Benefactress, after her return to her Relations, and, with tears in her eyes, expressed her gratitude for her preservation.

So much for the *impracticability* of abolishing this horrid practice!—and so much for the danger the Abbé apprehends from the attempt!—In short, I do maintain, that it betrays an ignorance of the native character, to suppose that the Hindoos are *capable* of being “roused to a determined spirit of opposition and resistance,” by such means as have been hitherto employed to wean them from any of their “sacred customs and practices.”



The Abbé very well knows, that the natives of India are not composed of such active and irritable materials.

Having thus considered the question in every point of view suggested by the Abbé Dubois' remarks, and endeavoured to put a fair construction upon all his statements, I think the arguments and facts here advanced in reply fully establish the position, that there is "a possibility of making real Converts to Christianity among the natives of India." Since the Abbé endeavoured to establish the opposite position, by an appeal to the immoral character of the subjects upon whom the experiment is to be made, and to the nature of their superstitions and inveteracy of their prejudices, I have hitherto waved the religious and spiritual consideration of the subject, for the purpose of shewing, upon his own grounds, that the Hindoo's entrenchments are not impassable, nor the moral impediments of his character irremediable; since they are not more vicious than others, and even less culpable in the sight of God than many who have been converted to the Faith of Christ. Hence the *possibility of their* conversion, also, must be conceded by every ingenuous mind: and while that possibility exists, we have not the shadow of authority



for excluding them from all hope of obtaining the divine mercy provided for apostate but repenting creatures in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

SECTION II.

THE NATURE OF THE MEANS EMPLOYED BY THE ROMAN-CATHOLICS FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE HINDOOS; TOGETHER WITH THEIR FAILURE, AND THE CAUSE OF THAT FAILURE.

THE Abbé Dubois arrives at his conclusion—that the conversion of the Hindoos is impracticable—from the failure of the means hitherto employed by Roman-Catholic Missionaries; which, he thinks, are better adapted to the purpose than the measures which Protestants adopt. Therefore, before proceeding to establish my position by arguments drawn from the successes which have crowned the labours of Protestant Missionaries, in justice to the Abbé, and to my own argument also, I will endeavour to take an impartial view of the efforts of M. Dubois and his Brethren to evangelize India, and of their result.



One of the most obstinate prejudices of the Hindoos, is that which ascribes to the Brahmin an origin and honours super-human. This prejudice must be overcome, before the Gospel can obtain any footing in the heart; for Christ cannot be exalted, until Man is humbled to the very dust.

How, then, have the Jesuits met this prejudice? They have adopted the very means that are calculated to strengthen it in the minds of the people, and to foster brahminical pride. "After announcing themselves as Brahmins, they made it their study to imitate that Tribe: they put on a Hindoo dress of *cavy* (or yellow colour), the same as that used by the Indian Religious Teachers and Penitents; they made frequent ablutions; whenever they shewed themselves in public, they applied, to their forehead, paste made of sandal-wood, as used by the Brahmins*; they scrupulously abstained from every kind of animal food, as well as from intoxicating liquors, entirely faring, like Brahmins, on vegetables and milk:" (pp. 5, 6.) He proceeds to expatiate on the prudence of this

* This mark is worn also by the other castes of Hindoos, and distinguishes the worshippers of their respective gods from each other. The Jesuits, therefore, by adopting this mark, bore the stamp of idolatry on their very front!



mode of proceeding, and attributes thereto the acceptance they met with from the Native Princes.

Some Catholic Friars of other Religious Orders justly complained of these proceedings to the Pope. The Jesuits were charged with "the most culpable indulgence, in tolerating and winking at all kinds of Idolatrous Superstitions among their Proselytes; and with having themselves rather become Converts to the Idolatrous Worship of the *Hindoos*, by conforming to many of their practices and superstitions, than making Indians Converts to the Christian Religion:" (pp. 7, 8.)

When the Pope called them to account for this shameful conduct, they attempted to excuse themselves, by representing the expediency of making this compromise; which, they argued, was only temporary, and was justified by the example of the Apostles. But "all these, and many other like reasons, appeared, to the Holy See, futile, and merely evasive; and the Jesuits were peremptorily ordered to preach the Catholic Religion in all its purity, and altogether suppress the superstitious practices, till then tolerated among the Neophytes:" (pp. 8, 9.)

They did not comply with these orders, without making a further attempt to obtain



the Pope's sanction to their idolatrous proceedings: and when, at length, Benedict XIV. peremptorily commanded them to desist from those practices, and to "bind themselves, by a solemn oath taken before a Bishop, to conform themselves, without any tergiversation whatever, to the spirit and letter of the decree," M. Dubois says, that they obeyed, though with reluctance: (pp. 9, 10.) Overawed, perhaps, by the Cardinal de Tournon, the Apostolic Legate at Pondicherry, they might comply at the time; but they soon resumed their Pagan customs and superstitions, and continue them to the present day.

The Abbé attempts to extenuate this policy, by representing the Hindoos as a people "constituted in such a manner, by their education and customs, that they are quite insensible to all that does not make a strong impression on the senses:" (p. 68.) And hence the necessity, I presume, of disguising the Christian Religion, under images, pictures, processions, &c. &c. resembling, as closely as possible, those of the people we would convert!

When the Abbé sat down to argue thus, did he recollect the words of Jesus Christ? "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth:"



(John iv. 24.) Let him not reply, that they are too sensual to give ear to such a doctrine; for their own Shasters inculcate a similar principle: and it is the professed object of their Sanassees, by mortifying the flesh, to become insensible to surrounding objects and animal gratification, that they may keep the mind absorbed in contemplation upon the Deity. Though the majority of them are actuated by pride and indolence, and study how they may impose on the credulous with success, yet such is their *avowed* object: and the devotee who practises the severest mortifications, is the most highly esteemed. They consider this dedication of the body, or any part of it, as more acceptable to God than any other service or offering that can be rendered to Him; and hence the strict Sanassees are regarded as the most holy of men. This Hindoo doctrine and practice may, therefore, be considered as facilitating the way for a favourable reception of the Gospel, when they shall hear of its spiritual nature.

Allowing, however, that the Hindoos are a sensual people, and easily captivated by pomp and magnificence, yet wherein do they differ in this respect, not to say from ancient and modern Heathens of all lands,



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66 *Means employed by the Roman-Catholics*

but from all the rest of their species, of every religion and every clime? The constitution of the human mind is the same everywhere. The peculiarity of its attachments is quite accidental, and is formed by education and habit. We are all creatures of sense, and too prone to be allured by sensible objects: and in proportion as we are thus led away by the vanities around us, the thoughts, the affections, are drawn from God. To deliver us from this thralldom of the senses, is one of the practical designs of Christianity: and until the soul shall be thus enfranchised, we can never become spiritual, and, consequently, acceptable worshippers of the Only True God, nor faithful believers in Christ.

The duty, then, of every Missionary to the Heathen, is obvious—he is bound to enforce upon them the necessity of renouncing every idolatrous practice, before they can be admitted as Members of the Church of God. The Abbé Dubois and his Brethren have adopted the opposite system—they have indulged their Proselytes in their use of superstitions, calculated to lock the minds in eternal ignorance of the spiritual nature of God, and of the service which He demands of all who approach Him. Are we, then, to be told by these men, that the Hindoos' pre-



judices are insurmountable? They have never attempted to overcome them!—M. Dubois confesses, that—during a period of twenty-five years that he has familiarly conversed with them, lived among them as their Religious Teacher and Spiritual Guide—he would hardly dare to affirm that he has anywhere met a sincere Christian. “In embracing the Christian Religion,” he says, “they very seldom heartily renounce their leading superstitions, towards which they always entertain a secret bent, which does not fail to manifest itself in the several occurrences of life; and in many circumstances, where the precepts of their Religion are found to be in opposition to their leading usages, they rarely scruple to overlook the former, and conform themselves to the latter:” (p. 63.) Can this be matter of surprise, even to the Abbé himself? Every impartial observer will see, that such is precisely the effect that might have been anticipated, from the temporising policy of the Jesuit Missionaries in the East.

Since, however, the Abbé Dubois thinks they were justified in adopting those expedients by the examples recorded in the sacred page, (p. 6.) it will be right to inquire, how far the conduct of our Lord and His



Apostles may be considered as establishing a precedent for this mode of proceeding, in our endeavours to propagate the Gospel.

We have seen that the Jesuits thought the favourable opinion of the Brahmins indispensable to their success; and that they, therefore, in the first instance, endeavoured to gain their countenance.

For the same reason, it would have been politic in our Lord and His Apostles to court the Scribes and Pharisees; for they also, as already shewn, were "the polished part of the nation," and "leaders of the public opinion." But, so far from paying any deference to those haughty Sects, Jesus Christ availed himself of every opportunity to humble their pride. Even the Harbinger of our Lord, when announcing to the Jews the speedy approach of the Kingdom of Heaven, boldly rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees, when he saw them coming to his baptism, and "said unto them, 'O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?'" Instead of flattering them, as the rulers of the public opinion, he tells them plainly, that no distinctions of which they boasted, no, not even their natural descent from Abraham, would recommend them to God, unless they brought



forth fruits meet for repentance: (Matt. iii. 7—9.) Jesus Christ reproves them still more sharply, (Id. xii. 34.) and denounces against them the most tremendous judgments. “Ye serpents! ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell:” (Id. xxiii. 33—36.) So far was He from being induced, by their exalted station and influence, to conciliate their minds, that He refused to give them a sign, when they requested one: (Id. xii. 38—40. xvi. 1—4.) He taught in parables, that they might not understand lessons which He intended for persons of *inferior* rank and importance: (Id. xiii. 11, &c.) Upon their demanding by what authority He acted, He refused to satisfy them, unless upon conditions with which they found it unsafe to comply: (Luke xx. 1—8.) Instead of appearing among them in the character of a Rabbi, which He might have done without having recourse to the duplicity which the Jesuits practised upon the Hindoos, He assumed a low origin; selected a city of no reputation for His birth-place; chose to be nurtured in another of still less esteem, though thereby their objections would be strengthened against His person and office: (John vii. 41—53. See also Luke xvii.



20, 21.) Even His own countrymen were offended with Him, for the same reason : (Matt. xiii. 54—57. Mark vi. 3.)

Our Lord knew that this behaviour would provoke the Pharisees, and other persons of respectability, to seek His death ; and that they would succeed. Some of His Disciples seem to have been amazed at the freedom with which He spake ; and to have thought, that He could not be aware how greatly He was offending those, towards whom worldly policy would have dictated a more conciliatory deportment. But He corrects their misapprehension, and takes pains to make them understand that He acted upon better principles : (Matt. xv. 12—20.) Peter, disappointed at his Lord's prediction of the many things He was about to suffer from the Elders, and Chief-priests, and Scribes, even unto death, “ took Him, and began to rebuke Him ; saying, ‘ Be it far from Thee, Lord ! this shall not be unto Thee.’ But He turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind Me, Satan ; thou art an offence unto Me :” Why ? “ for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men :” (Id. xvi. 21—23. xvii. 12, 22, 23. xx. 17—19. Mark viii. 31—33. &c.) Peter, at this moment under the influence of the god of this world, would have



suggested to his Master a mode of proceeding like that which the Jesuits have pursued in India; for this, he hoped, would ensure for Him and His Disciples a more favourable reception. But our Lord's sharp rebuke of that Apostle teaches us, that such measures proceed from motives inconsistent with the principles of the Gospel, and in opposition to that disinterestedness and impartiality with which it is to be proclaimed. This Peter well understood, when under the influence of the Holy Ghost: (Acts ii. iii. iv. and x.)

Our Lord's example, in this respect, may be placed in a still more striking point of view. There is not a greater difference between the Brahmin and Pariah, or even Chuckler, than there was between the Pharisees and Samaritans. The latter were regarded by all the Israelites as the most odious of men; despised by them, under the notion that they were possessed by the Devil; and all intercourse with them was carefully avoided. Yet we find, that Christ conversed with a Samaritan Harlot, and with all her countrymen who resorted to Him for instruction, as freely as with a Pharisee—a Master and Teacher in Israel: (John iii. and iv.)

In short, Jesus Christ neither rejected nor



gave a preference to any that sought Him in sincerity of heart. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. *All* were lost. But it was necessary for them to feel and deplore their hopeless state, before they could apply to Him for salvation in a right disposition of mind. The Pharisees, like the Brahmins, “trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.” It was necessary that this feeling should be inverted—that they should learn to “repent in dust and ashes,” and “esteem others better than themselves”—before they could become proper subjects for the mercy of Him who was “meek and lowly in heart.” But that would never have been the case, had our Lord treated them as the Roman-Catholic Missionaries have behaved towards the Brahmins. The pride of both must be subdued; they must be converted and become as little children, before they can enter the Kingdom of Heaven: (Matt. xvii. 1, &c.)

The Saviour, instead of commanding His Disciples to continue to regard the Pharisees &c. with that respect which they had been accustomed to pay them, expressly cautioned them against being led astray by their influence and doctrines: (Matt. xvi. 5—12.)

Like his Divine Master, St. Paul paid no



more respect to the Pharisees, as such, than to the most illiterate, vulgar, and disreputable part of the Jews, or even the Gentiles. He was himself a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; and had more reason for glorying in temporal distinctions than most of his countrymen: (Phil. iii. 4—6.) But he never attempted, upon *this* plea, to recommend himself, or the Gospel, to his own, or any other Sect. He rather gloried in his infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon him (2 Cor. xii. 9.); and that in direct opposition to the Pseudo-apostles mentioned in the preceding chapter of that Epistle, who seem to have adopted the very method which the Jesuits pursued in India, and for which they are there condemned.

The object of St. Paul, like that of Christ, was to preach the Gospel with such simplicity, that it might commend itself to every man's conscience by its own intrinsic merits. Were it clothed in classic language, and promulgated by a person of eminence, it would, doubtless, render it more acceptable to the higher classes: but for that very reason he divested it of human decorations, knowing the propensity of the mind to be attracted by a fair exterior of Religion, and to mistake an approbation of a Preacher and



his style, for an approval of his sacred message. He was well aware, also, that a flowing diction, high-sounding titles, and courtly manners, were calculated to blind the understanding against those parts of the Gospel which are most objectionable to the pride of man ; but which *must* be subdued, before the doctrines and precepts of the New Testament can be rightly understood or faithfully obeyed. Our Apostle did not affect to undervalue human acquirements ; and on several occasions he shewed that he knew how to employ them, when expedient, to promote the glory of his Lord. But he was cautious lest they should operate against that simplicity of faith and singleness of heart, which are indispensable to a correct understanding and sincere acceptance of the terms of the Gospel Covenant. We may easily suppose, then, how he would have abhorred the thought of assuming a fictitious character, as the Jesuits have done in India, for the purpose of imposing upon any description of men !

The very circumstance of our Lord's selecting illiterate and obscure Individuals, for the first Teachers of the Gospel, shews how contrary His design was to the policy of the Roman-Catholic Missionaries. Hu-



manly speaking, they were, of all men, the least likely to succeed in weaning the world from long-established customs, overturning the existing order of things, and building up the Religion of Jesus Christ upon the ruins of every other Mode of Worship. What probability could there be, that a company of Fishermen, Mechanics, and others of as little respectability, should be able to contend with Rulers, Priests, and Philosophers, and triumph over their powers, sophistry, and malice? Yet this actually took place, during the whole of the First Century of the Christian Æra: and the conquests of Christianity being achieved by means of Individuals who, as far as natural causes have force, were unprepared or disqualified for such an undertaking, furnished incontestable proof of a divine power operating through their instrumentality.

Hence it may be concluded, that our Lord, by choosing the primitive Ministers of His Word from the lowest ranks of Society, intended to shew to the world, that the propagation of His Religion upon earth was the work of God, and not of Man. And though it is our duty, and, in the present state of the Church, necessary, to cultivate an acquaintance with ancient and foreign languages, and to employ every other lawful means to disse-



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minate the Gospel through every land, yet are we bound to keep our Divine Master's object steadily in view ; to act at all times with Christian sincerity ; and to give no such prominence to the persons or means employed, as shall detract from God the glory of the success that may result from our labours. Let our plans be formed and executed with all the wisdom, learning, and skill we can command ; but let our design be *simple*, our proceedings without disguise, and in all respects in conformity with the example of Christ.

Then, taking the Saviour and His Apostles for my guides, I maintain, that the Brahmin has no more claim to the regard of the Christian Teacher than the Pariah : (James ii. 1—9.) I would not have the Missionary do violence to the prejudices of any one: but he betrays his trust, if he flatters the vanity or sanctions the superstitions of any description of men, for the sake of obtaining for the Gospel a more extensive circulation. In the language of Jehovah, by the mouth of His Prophet, I demand, "Who hath required this at your hands?" Jesus Christ received the inquiring Pharisees and Rulers, when they really sought His instruction ; and on no occasion did He unnecessarily give them



offence. But He paid no more court to them, than to Publicans, Harlots, and Samaritans.

Therefore, the Jesuit Missionaries in India (besides introducing themselves to the Hindoo Brahmins under a fictitious character, and thus, to say the least of it, "doing evil that good might come") erred at the very commencement of their assault upon the prejudices and superstitions of Hindoostan.

The Abbé Dubois, however, as already noticed, thinks that himself and his Brethren are borne out in this particular, by the example of St. Paul; and he quotes at length 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21. (p. 6.) True—that Apostle did consult the infirmities of the weaker Brethren; feeding some with milk, others with stronger food, as he found them able to bear it: (1 Cor. iii. 2.) He did not instantly demand the renunciation of customs, in their nature indifferent, when he perceived that such strictness might wound their feelings, and thereby retard their progress in the Faith. He knew that they would discontinue them of their own accord, when further light had exposed their inutility. But did he ever compromise the principles or precepts of the Gospel? Did he, like the Jesuits in India, allow Converts from Idolatry to incorporate Pagan Rites and Ceremonies

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with the simplicity of the Christian Mode of Worship? Did he, like them, adopt those Rites himself? No such thing! On one occasion, indeed, he circumcised a Convert. That Convert was Timothy, whose mother "was a Jewess, but his father was a Greek." The Jews knew that his circumcision had been neglected; and, therefore, anticipating the objections of the Jewish Converts to his taking, for a Companion and Fellow-labourer, an uncircumcised Israelite, he performed that Rite upon the youthful Timothy, previous to their visitation of the Churches: (Acts xvi. 1—3.) But he never allowed the circumcision of a Gentile Convert, though almost all the Jewish Brethren contended for its necessity. He boldly set his face against this, and every other observance; seeing that they would contract the liberty of the Gospel, and tarnish the glory of God. He was jealous lest these external forms should become the means of flattering human pride, and be relied on as rendering those who observed them the more acceptable to Jesus Christ. On one occasion, he resisted even Peter and Barnabas, when he perceived that, out of respect to the Jewish Converts, they withdrew from the Gentiles, or wished to compel them to live as the Jews: (Gal. ii. 11, &c.) He



prohibited the Christians from eating meat which they knew had been offered to an Idol: but when ignorant of its having been so dedicated, he allowed them to eat freely; for its defilement was not actual, but merely accidental: and he even recommended them to refrain from asking questions about any meat set before them, lest, finding it had been consecrated to some Pagan Deity, they should be obliged, for conscience sake, to abstain from eating.

It appears, then, that nothing was further from St. Paul's intention, than "to become all things to all men," in M. Dubois' acceptance of the phrase.

I will here give two instances of the manner in which Protestants meet Brahminical pride.

The late Rev. C. F. Swartz, waiting one morning in the antechamber of the palace at Tanjore, for an interview with the Rajah, was thus accosted by a Brahmin, who was attending there for the same purpose. "Mr. Swartz, do you not think it a very bad thing to touch a Pariah?" "O yes," the venerable Missionary replied, "a very bad thing indeed!" The Brahmin, however, perceiving, by his manner of answering, that more was meant than expressed, asked again, "But, Mr. Swartz,



what do you mean by a Pariah?" "I mean," the good man said, "a thief, a liar, a slanderer, a drunkard, an adulterer, a proud man." "Oh! then," said the Brahmin, hastily interrupting him, "we are all Pariahs." Thus was the man made to perceive how insignificant, in the Missionary's opinion, was his boasted superiority over the Pariah: and the lesson was calculated to teach him wherein consists that distinction between one man and another, which alone God will recognise.

The other instance is as follows. A young Brahmin applying for admission into the English School at Palamcottah, requested a seat by himself. I desired the Master to inform him, that there was no objection to his sitting alone, provided he brought his own chair and table, but that he could not be furnished with a separate seat. Accordingly, he did so: but on entering the School, a few days after, I saw him sitting with the other Scholars, and two boys of inferior caste writing at his table.

It is in this way, without making any rude attack upon the prejudices of these men, but at the same time shewing them that we think their proud and childish distinctions quite beneath our notice, that they themselves will



begin to appreciate them less than they have hitherto done. And if we, like Swartz, take occasion also to tell them, that the immorality of any Individual will reduce him to a level with, or even below, the most vulgar, and, notwithstanding his reputation in this world, render him obnoxious to the judgments of God, we shall then be following the example of Christ himself, and adopting the most probable and only lawful means of correcting the notions and humbling the pride of the Brahmins. (Vide Matt. xxiii. 25, &c.) This would never be accomplished by the Jesuits' mode of proceeding. Their object is, not to humble, but to conciliate, that haughty caste: and they would allow them, on embracing Christianity, to retain notions directly at variance with the unassuming spirit of the Gospel.

We may now understand the Abbé Dubois, when he says, "If any of the several Modes of Christian Worship were calculated to make an impression, and gain ground, in the country (India), it is no doubt the Catholic Form, which you Protestants call an Idolatry in disguise" (p. 18), "whose external pomp and show appear so well suited to the genius and dispositions of the Natives," (pp. 23, & 67 to 70.) If the object be to make mere



Proselytes from one Mode of Worship to another, then we must concede, that Popery has the advantage; for Protestantism has no attractions whatever for the secular and the sensual. But if the design be to recover the soul from the dominion of the senses, to purify the heart and correct the actions—in a word, *to make true Christians*—then we deny that the Jesuits have reason to entertain the faintest hope of witnessing such a result from their exertions; they make little or no effort to raise their Proselytes from the degraded condition in which they find them. I once asked a Priest, on the Coromandel Coast, by what Scriptural authority they performed the Ceremony of the Rutt*, and other Idolatrous Customs. He replied, “There is no authority for it in Scripture: *but if you come amongst dogs, you must do as dogs do!*” It was in vain that I endeavoured to convince him, that it was the Christian Minister’s duty to exalt his Flock, if possible, to the character of Men and Christians; and not to degrade himself to a level with their base condition. This doctrine did not accord with his policy and secular interests.

* A vehicle resembling Juggernaut’s Car, used at all the principal Pagodas in India. The Roman Catholics place upon it the Image of the Virgin Mary; and draw it round the Church, in the same manner as the Hindoos drag their Idols round their Temples.



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The Roman Catholics in India, where they can afford it, celebrate the great Festivals of the Church by a Theatrical Representation of the event commemorated: this is followed by an exhibition of fire-works, accompanied by repeated shouts and the barbarous music of the Indians, as at the Hindoo Festivals, which is often continued through the night. As far as my observation has extended, I have never witnessed any attempt, on the part of the Roman-Catholic Missionaries, to improve the character of their Converts. They change their Idols indeed; substituting the Crucifix and the Images of the Virgin, Peter, Thomas, Sebastian, and other Saints, for the Lingum, Maha Deva, &c. &c.; but they leave them at heart as they found them. No wonder, then, that their character is as bad as the Abbé Dubois describes them. Indeed, it would be matter of surprise if he *could* find "a true Christian" among Prose-lytes made by such means: (pp.73, 131—136.) With reference to them, I do not hesitate to adopt the sentiment of Tully, and say, that it had been as well to have left them to follow the gods of their fatherst, as to have converted them in such a manner, and to such a

† "A patribus acceptos deos placet coli." *De Leg.* l. 2.



profession of Christianity as they have embraced.

The Missionary's line of duty, in his attempts to convert the Heathen, is so accurately marked out, and the Jesuits' departure from that line so strikingly expressed, in the following Extract, that I shall make no apology for transcribing it. The author is exposing the sin of Worldly Conformity. "No doubt to conciliate is a good thing; and to become all things to all men, in order to gain the more, as far as it can be done with a good conscience, is a work of charity. But if men, in order to conciliate, go half-way over to the World, and give up a great part of their Religion, this is not recommending the Cause of God, but betraying it. Remember the solemn charge given in the text: (Exodus xxiii. 20—25.) 'Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works; but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images; and ye shall serve the Lord your God.' This zealous protest, which the Israelites were to make against Idolatry and the works of the Heathen, shew with what firmness the Followers of Christ should resist every thing which is contrary to the interests of his Kingdom, and make no compromise with Satan



whatever*." I leave it with the Reader to apply this sentiment to the proceedings of the Roman-Catholic Missionaries, described in the preceding pages.

But, notwithstanding their unscriptural policy, and shameful compromise of every thing resembling the pure and undefiled Religion of the New Testament, the Abbé Du-bois himself acknowledges, that they have totally failed of their object, and that "all this pageantry is at present beheld with indifference by the Hindoos, and the interests of the Christian Religion have not been improved by what some may be disposed to term mere Priestcraft:" (p. 72.) In order to prove that this failure is not to be attributed to the inefficiency of the means employed, but to the peculiar character of the Hindoos and the nature of their superstitions, he shews, that those very means were successful in Japan, beyond all calculation or the most sanguine expectations. Upon a *prima-facie* view of this argument, it may appear to warrant his conclusion: for, if one race of people are converted to pure Christianity by the very measures which another nation has for centuries pertinaciously rejected, it would seem to furnish some plea

* Fawcett's Sermons, Vol. I. p. 448. 2d Ed.



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for the inference, that the latter lie under the sentence of Divine Reprobation. This question, then, requires examination.

The Jesuit Missionary who laboured in India with the most zeal and success, was Francis Xavier. He arrived in India about the year 1522. Within the space of three years, he "is said to have made many thousand Converts:" but these being of the lowest castes, and he being dissatisfied with their character, and "entirely disheartened by the invincible obstacles he everywhere met in his apostolic career, and by the apparent impossibility of making real Converts, he left the country in disgust, after a stay in it of only two or three years; and embarked for Japan, where his spiritual labours were crowned with far greater success, and laid the foundation of those once numerous and flourishing Congregations of Japanese Christians, who, within a period of less than a century, amounted to more than a million of souls." (pp. 3, 4.)

We are not to attribute this success to Xavier alone. He was accompanied by many Jesuits from various parts of India; and several others arrived, about the same time, from Macao. Nor are we to infer from it, that there was something in the nature or character of the Japanese superior to the



mental or moral qualifications of the Hindoos, which prepared them to give the spiritual and humbling doctrines of the Cross a more favourable reception. Their success arose, first, from the extensive connexions which the Portuguese had already formed with the Natives, by their commercial intercourse, and numerous intermarriages with families of the first respectability; which circumstance would, undoubtedly, prepare them to adopt the Religion of persons with whom they were so closely related. And, secondly, the Established Religion of the country so nearly resembled the constitution and forms of the Roman Church, that it required no great sacrifice of views and principles, in the Japanese, to embrace the Roman-Catholic modification of Christianity. Hitherto every Religion had been tolerated in Japan: but the established and most popular Creed was, and still is, the *Sinto*. The Dairi, or Ecclesiastical Emperor of Meaco, possesses a jurisdiction resembling that of the Roman Pontif. Their Holy Mother is honoured like the Sancta Maria. Their Bonzes or Priests, and Canusies or secular Clergy, in their office, dress, celibacy, shaved heads, &c. &c. strikingly resemble the corresponding characters in the Roman-Catholic



Church. Their Pilgrims, most of whom are Religious Mendicants, and Jammaboes, a kind of Hermits, with their various self-inflicted tortures, mortifications, privations, penances, fastings, &c. &c. are very like the *soi-disant* Holy Beggars who for many years imposed, and in Roman-Catholic Countries still impose, upon the credulity of the Western World. They have also their Sacred Vows, Religious Establishments, such as Convents and Nunneries, together with several Orders of Friars and Nuns. They even dispense Indulgences (*ofarra*), for which the Orthodox Sintonists go on pilgrimage to the Holy Place (*i. e.* to the Temple of Tensio Dai Sin, their chief God): these are sent also by the Canusies, annually, to all parts of the Empire, and are carried about by Pedlars for sale. The Sintonists are taught to believe in pretended Miracles or Charms, and in Purgatory. They pay divine honours to Images: their Church Service is accompanied by the tinkling of bells, incense, &c. &c. In short, Sintonism resembles, in so many particulars, the institutions, pretensions, and practices of the Roman-Catholic Church, that the Japanese were prepared, in a remarkable manner, to embrace that Form of the Christian Religion which the Jesuits introduced into their coun-



try. No wonder, then, that the Proselytes flocked to them by thousands and tens of thousands. They are said to have converted one-third of the Empire; among whom were Royal Princes, Viceroys, Magistrates, and many other Persons of Distinction. Indeed, under the then existing circumstances, it would have been matter of surprise had they not met with unexampled success.

But this prosperity was not of long continuance. In about a Century after the introduction of Popery into Japan, a severe persecution was raised by the Government of the Empire against the Roman Catholics; which, in 1639, ended in the total extermination of the Portuguese. This M. Dubois attributes to "the jealousy and alarm of the Bonzes and other Directors of the popular Faith;" awakened, as he says, by the daily increasing number of the Converts, which threatened "to supplant the Religion of the Country:" (p. 4.) That this feeling existed, is most probable. But surely the Abbé cannot be ignorant of the real causes to which this persecution is generally attributed. The Government became jealous of the immense wealth which the Portuguese were accumulating, and exporting out of their dominions. The pride and intolerance of their Bishops grew insupportable. Not content with the superintend-



ence of Spiritual affairs, they interfered with Politics and the Councils of the State, and endeavoured to assume a superiority over the Nobility of the Empire. One haughty Prelate in particular, meeting one of the chief Counsellors of the State, refused to pay him that deference which he was entitled to receive. This insolence provoked him to prefer heavy complaints at Court; and thereby the irritation of Government, already excited against the Portuguese, was considerably increased. There was reason to apprehend that they intended to effect a Revolution in the State; and the interception of two Letters, written by them, detected and explained their treacherous designs. The storm, that had been gathering for some time, now burst with a tremendous explosion. Instantly were they, with their Clergy and Japanese kindred, ordered to quit the country. The other Japanese Christians were detained; those who were from home commanded to return; and, in a short time, the whole were put to death. The final blow to the Roman-Catholic interests in Japan, was struck in one day; when above 37,000 Members of that Church perished by fire and sword.*

* The Portuguese blame the Dutch for this Persecution.—The latter may have acted in an unchristian manner, to which they were,



The Portuguese made several attempts to recover the ground they had lost. On one occasion they sent a splendid Embassy from Macao to the Court of Japan; but the Emperor ordered the whole (61 persons) to be beheaded—saving only a few of their meanest servants, who were preserved to carry home the sad intelligence of their masters' fate.†

The Japanese have from that time adopted every possible measure to prevent the introduction of Christianity into the Empire; and, identifying the Protestant with the Catholic Faith, under the general term of Christianity, their precautions are used alike against the professors of those opposite Creeds. “ Their Laws are extremely rigorous against Teachers of the Christian Religion.” “ The following inscription is placed at the head of the Stone

were, doubtless, provoked by the jealousy and opposition of the former against them, from their first settlement in Japan, in 1600. But how could the Dutch occasion the pride and intrigues of the Portuguese, which were the real cause of their sufferings?

† Golownin, in his Narrative of his Captivity in Japan, relates the last attempt made by the Roman Catholics to introduce their Religion among the low inhabitants (the Hairy Kuriles) of Eetooroop, which is under the dominion of the Japanese. The means they used were most unchristian and disgraceful; but they totally failed. The persons composing the Mission were obliged to flee, and were closely pursued by the Japanese: (Vol. I. pp. 105, 106.) This occurred about the beginning of the present Century,



Tablets of Laws, which are fixed up in all public places, and even in the streets: — ‘Whosoever knows any individual who has taught Christianity, and can convict him thereof, shall receive a reward of 500 silver pieces.’” One Law prohibits Masters from hiring Servants, until they receive from them a written assurance of their not being Christians. Another enacts; “If any European, residing in Japan, shall attempt to teach our People the Christian Faith, he shall undergo a severe punishment, and shall not be restored to his Native Country.” Their Laws protect all Foreigners within the Empire from corporal punishment, except “those who attempt to induce Japanese Subjects to embrace Christianity.” They prohibit the teaching of Christians to read and write their language; and even exclude from the Public Service every Japanese who has lived among Christians in a Foreign Country.

Such is their concern to preserve and propagate this contempt of the Christian Religion, that “in Nangasaki, where Christianity had made the greatest progress, there is a staircase, on the steps of which are laid various ornaments and utensils of the Catholic Church, and on the first step a Crucifix” (and images of the Virgin Mary and some other



Saints). “On New-year’s Day, all the inhabitants of Nangasaki are obliged to ascend these steps, and, as a proof that they are not Christians, trample on the articles.” “Even young Children, unable to walk, are held down by their mothers to touch the Images with their feet.”*

The Japanese informed Captain Golownin, that this strict prohibition of Christianity by their Laws, was solely to be attributed to the mischievous civil wars which arose in Japan after its introduction.

Such is briefly the rise and fall of Popery in Japan: and the Roman Catholics are chargeable with the guilt of producing these inveterate prejudices, and thus closing every avenue against the introduction of the Gospel into that extensive Island. It was by similar conduct that they provoked against themselves a severe persecution in China, also; and occasioned in the Rulers of that vast Empire, a resolution equally determined to exclude the Christian Religion.

We see, then, that the Abbé Dubois has little reason to refer to the success of the Jesuit Missionaries in Japan, either in proof of the efficiency of the means they used to propagate Christianity, or in support of his

* See Krusenstern’s and Golownin’s Narratives, &c.



inference, that, since the same means have been employed in India without success, the Conversion of the Hindoos must be a hopeless undertaking.

He admits the decline of Christianity from that numerical strength and partial reception which it once possessed in India. He says, "The low state to which it is now reduced, and the contempt in which it is held, cannot be surpassed. There is not at present in the country (as mentioned before) more than a third of the Christians who were to be found in it eighty years ago; and this number diminishes every day, by frequent apostacy. It will dwindle to nothing in a short period; and, if things continue as they are now going on, within less than fifty years there will, I fear, remain no vestige of Christianity among the Natives." (p. 12; see also, to the same effect, pp. 13, 14.)

The commencement of this decline, he attributes to the interference of the Pope with the proceedings of the Jesuits. Its more rapid progress was occasioned, he says, by "the invasion and bloody contests for dominion between the English and French." The confirmation of the Natives' contempt for Christianity arose, as he admits, from their detection of the fraud which the Jesuits had



practised upon them. "The Hindoos soon found, that those Missionaries, whom their colour, their talents, and other qualities, had induced them to regard as such extraordinary beings, as men coming from another world, were, in fact, nothing else but disguised *Fringy* (Europeans); and that their country, their religion, and original education, were the same with those of the vile, the contemptible *Fringy*, who had of late invaded their country. This event proved the last blow to the interests of the Christian Religion. No more conversions were made; apostacy became almost general in several quarters; and Christianity became more and more an object of contempt and aversion, in proportion as the European manners became better known to the Hindoos." (pp. 11, 12.)

I admit, that the immoralities of Europeans have always produced a bad effect, in various ways, upon the Natives of India. But had the Jesuits acted with Christian integrity; and, instead of assuming the character of Brahmins, appeared among them as faithful Preachers of the Gospel, no misconduct of the English or French army would have diminished the respect they had commanded prior to the invasion of India by



those Powers. Witness the unreserved, the undiminished confidence reposed in the late Missionary Swartz, and the regard shewn him by Hyder, Tippoo, and other Native Princes, to whom his character was known, even when they were at war with the very Nation, the English, by whom he was employed. He was generally allowed to pass through the midst of their encampments, without the slightest molestation: he was designated, both by Mahomedans and Hindoos, by the title of "*The Christian*," and that, too, *as a mark of respect*: and such was their delicacy of feeling towards him, that when it was thought necessary to detain his palanquin, the sentinel was ordered to assign a *general* reason, and to pretend to be waiting for orders to let him move on. This, and much more information to the same effect, I received from the late Colonel Charles Trotter, who knew Swartz intimately for years, and served in the campaigns during which that venerable Missionary met with such marked respect from the Enemy.

The instance given by the late Dr. Buchanan, of the confidence placed in the bare word of Swartz, when every other European was distrusted, and whereby the Fort of Tanjore was saved from famine during its



siege by the French Army, sufficiently proves that the Jesuits would have experienced no diminution in the esteem of the Natives towards them, after the European Invasion, had they uniformly acted in a manner becoming Christian Teachers.

After all, however, if we inquire into the expedients used by the Roman-Catholic Missionaries to *preserve* Christianity among their Converts, its decline will be found to have arisen more from their own negligence, than from any other cause: for it requires as much care, if not more, to cherish a love and reverence for the Gospel, as to produce it.

They withhold from their Converts the Word of God! This is the Charter of our Faith and Privileges—the only “lamp to our feet, and light to our paths,” to guide us, through the darkness, and across the devious ways of ignorance and vice, to the Kingdom of Glory. For this infallible guide, they substitute Images, Pictures, and unintelligible Ceremonies. M. Dubois denies “that the reading of the Holy Scriptures is forbidden to Catholics:” (p. 27.) I will only reply, that I frequently offered to supply them, through their Priests, with the New Testament; but have never been permitted. I have often left a Testament with the Catechist of a



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Roman-Catholic Church in the Interior, which the Priest has afterwards ordered to be returned. I have never heard of a Translation of the Scriptures by the Jesuits into any of the Indian Languages; nor have I ever seen a New Testament in the possession of even one of their Catechists, unless it were one that he had received privately from some Protestant Missionary, and which he kept carefully concealed from the Priest. A Tamul Book, written by a Roman-Catholic Priest, was once brought to me, to answer. The Author defends the Worship of Images, upon the plea, that Images and Pictures are books for the Illiterate. All question, then, about the corruption of Christianity by the Papists apart—had the Almighty prospered the labours of the Jesuits in India, He would, contrary to His avowed determination, have given His glory to another, and His praise to Graven Images: (Isaiah xlii. 8.) The Abbé Dubois glories in their policy, though it has failed: we may easily suppose, then, how he would have triumphed, had it succeeded. The vindication of His own honour, therefore, required that Jehovah should withhold His blessing from them, and confound their devices: (1 Cor. i. 25—31.)

To substitute Images, &c. for the Scrip-



tures, is an imposition upon the human mind: it is denying to man that instruction which God has expressly revealed, for the purpose of teaching us the knowledge of Himself and His gracious will. I am aware that M. Du-bois asserts the incapacity of their Converts to understand the Word of God. "I have now under my religious controul," he says, "between 7000 and 8000 persons of this description; and I should be very much perplexed, indeed, were I, among so large a number, desired to point out four Individuals capable of understanding the meaning of the Bible, and to whom the reading of the naked Text of the Holy Scriptures would prove of the least utility:" (p. 125.)—And is this an argument for withholding the Blessed Book from them? To a man inspired with a moderate portion of love for the souls of his fellow-men, it will dictate a very different mode of procedure. Stationed among persons of this description, he will feel it to be his duty to put the Bible into their hands, *as soon as they can read it*; directing them, at the same time, what parts to read; and carefully explaining to them all the doubts and difficulties that occur. Many Roman Catholics in Tinnevelly, to whom I had given the New Testament in Tamul, were in the constant



habit of waiting upon me, for explanation of different passages. In general, I found them much more intelligent than I had been led to expect; and the very parts at which they seemed to stumble, led to profitable discussion: and I do not recollect an instance of one departing without being satisfied. One Young Man came frequently, with a string of texts to be explained. On one occasion, he referred to Rev. xiv. I told him that the conduct of the Romish Church, her arrogance, and her persecution of the Saints for centuries past, were so accurately described in that and the xiiith Chapter, that Protestants supposed she was intended by the *Beast* and *Babylon*. He replied, that the 6th verse was now being fulfilled; for that he had heard of the Translation of the Scriptures into the Languages of almost "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." "The consequence of this universal diffusion of the Bible," I added, "as foretold in the 8th verse, will be the fall of Babylon. When you read the Scriptures with attention and prayer, you will see that the Superstitions of your Church are contrary to the purity and simplicity of the Gospel: and when God shall give you His grace, you will renounce every practice that is prohibited by His Word."—"Now



then I see," he added, " why our Priests forbid us to read the Bible!"

I will give one more instance, in vindication of the Native Roman-Catholic's capacity to profit by the perusal of the Scriptures; which, at the same time, will furnish an additional *proof* of the intolerance of their Priests, in denying them the privilege of reading the Sacred Volume. A Young Man, educated in one of the Schools of the Church Missionary Society in Tinnevelly, wrote me the following Letter, on my leaving that district:—

“ Reverend Sir,

“ As Providence was pleased to send you to this country, many of us are now acquainted with the everlasting Light of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; especially, I speak of myself; *for before these three years, I did not know what a Testament was:* but since the Tinnevelly English School was opened, I have pretty good knowledge of the Scriptures; and I hope, and wish, that all other Schools will continue to make many understand the bright paths of Religion and Holiness!

“ As I hear of your departure, I am extremely sorry to say we are at a loss. I am



advanced pretty far in Arithmetic, and in the other branches of learning; and hope you would be pleased to give proper instructions about our future education.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your very humble servant,

"Tinnevely,
22 January, 1821."

Nahnpracausum."

So far is it from being necessary, as the Abbé Dubois pretends, to indulge the superstitious notions of these people before you can prevail upon them to listen to your instructions, that I never conversed with them without first desiring them to remove that idolatrous mark from the forehead, which their own Priests had allowed them to retain. They invariably admitted, that among the Heathen it distinguished the Worshipers of Siva from the Votaries of Vishnoo, and that it was, therefore, most unbecoming in a Christian to wear it: *and I never met with a man who refused to put it away.*

I had intended giving other proofs of the facility with which the Pagan Customs may be overcome, in those who embrace Christianity; and that nothing has a greater tendency to produce this effect, than the simple perusal of the Scriptures. Suffice it to say, that I have at all times resisted them, in the



Roman Catholics who have come to me ; and never without success. It has been my study to mark, as distinctly as possible, the difference between our simple Mode of Worship and the Pomp of the Romish Church. I know that our proceedings have been reported to the Roman-Catholic Priest at Palamcottah, in such approving terms, that he thought it expedient to imitate us ; and actually put a stop to Superstitions which they had long practised, to the entire satisfaction of his own people. With the same ease and advantage might they abolish the whole : and if, at the same time, they would teach and exhort them to read the Word of God, they would soon experience the revival of the interests and spirit of Christianity in the East. Alas ! in every part of India that I have visited, I have seen an Altar or a Cross by the road-side ; and have met Roman Catholics with a Crucifix or an Image suspended from their necks, like the Amulets of the Heathen ; which, upon being interrogated as to their utility, they have called their *Swamy* !* But never, never have I heard any thing like the sound of the Gospel, from either Priest or Layman ! Then, can the Abbé Dubois

* Meaning " God." This is the name which the Heathen give to their Amulets and Idols.



wonder that the interests of his Church are declining in such a land as Hindoostan?

Another means for the preservation of Christianity is, the publication of small Treatises and Elementary Works on Religious Subjects. The Roman-Catholics have published a few Works of this description; but they are seldom to be met with, except, here and there, one or two in the possession of the Native Catechists. And even were they more numerous, they are but ill adapted to preserve the spirit of piety, or cherish the love of True Religion; for they treat much more upon the Ceremonies and Superstitions of their Church, than upon Devotional Exercises, or the Graces and Duties of the Gospel. M. Dubois' own little Catechism is the most useful thing of the kind I have heard of among the Roman-Catholic Publications in India: (p. 125.) He himself acknowledges the want of such Elementary Works (p. 78): but we do not hear of any attempts, on his own part or that of his Brethren, to supply the desideratum.

A third indispensable requisite, if we would preserve the spirit of godliness among our Converts, is, a pious and well-educated Ministry. The Roman-Catholics in India do not want Seminaries for the educating of their



Priests. Nearly the whole of their Churches in the Interior are under the superintendence of what they call the Black Clergy, (the descendants of Portuguese born in India,) who were educated and ordained at Goa. In the District of Tinnevelly alone there are Eight of these Priests, besides upwards of Sixty Native Catechists; and I have occasionally met with a well-educated man amongst them. But the majority are extremely ignorant; none of them know any thing of the Scripture; and frequently have I heard the poor people under their controul complain of their avarice and oppression. Whether such a Clergy are calculated to promote the interests of True Religion, I leave the Reader to judge!

Equally essential is it to the welfare of Christianity, to educate our Children in the precepts and principles of the Bible. But the Roman-Catholics have very few Schools in India of any description. In the Tinnevelly District, where there are 30,000 Members of that Communion, they have only one School, containing Forty Scholars. They will plead poverty (as they have done to me) in excuse for this neglect of the Rising Generation: but I have offered to establish Charity Schools for them*, and to appoint one of

* Under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society.



their own Congregation for the Master, provided they could find a man qualified to teach, and would allow him to conform to our Regulations. At one place I opened a School, under a Protestant Master, which succeeded well for some time; until the Priest interfered, chastised the Children, and reproved their Parents for allowing them to attend. The Scholars were then reduced to so small a number, that, after persevering for a few months, under the hope of their coming to a better mind, the Master was at length removed to a more promising Station. One Priest only had the liberality to allow me to open a School, for the benefit of the Children of his Congregation; and he permitted a Catechist of his own to become the teacher.

We may now easily account for the decline of Christianity in India, as promulgated by the Roman Catholics. M. Dubois may have felt the inconvenience arising from the People's incapacity to comprehend his Discourses, or even his own simple Catechism (pp. 68 and 125); but to complain of it, is to reproach himself and his Brethren for their neglect to cultivate their Converts' intellectual powers! What else could be expected, when so little pains are taken to instruct the adults in the true nature of the Christian Religion, or to educate the children in the rudiments of



knowledge, and train them up in Christian Principles? To have found Four, or even One, among 7000 or 8000, or any given number of persons so entirely neglected, capable of understanding a Christian Treatise or Discourse, would indeed have excited astonishment! This were looking for fruit from an uncultivated vineyard. Even allowing that those who first embraced the Roman-Catholic Faith were Spiritual Converts, (which is more than the Abbé himself requires us to concede,) yet how were it possible to preserve their Christian Character by such means as the Jesuits employed? Ceremonies, Images, Processions, &c. may dazzle the eye and captivate the mind, but can never inspire holy affections, or engraft one Scriptural Principle on the heart. And certainly the Hindoos, who change their own Religion for one laden with such Superstitions as these, are not likely to remain “stedfast in the Faith,” when their personal comfort or safety are endangered by their Christian Profession. M. Dubois has given one instance of their apostasy under such circumstances (p. 74): and though, when the storm of Persecution blew over, the majority of them returned to the bosom of the Church, yet he has good reason for placing no greater confidence in their sta-



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bility, should the trial of their Faith ever be repeated : (p. 75.) But he ought to attribute the diminution of their numbers, and the degeneracy of those who continue to profess the Catholic Faith, to the neglect of their Priests to adopt proper means for their mental and religious improvement.

He is of opinion that Xavier's disappointment "ought to have been sufficient to damp the most fervent zeal of the persons disposed to enter the same career:" (p. 4.) This I concede, provided those persons were actuated by his principles, and depended upon such means as he employed. The Abbé expresses himself as "fully aware that a great many over-zealous Protestants may be disposed" "to maintain that the Catholic Religion being nothing but a corruption of the Religion of Christ, and its Worship a human invention, the Divine Assistance can never attend the propagation of it; and that its failure in the business of Proselytism cannot be a matter of surprise:" (p. 24.) He declines entering into this discussion; and, in a Private Letter, his Correspondent might courteously dispense with it: but, in publishing that Letter to the world, it was by no means foreign to his subject to disprove the Protestants' objection. Indeed, his Cause demanded it;



for the Conversion of the Hindoos. 109

for this question is the very hinge on which the controversy turns. If he can prove that Popery is not a corruption of Christianity, and that the means used by the Papists for its diffusion through the world are lawful and scriptural, and the best adapted to promote the interests of real Religion; he will then have fair premises for his conclusion, that to endeavour to convert the Hindoos is an impracticable task. As a Protestant, I might claim the privilege of assuming, that the Cause of Christianity and that of Popery are distinct from each other; and that when the Missionaries of the latter Communion laboured to further the objects of the Holy See in India, it by no means followed that they even thought of "forwarding the interests of the Gospel," in the Protestants' acceptance of the term. But my argument does not require *me* to enter into the question. If the Abbé Dubois *can* prove that this assumption is untenable, it will turn the discussion in his favour: but certainly the *onus* rests with him.

All comparison, however, between Protestantism and Catholicism apart—I have only to shew, that the measures adopted by the Roman-Catholic Missionaries for the evangelizing of India are unwarranted, by



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110 *Means employed by the Roman-Catholics.*

the nature of the Gospel, the plain text of Scripture, the examples of Jesus Christ and his Apostles; and that, so far from being better adapted to the accomplishment of this design than any other means, they are, of all means, the least likely to make True Converts. This I have already done; and, therefore, their failure, instead of setting the matter at rest, and justifying the abandonment of India to its present state of ignorance, superstition, and vice, leads much more obviously to the conclusion, that the Almighty has purposely withheld His blessing from such human devices. And if we are to believe that God is faithful to His promises, to give unto His Son the Heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession (Ps. ii. 8.), we must infer, from the failure of the Jesuits, that other means are to be used for the completing of His gracious purposes in the East.



SECTION III.

THE NATURE OF THE MEANS WHICH PROTESTANTS USE FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE HINDOOS.

THE Abbé Dubois admits, that Christianity will prove a great blessing, even where it effects not all the saving benefits which it is calculated and intended to produce (p. 81.)—that its mere profession is much better than Idolatry (p. 82.)—and that, notwithstanding the infamous character of the generality of Native Christians (p. 63, &c.), he is “acquainted with many among them who are, in their morals, probity, and general behaviour, irreproachable men, enjoying the confidence even of the Pagans; and into whose hands I should not hesitate,” says he, “to entrust my own interest:” (p. 83.) Seeing, then, that Christianity (of course he means as professed by Roman Catholics) is capable of operating, and actually has operated, in so beneficial a manner upon the Hindoos who have embraced it, can he have so little love for his Species, as to deny to any portion of them the



blessings which he has the opportunity of dispensing? Indeed, in a happier moment, he can say, "As a most sincere, and most undisguised Believer of the Divine Origin of the Christian Religion, and firmly persuaded that this Religion alone can render man happy in this life and in that to come, my most earnest wishes have always been to see it believed and professed by all mankind, and extend its dominion, its mild and genial influence, all over the World, and among all Nations:" (p. 47.) Why, then, has he forsaken the Missionary Cause in the East, and done his part to deter others from entering upon the same undertaking? He will doubtless reply, as he has already said, because he thinks the Conversion of the Hindoos impracticable. Suppose this were conceded; yet his own admission, just cited, of the effect it is calculated to produce in the World, and which it has already produced in India, condemns his deliberate abandonment of that Idolatrous Land. Allowing, with him, that the Native Roman-Catholics are not True Christians, yet to effect even the minimum of good which he admits that they have derived from Christianity, is worth all the pains and expense bestowed upon them. But *Protestant* Missionaries, notwithstanding the con-



temptuous manner in which M. Dubois speaks of them and their works (pp. 17—21. 25, 26. 51, 52, &c.) have met with still better success; and I now proceed to explain the nature of the means they have used.

Their main instrument is the Bible. Though the Abbé seems amused at the idea of giving the Scripture to the Hindoos, and thinks it the least likely instrument to effect their Conversion, (pp. 1, 2, &c. &c.) yet I maintain, that it is the most effective that ever was, is, or can be, employed. For this purpose the Evangelists wrote their Gospels, and the Apostles their Epistles. The earliest Missionaries of the Church of Christ translated the Bible into the languages of the Nations they endeavoured to convert. So far back as the Second Century, we have accounts of the Syriac, the Egyptian, the Ethiopic, and the Old Latin* Versions. In the next Century, Origen, and other Missionaries, translated and dispersed the Scriptures, in various Languages. Indeed, until the Papal Supremacy was established—when means more characteristic of Mahomedanism than Christianity were used to convert Infidel Nations; when Cardinals and Bishops were seen lead-

* This Translation is known by the name of "*The Italic.*"



ing armies to the field, to extend the dominion of Christ by fire and sword—till then, the Translation of the Bible into the language of a country, in order to effect its conversion, was considered a measure of primary importance. And with reason: for that Blessed Book imparts knowledge that is able to make men wise unto salvation, and that in a manner adapted to every capacity. Though it contains Mysteries that are beyond the comprehension of the Learned—much more of the Illiterate—yet is there sufficient, that is calculated, at once to enlighten the understanding, arrest the attention, convict of sin, engage the affections, and, in a word, convert the soul to God: (Ps. xix. 7. Heb. iv. 12.) This then, if any thing, is adapted to rouse the Hindoo from his mental apathy, and quicken him in the paths of life.

When it is considered, also, that the Bible is the only Revelation of the Nature and the Will of God ever vouchsafed to man; that it contains all the information which we have of Him who was sent to be “a Light to lighten the Gentiles;” there can be no question, in the unprejudiced mind, about the necessity, and the duty, of giving the precedence to *this*, among the various means used for the Conversion of the Heathen: for the



sacred light of the Scriptures can alone dispel the moral, the mental darkness which overshadows India, and every other Pagan Land. I know that the Abbé Dubois objects to the present Versions of the Bible in the Oriental Languages—to which I shall presently reply: but this will not serve him as a refuge here; for, when endeavouring to explode the idea of converting the Hindoos by giving them the Bible, and to prove the absurdity of the attempt, he speaks in the most unqualified terms of the Scripture itself, as unsuited to the purpose, without reference to any specific Versions: (pp. 27—33. 121, &c.)

His principal reasons for this conclusion are, because “the Sacred Book contains, in almost every page, accounts which cannot fail deeply to wound their feelings, by openly hurting prejudices which are held most sacred.” “What will a well-bred Native think,” he asks, “when, in reading over this Holy Book, he sees that Abraham, after receiving the visit of Three Angels under a human shape, entertains his guests by causing a calf to be killed, and served to them for their fare? The prejudiced Hindoo will at once judge that both Abraham and his Heavenly Guests were nothing but vile Pariahs; and, without further reading, he will



forthwith throw away the book, containing (in his opinions) such sacrilegious accounts.” —“What will a Brahmin say, when he peruses the details of the bloody sacrifices prescribed in the Mosaical Law, in the worship of the True God? He will assuredly declare, that the God who could be pleased with the shedding of the blood of so many victims immolated to his honour, must undoubtedly be a Deity of the same kind (far be from me the blasphemy!) as the mischievous Hindoo deities Cohly, Mahry, Darma-rajah, and other infernal gods, whose wrath cannot be appeased, but by the shedding of blood, and the immolating of living victims.” —“But, above all, what will a Brahmin, or any other well-bred Hindoo, think, when he peruses in our Holy Books the account of the immolating of creatures held most sacred by him? What will be his feelings, when he sees that the immolating of oxen and bulls constituted a leading feature in the religious ordinances of the Israelites; and that the blood of those most sacred animals was almost daily shed at the shrine of the God they adored? What,” &c. &c. &c. (pp. 28 —31.) After mentioning several other instances, he concludes thus: “I could point out, in almost every chapter of Holy Writ,



passages nearly as exceptionable; and which it would be equally dangerous to exhibit, without a long previous explanation to the prejudiced Hindoo." He then endeavours to prove, that he has sufficient grounds for his objection, by stating, that his own Congregation were offended at the mention of Christ as a *peasant of Galilee* and *the son of a carpenter*; and of his Apostles, as *fishermen*. They cautioned him also against speaking of the *fatted calf*, in the Parable of the Prodigal Son — of the *wine*, in the Eucharist, &c. (pp. 32—34.)

I grant that these accounts are calculated to wound the prejudices of the Hindoo, whose mind is unprepared to receive them. But does not M. Dubois know, that in every Nation, and every age, the Natural Man has taken offence at the peculiarities or the simplicity of the Divine Religion? Under the Mosaic Dispensation, let us instance the Circumcision of the Jews. Nothing ever appeared more contemptible and absurd, in the eyes of the Heathen, than that ordinance. The Jews are ridiculed by many Ancient Authors, for performing that painful and, as it appeared to them, unmeaning ceremony: and Philo says, that every body laughed at it. Yet many Proselytes from Idolatry sub-



mitted to it ; the False Prophet, Mahomet, adopted it ; and it has continued to be practised by the millions of his followers to the present hour. The Abbé Dubois will not, of course, think it possible that a Hindoo Brahmin could be prevailed upon to endure it. This, however, actually took place, while I was residing at Palamcottah—a Brahmin of that Fort having embraced the Musulman Faith, and, of course, submitted to this initiatory ordinance.

Under the Gospel Dispensation, we will instance the Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Saviour. The Heathen, and especially the Jews, scoffed at the Christians, as worshippers of a Crucified God (עובדי התליה *cultores suspensi*). This was, at that time, a term of great reproach ; for crucifixion was the most ignominious of all punishments ; and was never inflicted by the Romans upon any but fugitives and slaves. For the first Three Centuries, Christians of all ranks endured this contempt. At length, Constantine the Great abolished the practice of crucifixion ; and thus, in a few years, the ignominy of the punishment being in a great measure forgotten, this “ offence of the Cross ceased.” Such has been the policy of Roman Ecclesiastics almost from that day to the



present: but the vanity which dictated this shunning of the Cross, engendered a Hydra which has devoured the Christian Graces*.

The doctrine of the Resurrection also was despised by the Ancient Heathen; and to believe in it, accounted madness: (Acts xvii. 32. xxvi. 23, 24.) Yet, among the first Converts to the Christian Faith, were some of the wisest Heathen Philosophers.

To give credit to all that the Abbé affirms, we must conclude that the Brahminical System prohibits the shedding of blood, and the putting of an animal to death, particularly in their Religious Ceremonies. Not to advert to the Human Sacrifices under the wheels of Juggernaut's Car (to appearance voluntary, but which the Brahmins, it is well ascertained, often procure, lest the reputation of their god should suffer from the circumstance of none being found zealous

* It may be noticed here, as a favourable coincidence, that the Sufferings and Crucifixion of Jesus Christ are calculated to exalt him in the opinion of the Hindoos, especially when they shall understand for what purpose He endured such accumulated miseries. The more painful the tortures to which their own Sanassees submit, the more holy do they esteem them (as already remarked): and they will readily apply this prepossession to the suffering Jesus. I remember shewing to one of them a Plate of the Saviour on the Cross, and asking him who it was. He replied, that he supposed it must be some Holy Sanassee. This led to an explanation, which he seemed to approve.



enough to sacrifice their lives to his honour); nor to the immolating of the Hindoo Widow upon the funeral pile of her husband's corpse (at which horrible ceremony a *Brahmin* is present, and commonly the most active person there): I will mention only one case in point, which I have witnessed. It occurred at Courtallum, in the Tinnevelly District. At the conclusion of a Festival which had lasted several days, two kids were presented before the Idol: the head of one was severed from its body, and laid upon the altar, with boiled rice, the blossom of the cocoa-nut, flowers, &c. &c. as an offering—not to the mischievous Hindoo Cohly, &c. &c. but, to the god *Ramah!*—The second kid was next presented, its ear slit, and then it was suffered to escape*! A *holy Brahmin officiated* at this “bloody sacrifice.”—So much for M. Du-bois' pretence that they will be shocked at the very mention of such a thing in Scripture.

The offence taken by his people at the mentioning of the *fatted calf* (p. 33), furnishes

* The Reader will observe the similarity between this and the Levitical Ceremony of the Scape-goat: (Lev. xvi. 7, &c.) I could not ascertain that it bore any reference to this Jewish Ordinance; the only reply given to all my inquiries being, “It is our custom”—the Hindoos' general answer to such questions, so little do they know of the origin or signification of their own observances.



its own answer. It was his duty to mention it, accompanied with an appropriate explanation, which he, doubtless, gave. If they were dissatisfied or scandalized, he might lament their weakness, but was not responsible for the unfavourable effect produced upon their minds. We are bound to preach the Gospel as it is revealed to us. We must explain it, indeed; but it is at our peril to alter or disguise it, in order to meet the prejudices of any people. While conscientiously fulfilling our duties, as Ministers of the Word, we may safely leave the consequences to God.

A similar reply may be made to their objection at the describing of our Lord as the son of a carpenter, and the naming of the mean occupation of His Apostles. This objection is as old as Christianity: it was advanced by our Lord's own countrymen, against His pretensions as a Public Teacher, (Matt. xiii. 54—58.); and by others, against Himself and his Apostles (Acts iv.) Though He foreknew that this prejudice would exist, yet He chose to appear in that humble station, and appointed to the Apostleship men of the same rank. We have already seen, that the Hindoos cannot be more scandalized by the human origin of Christ and His Apostles, than the Jews were; and we may fairly



conclude, that it was intended thus to humble their pride, and correct their expectations of worldly grandeur and power under Messiah's reign. It is for the destruction of such principles that the Gospel artillery is pointed. Are we then to disguise those circumstances, in the history of Jesus Christ and His first Disciples, which He evidently intended to be made most prominent? Shall we be ashamed of his humiliation? Neither St. Paul, nor any of his Apostolic Brethren, acted thus (1 Cor. i. 23, 24. 2 Cor. xi. 6, 7): and if we adopt a contrary mode of proceeding, we shall only prove ourselves unworthy of the sacred office to which we are ordained.

Not unnecessarily to prolong this discussion, I maintain, and am prepared to prove, if more than is here stated be required, that there is nothing in the objections advanced by the Abbé Dubois that can do greater violence to the prejudices of the Hindoos, than the ceremonies and doctrines of the Old and New Dispensations offered to the notions of the Ancient Heathen. And since, notwithstanding these obstacles, the Cause of True Religion has triumphed, in a greater or less degree, wherever it has been proclaimed, we may reasonably anticipate success even in Hindoostan.



But I would ask the Abbé Dubois, Who *does* distribute the Bible among the Hindoos in the manner he describes—indiscriminately, and without preparation? Certainly not the Bible Society. I never heard of a single Agent of that Institution thus employed in India. Their specific object is, to procure and publish the most-approved Translations of the Bible into all the Languages of the East. Missionaries, and other persons, are furnished, from the Society's stores, with what number of copies they may require; but in distributing them, they are left to their own discretion. Having been upon the Committee of the Bible Society at Madras, I can bear testimony to the caution exercised in receiving and answering the applications made for supplies of the Scripture. Pains were always taken to ascertain the number of copies likely to be wanted, and whether the person applying for them might be expected to distribute them with care. As far as my experience goes—and it extends to a considerable part of South India—they were given with prudence. Indeed, numerous as they appear on paper, our stock was too small to admit of an indiscriminate distribution among the Heathen. In Tinnevelly alone, we had not enough to supply the Na-



tive Christians. Not quite 200 copies of the New Testament were sent to us annually by the Christian-Knowledge and the Bible Societies: we could have disposed of twice the number among our own people and the Roman Catholics alone: and seldom was a copy given to a Heathen, unless it were to one of our own Scholars, who, upon completing their education, generally begged to be allowed to keep their books. To give an idea of the *scarcity* of the Scriptures in our districts, we had the Gentoo New Testament bound up in Two, and the Tamul in Three Parts, to make them go as far as possible. All this does not look very much like an extravagant and indiscriminate distribution of the Holy Book. Indeed, to use a colloquial phrase, *we could not afford it.*

The Abbé asserts, that Christians in general are as unprepared to read the Scriptures as the Heathen. This I shall soon shew is not the fact. At present, I will only remark, that, whatever may be the case with his own people, I know many Protestants, and some Catholics educated in our Mission Schools, who are as capable of reading and understanding the Word of God in their vernacular tongue, as the same class of persons in any Christian country.



He reprobates, however, in the strongest terms, the character of the Translations hitherto made into the Oriental Languages; and maintains that they are so very imperfect, that they cannot be understood. If that be the fact, he may dissipate his apprehensions of the evil they will do; for it will certainly go far to neutralize his objection, that they will do more harm to Christianity than good. He knows, as well as I do, that the Natives are not so industrious, as to toil through a volume which they find it difficult to comprehend. In the event, then, of a stray copy finding its way to a man as unprepared for it as he may suppose him to be, and not familiar with the style in which it is rendered, it cannot do the harm which he pretends to fear.

However, I much question the Abbé Dubois' competency to judge of the Translations, against which he has passed so sweeping a sentence of condemnation*. "On Twenty of the Versions which had been wholly or in part executed," at the time the "Ninth Memoir on the Translations" was issued, "the Testimonies of Learned Natives had been obtained before the Report went to press,

* For a full exhibition of his incompetency to this task, see the *Eclectic Review*, November 1823.



and are printed therein. In all the cases, the approbation is explicit; and in nearly all it is declared, that the respective Versions will be universally intelligible to the people for whom they are designed*.

But I shall leave the defence of the Northern Versions to persons who may be conversant with those Languages; and confine myself to Three Southern Translations, upon which he has animadverted.

With respect to the Translation of the First Four Chapters of the Book of Genesis in "Canada" (Canara, or Canarese)—were it even as inaccurate as the Abbé Dubois would make it appear, the very circumstances relating to it speak in favour of the Bible Society. I happened to be on the Sub-Committee for Translations at Madras, when the indefatigable Translator, the Rev. W. Reeve, Missionary at Bellary, offered his Canarese Version of the Pentateuch to the Madras Auxiliary Bible Society. After much deliberation, and the detention of Mr. R. at the Presidency for several months, it was resolved to print, if my memory does not fail me, only *three* chapters, and to send a copy to every Canarese Scholar whom they knew (and the Abbé Dubois was named among the

* Missionary Register, November 1823, p. 493.



rest), inviting criticism. Mr. R. remained at Madras until their answers were returned; the greater part of which were highly favourable to the Translator and his performance. When the Abbé's Criticisms were read, Mr. R. replied to many of his objections, in a manner that convinced me, at least, and I believe the other Members of the Committee, that he was as conversant as M. Dubois with the Canara Language. So favourable was the impression made upon the Committee by the careful examination of all the opinions received upon this Specimen, that it was resolved to proceed with the remainder in the same way; and a Committee of Canarese Scholars was appointed at Bellary, to revise the whole, prior to its being submitted to the Sub-Committee at Madras.

Whatever opinion, then, the Abbé may form to the prejudice of this Version, it is most uncandid to hold it up to ridicule, as a Specimen of the Translations circulated by the Bible Society in the East. It was not yet adopted, much less published, by that Society; and the care taken to collect the judgment of the most-approved Scholars upon it, *previous* to its being received, would, to an ingenuous mind, have suggested a very different conclusion, in reference to the Bible Society, from that which he has drawn.



But the very Specimen which he has published of this Translation (p. 213, &c.) speaks much more in favour of Mr. R. as a Translator, than of the Abbé Dubois as a Philologist.

I had prepared a Criticism, to shew that the Abbé, in his Critique upon the First Chapter, has erred, *apparently* through ignorance of the Hebrew Language. Had Mr. Reeve translated from the *Vulgate*, he would, probably, have adopted some of the expressions suggested by M. Dubois. But that Gentleman made use of the *Original*; and, before the Subcommittee, constantly referred to the Hebrew Text. I find myself, however, so ably anticipated by the Eclectic Review *, that I shall transcribe the major part of the Criticisms given in that Work.

After fully exposing the inaccuracy of the Abbé's Criticism upon the compound word *Dewer-attma*, employed by Mr. Reeve to express 'the Spirit of God,' in Gen. i. 2. the writer proceeds :—

“Among the expressions marked as ‘mere interpolations,’ or ‘as words whose meaning

* (For November 1823.) With the exception of one or two very immaterial inaccuracies, arising from the want of sufficient *local* information, the whole of the circumstances relating to this Translation are fully stated in the same Work. I shall, notwithstanding, let what I have written remain, as the Testimony of a Witness to the truth of the facts recorded.



materially differs from that of the Text,' in the Abbé's Literal Translation, are several of a very extraordinary description. For instance: '*To govern* the day and *to govern* the night' (ver. 16), are printed in italics, as instances of mistranslation; the word in the English Bible being, 'To rule.' '*And be in great numbers* in the water of (the) sea: *all birds* multiply on the earth'—are marked in the same manner. Our Readers will perceive, on turning to Gen. i. 22. that this reading is identical in meaning with the Common Version, but better expressed. '*Overcome*' the earth, another word printed in italic, as materially differing from the Text: our Text has, 'subdue:' (ver. 28.) 'He created him *having the figure* of God' (ver. 27), is stigmatized as a 'blasphemous expression.' The Reader will recollect that the *expression* is the Abbé's own. The word in the English Text is, 'In the image of God.' Now, if the Canarese afforded a word more specifically signifying *image*, than that which the Abbé has been pleased to render *figure*, it would clearly have been *less* eligible, because it would have suggested more strongly the idea of a material likeness. But here again he does not hint at there being any more proper word, which could be substituted for the one



employed by Mr. Reeve; and it is obvious, that the shades of difference between the words *form—figure—image*, are such as arise purely from our acquired associations. We have no doubt that the Canarese word, which the Abbé renders *figure*, might with equal fidelity have been rendered *image*. If so, the charge of blasphemy returns upon the Critic's head; for it is the language of Scripture."

Before dismissing this subject, I request the Reader to compare the whole of the Abbé Dubois' English Translation of the Canarese with the First Chapter of Genesis in our own Authorised Version; and he will find that many other words printed in *italics*, as inaccurate or absurd, are actually synonymous with the terms used in the English Bible. If then he had intended, like a Christian and a Scholar, to give a fair view of the merits of this Translation, he would have rendered it back again, as far as he could consistently, into the language of our Received Text. But, by studiously and unnecessarily adopting other expressions, a suspicion is raised, that his object was to hold up this, and, through it, every Translation published by the Bible Society, to contempt: and I should decline to argue thus with a



man who could act in so illiberal a manner, were it not that I know that, in certain quarters, deference is paid to any thing the Abbé may advance, without examining into its accuracy.

In his first Letter (dated Aug. 7, 1815) he writes in contemptuous terms of the Malayalim Version: (p. 39.) This was made, not by the Agents of the Bible Society, but by some Syrian Priests (Catanars) in Travancore. The Protestant Missionaries in that country soon discovered in it numerous inaccuracies; and, instead of circulating it, the Rev. B. Bailey, a Missionary at Cotym, has been employed about five years, with the best assistance the country affords, in giving an entirely new Translation. As far as he had proceeded with it, when I was in Travancore (in Dec. 1820), his performance was highly approved by competent judges; but, before it is adopted by the Madras Auxiliary Bible Society, it will have to pass, like every other Translation, through as strict an ordeal as the Canarese.

He has no better opinion of the Tamul Version. With this I am better acquainted than any other; and have a copy by me now. It was made upwards of a century ago, by Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, the first Protestant



Missionary in India, sent out by the King of Denmark to Tranquebar. On visiting England, to promote the interests of his Mission, he was countenanced by the King, George the First, the Bench of Bishops, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; by whom he was recommended to translate the Scripture into the Tamul Language, as a work of primary importance. Several Editions of this work have been published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, at their Vepery Mission Press; and, within these few years, by the Bible Society also, at the Serampore Press, after having been revised each time, but without undergoing any very material alteration.

I admit that this work is not sufficiently idiomatic: and for that reason it is, in many parts, particularly the Epistles, not well understood by the Heathen. But M. Dubois is much mistaken in asserting that it has entirely missed its object (p. 38). The principal object of its frequent publication has been, to preserve, among Native Christians, a knowledge of the Word of God; and *this it has accomplished*. The Protestants, and even Roman-Catholics educated in Protestant Schools, are familiar with its style, read it with fluency, and have little or no difficulty



in comprehending those parts which, in the English Translation, are intelligible to an ordinary reader. And may we not hope that it has instructed many souls in the doctrines, and guided them in the paths, of Everlasting Life*?

So far, then, as my observation has extended, I affirm that the Abbé Dubois has totally failed in his attempt to fix a stigma upon the operations of the Bible Society in the East.

I admit that accurate Translations of the Holy Scriptures, into the various Languages of India, are difficult to be obtained: but First Versions require, and will receive, indulgence from all who candidly consider the great obstacles with which the Translators have to contend. It is not necessary for me to reply to M. Dubois' insinuations against the Serampore Missionaries. Their qualifications for the important task they have undertaken; the vigilance and labour with which they have endeavoured to prevent inaccuracies in every Version that has

* There is another Tamul Translation of the New Testament, made in Ceylon, by a Company of Learned Natives. It was published at Columbo, in 1759, by the Dutch Government, and edited by two Dutch Missionaries—Bronsveld and Fybrand, I think, were their names. This Version is more idiomatic, but not so correct as that of Ziegenbalg.



passed through their hands ; have been fully and, to every unbiassed mind, satisfactorily explained*. I feel that it would be degrading those estimable men—men whose talents, and worth, Marquis Wellesley, Lord Minto, and Marquis Hastings, together with a long list of Public Servants in Bengal, eminent no less for piety than ability, knew how to appreciate—to *intimate* the necessity of advancing one word in their defence against the Abbé's unwarranted attack†. p. 35, &c. &c.

The precautions taken by the Madras Auxiliary Bible Society to ascertain the accuracy of every Translation of the Scripture into the Languages of the South, are the same as those adopted with reference to the Canara Specimen already noticed. Each Translation is first submitted to a Committee of Translators, composed of Gentlemen acquainted with the language; who are empowered to call in Learned Natives to their assistance. When it has been revised and corrected to the satisfaction of every member, it is sent to the Sub-Committee for Translations ; and, if approved, it is printed,

* See Ward's Farewell Letters—the whole Series of Memoirs published by themselves upon their Translations—the Eclectic Review for Nov. 1823—&c.

† For a vindication of the Serampore Missionaries, see their *Vindicte Seramporianæ*.



and circulated among persons who are known to be acquainted with the language, whose opinion of the work is solicited. When it has passed through this ordeal, it is finally submitted to the General Committee of the Society; before whom any individual may object to its adoption, provided he think that sufficient attention has not been paid to his previous representations. The work is not adopted and published until it has received the approbation of this Committee*.

Such precautions ought, I think, to satisfy the most scrupulous objection. If, however, M. Dubois can suggest any hint for the better security of the Translations from error, I will pledge myself, on my return to India—should it please God to restore me to my labours in that country!—to exert my influence with the Bible Society for its adoption.

The Abbé passes a sweeping sentence of condemnation against the Twenty-four Versions published at the Serampore Press, without giving us any proof of his ability, or informing us that he has taken any pains to ascertain

* Such were the measures adopted to the close of 1821, when my intercourse with the Madras Bible Society was suspended. At that time they were soliciting the opinions of several Gentlemen, as to what better or additional precautions could be adopted: and if any alteration has been since made, it will, I am persuaded, be for the better.



their character. But even were they as imperfect as he asserts, would the funds and the labour expended upon them be lost? No, by no means.—It were unreasonable to expect the First Translation of the Scripture into any language to be perfect. The late Mr. Ward himself (speaking of the Translations against which the Abbé so bitterly inveighs) says,* “These Versions are not offered as perfect performances; but, I doubt not, they will bear to be compared with any other First Versions which have at any time been given to the world.” “Every First Version of such a book as the Bible, in any language, will require, in future Editions, many improvements, and all the aids possible, to carry these Versions to perfection.” Every future Translator will be greatly assisted in his work by all that have preceded him. And if even the Seventh Version be in general correct, what good man will regret the labour and costs of the former Six? We may, for instance, refer to the English Translation, which, the Abbé says, is the

* Farewell Letters, pp. 155, 184. *Query.* Is this the language of a man wishing to impose upon the Public? or of one who, “without the assistance of any criticism whatever, supposes himself, with five or six other individuals, able to execute genuine Translations into intricate Languages, with which they, after all, can possess only an imperfect acquaintance?”



“Third Version” of the Scripture into our language; but which, had he taken proper pains to acquaint himself with its history, he would have found to be the *Seventh*, or rather a revision of Six former Versions. Though this Version, confessedly, is not perfect, yet it abounds in instruction which is able to make men wise unto salvation: and where is the Englishman, who loves his Bible, that does not praise God for having raised up such men as Wickliffe, Tyndal, and other English Reformers; who, in the face of personal danger, and while enduring grievous privations, executed those Translations to which we are greatly indebted for the accuracy to which our present Authorised Version has attained? So shall the day come, in the fulness of time appointed in heaven, when Asiatic Christians shall bless the memory of those devoted and benevolent Strangers, who, from such a distance, and with so many sacrifices, first brought to their shores the Oracles of Divine Truth.

M. Dubois more than insinuates, that we have no occasion—probably he means no *right*—to supply the Hindoos with Bibles, until they ask for them: (p. 150.) Did they ask for the Jesuit Missionaries? Did any Heathen Nation ever, in the first instance, ask for the

Bible? Had the Almighty waited till man asked for His Word, we should have remained, to the present day, without a Revelation of His Nature and Will!

But this insinuation would be unworthy of notice, were it not that I am prepared to shew that the Hindoos are now in such a state, that they *do* ask for the Bible. Many more applications have been made by them, to myself, than it has been in my power to grant: and I shall here transcribe the greater part of a Letter in my possession, to prove that the Heathen are not only asking for the Bible, but actually coming forward to promote the objects of the Bible Society.

Having written to the Hon. Dr. Twisleton, Archdeacon of Columbo, to collect such Tamul Publications as he might be able to procure, in order to assist me in the revision of the New Testament in that language, he kindly wrote for me to a friend, C. Layard, Esq. Judge of the Province of Jaffna, where the Tamul is more spoken than in the South of Ceylon. On the night before I embarked for Europe, in a state of ill-health that precluded the possibility of my attending to business, I received a Letter from the latter Gentleman, stating that he had forwarded a large collection of Tamul Books,



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and giving the following very interesting information.

“ Dear Sir,

Jaffnapatam, Jan. 4, 1821.

“ The books I sent from hence are all that I have yet been able to procure; and there are no other copies of the same works, I believe, left in the district.

“ To dwell on the difficulties I have met with, would appear only as an attempt to enhance the little service I have been able to effect towards obtaining as many copies of the Sacred Scriptures, for the use of the Translators, as are extant: but were I to say nothing, I should deprive myself of the pleasure of communicating to you a piece of agreeable information—viz. that the possessors of some of these books would with more readiness have parted with much money or valuable property, than with the Sacred Volume; and that they would not have given them for any price, or on any terms, excepting for the Christian purpose of their being sent to the Translator, in order to expedite the circulating of an approved Translation of the Word of God.”

Of the possessor of a Bible sent, Mr. L. writes, he “ prizes it above any money, and refused, from a Roman-Catholic Priest,

some years since, the value of six slaves for its purchase.

“ I am obliged to request you will consider the books sent as merely a loan ; for I am pledged for their return, as soon as they can be spared : and have ventured to assure our community, who are not pleased to lose even a School-book, that we may now reckon you amongst our friends, and one who will, if it is in your power, not only secure us a part of the Bibles published, but also supplies of any Extracts from the Scriptures the Bible Society at Madras may circulate, and such as can be spared of the Elementary Books that may be received for distribution from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, especially some Tamul Prayer-Books.

“ In the last year I have witnessed that which would give true satisfaction, even to our friends in England, if it could be laid before them in a manner entitling it to credit*.

“ On the 1st of January 1820, I presided at the forming of the first Tamul-Bible Association which, I believe, was ever formed;

* I take upon myself to give publicity to this Letter, feeling persuaded, from this passage, that the respected writer would readily permit it to be published, for the purpose for which it is here introduced, were he at a convenient distance to be consulted.



being the only European present. The Manuscript of that day's proceedings, and some Papers relative to the Society, were sent to the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, when last at Columbo: and thus, I would hope, was conveyed to that high authority a just idea of the extent to which the Natives may be expected to come forward in their own cause, if only a few can be found amongst those who ought to interest themselves about the People they are placed to govern, who will consider it an incumbent duty to lead the Natives to exertion.

“ In February 1820, an Assistant Association was formed at Poonerem; on which occasion Christian David†, a Vice-President of our Tamul Association, was deputed to attend—and, in October, another at Malagam.

“ We have thus raised Three Tamul Associations in nine months. The last, at which I also presided, was very numerously attended; and the greater part of the Subscribers (a most extraordinary fact!) were *Heathens, who, to the amount of from 250 to 300 persons, contribute from one to six fanams monthly. The revenue thus raised for the pur-*

† A pious and intelligent Native Priest, who has translated the English Liturgy into Tamul.



pose of circulating the Holy Scripture is equal to 1500 Rix-dollars per annum."

After giving some information respecting the advancement of Religion and Education in the district, inhabited by a population amounting to from 150,000 to 200,000, the writer concludes:—

“ My Letter is already so long, that I am sure you will have reason to be tired of it; and I shall, therefore, hasten to a conclusion, with only expressing a hope, Dear Sir, that, on every occasion that you can obtain a few books for the Tamul Inhabitants of this place, you will recollect that an appeal to you has been made from one who has known them eighteen years, and *who finds them more ready to receive the Sacred Scriptures and Books of Instruction, than many of the warmest wishers for the spread of Religion amongst them would readily believe.*”

These Extracts I shall leave, without comment, to speak as to the disposition of the Natives, both Christian and Heathen, in reference to the Bible, and to the want of the Sacred Volume in this district.

It is possible, however, that the Abbé Du-bois may be induced to admit the propriety of translating the Bible into the Eastern Languages, provided the task be executed



in an acceptable manner: for he says, "A Translation of the Holy Scriptures, in order to awaken the curiosity, and fix the attention of the Learned Hindoo, at least as a literary production, ought to be on a level with the Indian performances of the same kind among them, and be composed in fine poetry, a flowery style, and a high stream of eloquence; this being universally the mode in which all Indian performances of any worth are written:" (p. 41.) Then, why have not some of the Jesuit Missionaries performed this work? Perhaps of all Europeans that ever resided in India, R. C. J. Beschi, *alias* Vira-mâmuni*, was the best qualified for such an undertaking. As a Tamul Scholar, he was little inferior to many of the Learned Natives; and his High and Low Tamul Grammars speak loudly in praise of his talents and diligence. Why then did he not undertake such a Translation of the Scriptures as the Abbé describes? Probably his Epic Poem, the Temba-vani, was intended, and may by some be thought to supersede the Scripture, as it treats upon Scriptural subjects. It is composed in poetic language, "a flowery style, and a fine stream of elo-

* An assumed title, by which, as an Author, he was best known by the Natives.



quence;" and I freely render to it that tribute of commendation, to which, as a literary performance, it is entitled. It abounds also in admirable instruction upon various Sacred topics: but the metaphysical style, and the classical language, in which the Author has clothed his Lessons, have rendered them quite unintelligible to any but the most Learned Hindoos. Very few indeed have I met with that *understood* the Temba-vani, and never one that derived any spiritual advantage from it. One or two Extracts, if the Reader will have patience to peruse them, will convince him, that the lowest Translation of the plain Text of Scripture is more likely to convert the Hindoos to Christianity than such a substitute as this.

I will not insert his description of the Journey of the Holy Family across the Desert, on their return from Egypt; fearing that it will weary the Reader, before he comes to the predictions, which the Saviour is made to utter upon that journey, of several Monks, who, in future ages, would there devote themselves to various mortifications in the cause of virtue.

“When, by the outrageous fury of the passions, the driver had fallen from his seat, Mavavanâ-muni, having seized and mounted



the elephant, which is the body; governing him by the strong hook* of resolution, he will bind him to the pillar of constancy by the rope of penance, and fill all heaven with admiration."

Take another—

"Desirous of obtaining the wealth peculiar to the Kingdom of Heaven, Madittagen, having heaped on the car of unceasing penitence a load of holiness, and yoked to it, as oxen, his body and soul, avoiding the quagmire of sinful desire, he will arrive at salvation."

A third—

"Having planted the honey-dropping jasmine-vine of perfect virtue; having surrounded it with a hedge of subdued senses, to protect it by penance supported by religion; having let in the water of strict discipline, and spread around it the sand of grace, Asoren will flourish as a garden whose fragrance reacheth to heaven."

A fourth—

"Blowing the red furnace of penance, and placing therein the iron of the five senses, adding the mercury of bright wisdom, Puro-

* It is, perhaps, necessary to inform the English Reader, that the elephant is governed by an instrument, hooked at one end, with which the driver pricks him behind the ear.



daren poured the pure gold thus obtained into the mould of religion; and, having en-
chased it with precious jewels, he became
an ornament for the breast of the God he
adored."

Will the Reader bear with me, if I add a
fifth? It shall be the last. It is upon the
Egyptian Mary.

"Though women may inwardly resolve on
good or bad, it is difficult for them to persist
in their resolution: thus, though Ejesia Ma-
riyal, overleaping the fence of modesty, had
at first plunged into the sea of carnal desire,
yet at last, having determined to perform
austerities with the purest devotion, she will
retire from the world, and long remain here.

"The eye perceives not the colour by
which it is darkened; and who are they who
see their own faults, apparent to all others?
But she, remembering of herself her mi-
nutest sins, and borne on the wings of men-
tal resolution, produced by reflecting on the
truth she perceived, gave herself up to devo-
tion, covered only by the mantle of female
modesty.

"On the flying chariot of Desire, she ar-
rived at the Desert of Sin; on the flying
chariot of Fear, she repaired to the Mountains
of Penitence; on the flying chariot of re-



splendent Wisdom, she entered the grove of Growing Virtue; and on the flying chariot of My Name, she shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

These Extracts are taken from the Notes to the late Mr. Ellis's Translation of the Korell* : and though that Gentleman was an admirer of the talent and genius of Beschi, yet he remarks upon this part of his celebrated Poem, "The tissue of conceits exhibited by these Verses may have been woven for the Poet by the Italian or the Tamul Muse; as both, though they often cull from the rose-bush of Fancy its fairest flowers, are prone, also, to collect the unsubstantial dew-drops glittering on its leaves."

But what shall we say to his attributing such "conceits" to the Saviour, who spake as never man spake; studiously adapted His lessons to the meanest capacity; and, so far from sanctioning Monkish austerities, cautioned us against assuming such hypocritical appearances of sanctity? (Matt. vi. 1, &c.) Were there any thing in the history of His infant years to warrant the ascribing of predictions to Him at the early age of His return from Egypt, and were even these fancied prophecies, instead of being clothed in a style

* Chapter III. Section 3.

which the most erudite only can understand, delivered in such familiar language as the Saviour designedly adopted; yet what purpose, I ask, could they possibly answer to the cause of Christianity? They could serve only to give authenticity to Popish Legends, and encourage the practice of superstitious mortifications, which our Blessed Lord so pointedly prohibited.

I had marked several other passages of the same character for insertion; and had intended noticing, also, the Inyana-upedasam of R. Robertus Nobili, *alias* Tatwa-bod, haca Swamy (a scholar of the same School, though of inferior ability to Beschi). But, if the Reader is not tired of perusing, I must confess that I am of transcribing such fantastical “conceits!” Were it not that the Temba-vani is, to my own knowledge, more admired by some professed Christians than the Bible itself, I should hardly have thought it worth while to take even this much notice of the Work. It exactly corresponds with the description which the Abbé Dubois gives of such a Translation as he conceives to be indispensable, in order to render the Sacred Volume acceptable, or even tolerable, to the Hindoos. But I doubt not that the Christian Reader will concur with me in



opinion, that the Translations of the Scriptures already made by Protestants into the Languages of the East, even though we judge of them all by the specimen which the Abbé has given of the Canara Version of the Pentateuch (which, it is fair to conclude, is the most unfavourable he could select), are likely to prove one-hundred-fold more beneficial to the Hindoos than such Versions, or Paraphrases, or Fictions, or whatever it be called, as the Heroic Poem of Beschi. Let the Reader compare this with St. Paul's conduct, in a corresponding case: (1 Cor. ii. 1—8.)

But, while I argue thus for the supremacy of the Scriptures among the means used for the conversion of the Heathen, and maintain that the Bible Society have not acted with that indiscretion with which the Abbé Dubois charges them, I am not contending for the propriety of distributing Bibles among the Heathen without accompanying helps: (pp. 31, 124.) He asserts that “the New Reformers,” by whom he means the Protestant Missionaries in India, “fancying that, in order to convert the Hindoos to Christianity, it was only necessary to lay the Bible before them, they, at their first outset, made extremely incorrect and almost unintelligible Translations of our

Sacred Books into the several idioms of the country. Our disfigured Holy Scriptures were profusely diffused among the inhabitants, under such a contemptible garb; and upon this only foundation the latter were angrily required to shift for themselves, to build their faith, and reform their religion, civilization, and manners:" (pp. 149, 150.) A most unfounded charge! and, until he can support it by well-attested facts, or even by a single instance of such imprudence on the part of any *Society**, I shall think it unworthy of a reply.

Contrasting the measures of the Jesuit with those of the Protestant Missionaries in India, he says, that the former established Schools for the educating of Native Catechists and Religious Teachers, and composed Tracts and Elementary Works upon Religious Topics: (p. 131.) Any person not acquainted with the proceedings of Protestants in the East, would conclude, upon reading this statement, that *they neglected* the use of such means; and this is obviously the impression made on the mind. But is this arguing like a fair disputant and a lover of truth? He must, he cannot but know, that Protestant

* No Institution is answerable for the conduct of an individual Member, which it does not authorise.



Missionaries have adopted these very expedients, and that to a much greater extent than the Jesuits ever did. How inconsistent, then, with Christian integrity, so to state the case, as to make a false impression!

With regard to the training of Native Catechists, Schoolmasters, and Priests, I know not a single Missionary Station between Madras and Cape Comorin, including both the Coromandel and Malabar Coasts—nine of which I myself have visited—where there is not a separate establishment for this specific purpose. This was one of the first objects to which the venerable Ziegenbalg, Swartz, and their co-adjutors, paid attention. I am intimately acquainted with several *pious* and *intelligent* Native Religious Teachers, educated at Vepery, Tranquebar, Tanjore, &c. &c. Does M. Dubois remember nothing of the first four Priests ordained by Swartz and Kohloff, some years ago? Did he never hear of the devoted Sattianaden? Does he not know, that successive Missionaries, in South India, of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, have since ordained other Natives equally promising†? Has he never read accounts of the splendid Esta-

† All these *Priests* are supported by this admirable Institution.



blishment at Serampore; or of the College at Calcutta, founded more recently by the late Bishop of that Diocese? I cannot think that the man who appears to have been so industrious in collecting information to the prejudice of Protestant Missionaries, needs to be informed, that *they* also have always “selected the best-disposed and most intelligent among the Native Converts, and established Schools for the forming of Catechists or Native Religious Teachers”—or, that they have “superintended and directed those Schools of Catechists, and made it their principal study to give them an education suited to their intended profession.”

Neither can he be ignorant, that the composition and translation of Religious Tracts, and other Elementary Works, has formed a prominent part of the Protestant Missionary's labours. Has he never seen the valuable Dialogues of Swartz, in Tamul; or any of the numerous Catechisms, and other Works of various sizes, published by the Danish Missionaries, and the Agents of the Christian Knowledge Society in South India, for many years past? Is he ignorant of the thousands of Elementary and other Publications that issue annually from the various Presses in Bengal and Madras? No—



several parts of his Letters shew, that he is well aware of what is going forward in this and other departments of Missionary Labour. I will therefore relate but two cases in point. *Last year, the Press of the Church Missionary Society at Madras, alone, sent forth Thirty Thousand Copies of Religious Publications! During my residence in Tinnevelly, the Madras District Committee of the Christian Knowledge Society, and the Corresponding Committee of the Church Missionary Society, sent me annually, upon an average, Two Thousand Religious Publications, for the use of their respective Missions in that distant province!*—I will only add, that every* Protestant Mission in India is as well, and many are much better, supplied with Works of the same description: and that they are not published for the Catechists only (as the Jesuits' Tracts, &c. appear to have been), but are distributed among all ranks of Christians and Heathens, that are found capable of understanding, and desirous of possessing them.

There is another, and that a most promising department of Missionary Labour; to which, as far as I can learn, from the "Let-

* Of course, I except newly-formed Stations.



ters" now before me, and other sources of information, the Roman-Catholic Missionaries have paid no attention—I mean the establishment of Schools for all classes of Children. I know not of a single Protestant Missionary Station in South India, where there is not an English School for the benefit of those Children whose parents wish them to learn our language, and one or more Schools in which the Children of Christians and Heathens are taught the Elements of useful and Religious Knowledge in their vernacular tongues.

To expatiate on the expediency or utility of such Institutions is, happily, quite unnecessary: for it is now acknowledged, by all who have given the subject a candid consideration, that it is of primary importance

“——to rear the tender thought;
To teach the young idea how to shoot;
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind;
To breathe th' enlivening spirit; and to fix
The generous purpose on the glowing heart.”

If this be the case in Christian Countries, how much more so must it be in Pagan Lands, while the mind is yet supple, and ere it is benighted by Superstition, or distorted by Vice!



Such are the instruments which Protestants employ, for the enlightening, the meliorating, the evangelizing of Hindoostan. Whether or no these, and the other means here enumerated, are well adapted to the end in view, will be best ascertained by the successes that have hitherto attended them; and which I shall briefly enumerate in the next Section.

SECTION IV.

THE SUCCESS WHICH HAS ALREADY ATTENDED
THE MEANS USED BY PROTESTANTS, FOR
THE CONVERSION OF THE HINDOOS.

THE Abbé Dubois, to shew that the "brilliant success" of the Serampore Missionaries, in "*translating* the Scriptures, within the short period of nine or ten years, into no less than Twenty-four Asiatic Languages," "has not in the least dazzled him, nor altered his opinion, nor diminished his scepticism on the entire inadequacy of such means to enlighten the Pagans and gain them over to Christianity," adds, "I would not certainly



dare to warrant, that these twenty spurious Versions, with some of which I am acquainted, will, after the lapse of the same number of years, have operated the conversion of twenty-four Pagans :” (p. 37.) This, we are to conclude, is the *lowest* estimate of good which he supposes likely to result from them. He thinks it is *possible*, then, that they *may* produce this number of conversions. I will venture to affirm, that if, at the expiration of twenty-four years, it shall appear that the same number of immortal souls have been actually converted through the perusal of those “spurious Versions,” there are few Members of the Bible Society, who contributed towards their publication, but will feel grateful to Almighty God for this apparently small quantity of success. When the value of one soul is maturely considered, and it is remembered that such corruptible things as silver and gold were not of sufficient value to redeem it—that its ransom from sin and death cost “the precious blood of Christ!”—what labour, what expense, that men can bestow upon its conversion, can be more than equivalent? His objection, then, arising from the imperfect manner in which those Translations are executed, will be lighter than a feather, in the judgment of those *who alone*



have any right to complain—the Members of the Bible Society!

For the satisfaction of those Benevolent Individuals, we can enumerate many more than the given number of conversions, from the perusal of those “spurious Versions” alone—and that *within half of the allotted period!* The late Mr. Ward names several persons, whose conversion is to be traced to the perusal of the New Testament*. But Mr. Ward was one of the parties arraigned!—True. Well; any one who will take the trouble to look over the various Missionary Publications for the last ten years, will find several instances of the kind, from authority which—to the Abbé Dubois at least, but to no one who *knew* that good man’s character—may appear less questionable.

But, could it be proved that the simple perusal of the Scriptures had produced no effect in India—the translating and publishing of Twenty-five Versions of the Bible, if we consider only (upon the maxim of Horace, *Dimidium facti* &c.) the importance of making a commencement, and also the service which these Versions, how imperfect soever they may be, will render to future Translators, we may regard them as an

* Farewell Letters, p. 185, &c.



amount of success in which the Friends of Missions, and particularly the Members of the Bible Society, have cause to exult.

The success attending the Mission Schools, has far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the best friends to the Missionary Cause.

The Abbé Dubois refers his readers to the Lutherans, Baptists, and others, for an account of "their successes" in India; evidently implying, however, that the result will disappoint any expectations that may have been raised: (p. 25, 26.) I have followed his directions—not, indeed, confining my inquiries to the Societies he names, but extending them to as many of the Societies now labouring in India as I could conveniently consult. The following is a rough Statement of the numbers in the Schools established by various Associations, for the instruction of Native Children in that country.

The Society for Promoting Christian

Knowledge	3500
Baptist Missionary Society	10000*

* Since the material change introduced into the School System of Serampore, as detailed in the Third Report, no List of Schools or of Scholars has been sent home. Indeed, the nature of that alteration is such, that the Schools can no longer be said to belong to the Baptist Missionary Society, though the Children derive instruction

instruction



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Church Missionary Society	6581
Adults	230
London Missionary Society	4650
In Government Schools, under the superintendence of the Missionaries of the London Society say	3000
Calcutta School Society	2800
Wesleyan Missionary Society	4000
Bombay Education Society	1200
American Board of Missions	2000
Scottish Missionary Society	500
Hindoo College, at Calcutta, Serampore, &c. say	300
Jay Narain's Seminary at Benares	130
Netherlands Missionary Association	100
Free-School Association at Cawnpore	158
<hr/>	
Total	39149

These numbers are given from the latest accounts received. From some Stations, no Returns have arrived in England these two, and from others these three, years past: and I hesitate not to affirm, that there are, at least, *Fifty Thousand Children, the major part Heathen, now in the various Schools established by Protestants in India!*

instruction through means of their Missionaries. In 1819, the Children in the Schools connected with Serampore alone amounted to 8000. They have since been increasing, in an accelerating ratio: and, perhaps, if I *doubled* that number, I should be *within* their present amount.



Though it is not pretended that these Schools have effected *many* conversions, yet, if we recollect the strong prejudice that existed in the minds of the Natives, within these few years, against sending their children to Schools established and superintended by Europeans, and in which *printed* books were used ; and if we consider, also, that the Scriptures, and other Religious Books, are now used in the great majority of those Schools ; we must indeed be ignorant of the general effect of such education upon the youthful mind, not to admit, that those Schools promise much to the Missionary Labourer. We may reasonably look to them as so many Nurseries for the rearing of a more intelligent and less-prejudiced race of Hindoos than those of the present or any preceding age. And that the preaching or reading of the Divine Word will be more likely to affect their minds than it does those of their parents, who possessed none of the advantages which they enjoy in the Mission Schools, is too obvious to need further remark.

In the collection, then, of so vast a number of Native Children into the numerous Schools in India, we behold an important Missionary achievement. How much prejudice must have been overcome, those who know the



character of the Hindoos, and the nature of their superstitions, can well conceive: *reason* and *experience* may calculate upon extensive mental and moral improvement, from this wide diffusion of general knowledge: and *faith* can see, in the distance, "first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear," growing thickly over the fields where the divine seed is thus profusely strown.

The Abbé Dubois will be amused at these anticipations: for he asserts, that the children "go to those Schools for the sole purpose of attaining a competent acquaintance with the English Language*, in order to be able, by this means, to gain a livelihood; as this accomplishment is, at present, the only way to attain an honourable and advantageous situation in the several offices of Government. As soon as they have attained their object, all is over with your books of science and morality; they never more cast a look at them, during their lives:" (p. 167.) Such is the liberal Abbé's *surmise*†! The *fact* is otherwise—as examples, about to be

* The Missionary Schools in which English is taught are comparatively few.

† Were this correct, it would apply only to the English Schools.



produced, will prove. That such is the object with which many *enter* the Schools, cannot be questioned; for *Hindoo* Children know as little how to appreciate the advantages of education, as the Youth of England or any other country. But numerous are the instances wherein they have *acquired* a taste for European Literature in these very schools; taken pleasure in *cultivating* that taste after they have quitted them; and employed themselves in communicating their knowledge to their friends. Often have I seen the head scholars at their Lessons and Exercises, when all the rest have been celebrating the Heathen Festivals: and on expressing my surprise at seeing them in school on such occasions, they have replied, that they found more pleasure in their books than at the temples.

In the Fifth Report of the Diocesan Committee of the Christian Knowledge Society, speaking of their scholars' proficiency and disposition to improve, it is said,—“In addition to the regular Class-books, some of them have made themselves acquainted with Tarachund Duet's ‘Pleasing Tales,’ the ‘History of Joseph’ in Bengalee and English, with other books of the same description.”

“The increased esteem in which informa-



tion and amusement, thus derived, is held by them, is evinced by their frequent requests for books, for the purpose of taking home to read in their families, which is now becoming a common practice among them : and, among the pleasing omens of the general improvement of moral feeling, it may be mentioned, that a little Boy (whose attention and good behaviour had been always remarkable, and who had invariably refused any pecuniary reward), on quitting Calcutta for a period, came to return thanks for his schooling; and asked, as the only desired mark of favour, for books to carry home to his friends. ‘They have none,’ said he, ‘in our village; and I shall read there to them.’ Several equally pleasing instances might be mentioned : and the Committee offer no apologies for occasionally noticing objects which may appear to some so trifling; because the Benevolent will see in such traits a prospect of future good; and will feel assured, from such dawnings of improvement, that their kind countenance and liberal support will reap their fruit in due season.”

Such is the disposition which I have witnessed in many of the Youths educated in the Church Missionary Society’s Schools in South India; and abundant information to the same



effect might be collected from the Reports of every Missionary Society in Hindoostan.

We have seen that M. Dubois represents the Brahmins as inaccessible beings, and that "the barrier" between us and them is "impassable:" (p. 101.) Had he established Schools for the instruction of Youth, and conducted them upon liberal principles, he would have seen the Brahmins themselves crossing that barrier, and courting his acquaintance. One or two instances shall suffice, to prove that Protestant Missionary Schools are rapidly removing that "wall of partition," which has for ages separated the Brahmin from all other castes and descriptions of men.

Boys of every caste are admitted into those schools. In Tinnevely (and I believe the same practice is adopted everywhere else,) we classed the Brahmin with the Soodra of equal attainments; and constantly have I seen them studying at the same desk, or standing up, side by side, to repeat their lessons. In one of our Schools, there were, at the time of my leaving the district, 4 Brahmins, 6 Soodras, 2 Mussulmans, 8 Roman Catholics, 1 Country-born, and 2 Pariars. One of those Brahmins, instead of leaving the school "as soon as he had attained the object" for which



alone, as the Abbé Dubois asserts, they attend, continued there till he was upwards of twenty years of age: indeed, I left him in the school when I came away from the South. He seemed really to *love* the New Testament; and used to read it at home, notwithstanding the opposition of his family. At length they complained of him to an Uncle, the senior member of the family, requesting him to use his influence to induce the young man to lay aside the obnoxious book. The old man, with the liberality of a Gamaliel, sent for his Nephew, and desired to look at the book (which was a Tamul Testament). Having examined several parts of it, he returned it, speaking to this effect: “ *This is a good book: it can do the lad no harm, and may do him much good: I will not, therefore, interpose, to prevent his reading it.*”

Just before I left the district, this young Brahmin wrote me the following Letter:

“ Reverend Sir,

“ I am very thankful to you for the good path which I am now learning in the Tinnevelly English School. My longing wish was, to wait always, yea, even to the day of my death, at your door, for to get instructions to save my perishable soul; which



no one yet had undertaken to do, but is done in your days. Now, as I hear you are going away very far, we do not know what to do, and how we shall improve for the future. Therefore I beg you would be pleased to give proper orders, to bring me on forward in learning as usual.

“ I am, Reverend Sir,

“ Your humble servant,

“ 22d January, 1821.

CHINNIAH.”

This, with the exception of a few compliments, is *verbatim et literatim*: it will, therefore, speak for itself, as to the *proficiency* and *spirit* of the writer.

There are a few Brahminy Boys in many of the Schools of the Church Missionary Society; and, I believe, in those of other Societies also. In one of the Tranquebar Schools, supported by that Institution, out of the fifty-two Scholars it contains, *forty-five are Brahmins*. At a recent examination of this School, *one of the Brahminy Boys, seven years of age, read our Church Catechism, and repeated a part of it which he had committed to memory*.

A Missionary of the same Society, after mentioning his examination of the School at Madabaram, writes—



“ In the afternoon, a Brahmin, who appears to be the principal man of the place, and who formerly was against our establishing a Christian School, came, and several other Heathens along with him. He said, ‘ Sir, we see that this School is profitable to our children; for they have come home, and have put questions to us which we could not answer, and felt indeed ashamed that our children became our instructors. We, therefore, request you, not only to continue this School, but also to instruct us.’ It was, indeed, unexpected to me, to hear this from that Brahmin, who, a year before, I thought would be our strongest opponent. According to his request, the way of Salvation was declared, and Jesus Christ preached to him: after which he ordered his servants to bring some fruit, which he offered to me, according to the native custom*.”

By the Third Report of the Serampore College, it appears, that, of the Fifty Students on the Foundation, *Seven were Brahmins*; who were studying, besides the Languages taught there, Geography, and the Newtonian System of Astronomy. And it is intended, in the present year, to give them, in common with the other Students qualified to

* Missionary Register, Oct. 1823, p. 443.



enter upon these branches of science, "some knowledge of the First Principles of Chemistry; and thus to lead them gradually forward in scientific pursuits, while they advance in their Philological studies."

Numerous instances to the same effect might be given, in reference to every other class of Hindoos: but, since the prejudices of the Brahmins are considered and acknowledged to be the most difficult to overcome, it will be sufficient to have stated these results upon that domineering caste, in answer to the Abbé's assertion, that the barrier between us and them is "impassable."

The *Protestant Reader* I refer to the blessed effect of the revival of Literature in the Western World, previous to the Reformation—an effect which, though these Schools produce no immediate conversions, warrants the anticipation of a result, at no distant period, equally glorious, from this wide diffusion of Religious and Scientific Knowledge! And I will detain him with the statement of only one Case, to prove that such expectations are far from being visionary, or beyond the probability of being realized.

At Tinnevely, the Head Classes of the Church Missionary Society's Schools were assembled every Saturday Afternoon, ac-



accompanied by their Masters, to read a Chapter in the New Testament, which was always given them on the Saturday preceding. They were then questioned as to the meaning of the Chapter, and afterwards listened to an Exposition upon it. The Missionaries at that Station continue this practice; and the last accounts received from them state, that one of the Masters had embraced Christianity, in consequence of what he heard from them on those occasions!

The Abbé Dubois asserts, that the “project,” (viz. “the establishment of Schools to enlighten the Hindoo Females”) “is merely visionary, and altogether impracticable; the most deeply-rooted prejudices of the country being decidedly hostile to its execution”—“that even should not the prejudices of the country oppose an almost insurmountable bar to the establishment of Schools for Females in India, the state of poverty of the latter, and their numerous avocations, would not allow them to attend those Schools”—and, “that at least five-sixths of the Hindoo Females live in such distressed circumstances, that, from the age of eight or ten years, to the end of their lives, they are obliged to labour without intermission from morning till evening; and that, notwithstand-



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ing their incessant labours, they are hardly capable of saving enough to purchase a coarse cloth of the value of five or six shillings, to cover themselves." (pp. 205, 206.)

Will it be believed, that the writer of these sentences, not twenty pages before, endeavours to represent the Hindoo Females in the most amiable light*. His object *then* was, to confute the statements of the late Mr. Ward; which, by the way, corresponds with his own character of Hindoo Women, given in his "Description of the People of India." I could confute, from my own experience, not from "*hearsay*," and also from some copious Extracts from Hindoo Writers which I have in my possession, most of what he has asserted for the purpose of raising the Hindoo Females in our esteem. But it is enough for

* I shall not break a lance with the Abbé, for asserting that the Hindoo Women vie with those European Ladies who "dance Waltzes," and in various ways "deliver their persons into the arms of another man:" (p. 183.) I cannot defend those of my Countrywomen, who are so little "aware of what they owe to their Husbands, and to the modesty of their sex," as "to allow themselves such gross violations of decorum," against the severe, though, it must be conceded, too-often-merited insinuations of the Abbé Dubois. If he enter into a comparison, between the Hindoo Women, and those Europeans Ladies who are Christians, not in name and external professions only, but upon principle—who love the Bible, and are attentive to their devotions and every religious, moral, and relative duty (of whom there are, happily, many in India!)—*then* I will meet him.



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my present purpose, that he admits the prevalence of an "austerity of manners which has drawn so marked a line of separation between the two sexes, and denied Women in India a due share in the social intercourse, and a proper attention to the improvement of their intellectual faculties." It is rather an aggravation, than a palliation (as M. Dubois seems to think it) of this evil, that it has existed "from the earliest to the present times, among all Oriental Nations" (p. 181): and its existence in India is quite enough to rouse our sympathy in behalf of the Hindoo Women, whom he represents as in so degraded a condition. Such a "line of demarcation between the sexes," and such "austerity of manners" on the part of the male towards the female, is contrary to all Christian principle and precept: and if it be our duty to attend to the moral, mental, and religious improvement of the former, we are bound to devote an equal share of attention to the latter. The Hindoo Women are much more superstitious than the men, of which I could give several instances, in the opposition which they have raised to the instruction of their children in Mission Schools, and to the reading of Religious Books in their houses, when their Husbands have been anxious for



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both. This will be regarded as the natural result of their want of mental improvement; for Ignorance, it is generally admitted, is the mother of Superstition: and it will excite within the Christian bosom a still deeper commiseration for them, than for the men.

But the Abbé Dubois does not know the Liverpool, or indeed any British Ladies, if he thinks they will cease from the attempt to establish "Schools for Females in India," in consequence of any "*almost insurmountable bar*" that may oppose the execution of their plans. It may, indeed, cause them to halt in their benevolent career; but it will only be to attack this formidable "*almost*;" nor will they desist, until it be levelled with the ground.

About two years before the Abbé Dubois hazarded these assertions on the impracticability of establishing Female Schools in India, the Baptist Missionaries in Calcutta, with their accustomed benevolence and activity, had actually succeeded in this important branch of Missionary Labour. Their success encouraged the British and Foreign School Society, in concert with some of the Members of the Calcutta School Society, then in England, to solicit from the Public, "funds for the sending out a suitable Fe-



male Teacher from England, who might devote herself exclusively to the education of Native Females in India." Such a Lady (Miss Cooke) was procured; and she sailed to India, "recommended, in the first instance, by the British and Foreign School Society, to the Calcutta School Society; but was subsequently transferred to the Church Missionary Society*."

On the arrival of Miss Cooke in India, and the object of her mission being made known, many, both Europeans and Natives, thought, with the Abbé Dubois, that it was the most visionary scheme ever formed, and *certain* to end in disappointment. Her own Pundit, "a high Brahmin," Miss C. writes, "with a most profound contempt for the Bengalee Females," "used daily to assure her, that she would never succeed: their women were all BEASTS—quite stupid—never could or would learn; nor would the Brahmins ever allow THEIR females to be taught," &c. &c. To all this she answered; "Very well—we shall see." She persevered, however, against every discouragement; and in a short time she had the satisfaction of witnessing the decline of the native prejudices, and an increasing

* Missionary Register, November 1822, p. 481.



desire, on the part of the Parents, to send their Children to School, and on the part of the Scholars to be instructed. This intelligence is fully detailed in the Missionary Register for 1823*. Suffice it to say here, that before the expiration of twelve months from the commencement of operations, there were nearly 400 Female Scholars in the Fifteen Schools which Miss Cooke had established. The subject of Female Education is becoming more popular than it was among the Natives, and no doubt the number of Schools is now greatly augmented. By the last arrivals, the account stands as follows :—

	Scholars.
Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,	100
London Missionary Society	80
Church Missionary Society	439
In Calcutta—by the Female Juvenile Society,	
Baptist Missionaries, and others	370
At and around Serampore, say	200
Total	1189

In stating the number of Native Female Children now under instruction in India, I labour under the same disadvantage of imperfect information which I lamented in reporting the state of the Schools for Boys. By confining myself, however, as nearly as

* April, p. 194, 195 ; and August, p. 355—360.



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possible, to the accounts received, I obviate the charge of exaggeration; and in these nearly 1200 Native Girls, now collected in Protestant Mission Schools, we are furnished with a triumphant reply to the Abbé's imaginary objections! He will hardly credit, that it was proposed, and acceded to, by some of the most respectable Natives in Bengal, to admit European and other Female Teachers into their Families, to instruct their Wives and Daughters. In short, the Abbé Dubois ought to have known, that, in Christian Benevolence, as well as in Philosophy, the age of conjecture is gone by, and that we are now living in an age of experiment: and such results of Charitable and Christian Experiment as have here been adduced, when weighed against his volume of conjectures, or rather unproved assertions, are perfectly satisfactory to all candid minds. *but blue*

He concludes his remarks upon this subject, by recommending the "Liverpool Ladies" to attend rather to the *temporal* wants of their poor neighbours; and if, after, they have any surplus, and are "disposed to give a more extensive range to their charity and benevolence," to send it to India, to feed and clothe the poor of that distant land: (p. 207.) Since he is now in Europe, I



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recommend him to pay "the Ladies of Liverpool" a visit, (as I have done since my return to England); and he will find, perhaps to his satisfaction, and, I hope, to his admiration also, that they have liberally anticipated his admonition. There is, I believe, no town, even in England, where Charitable Institutions more abound, or in which the wants of the indigent are more industriously explored, or more bountifully supplied. To what shall we attribute their strict attention to this "Christian duty," but to that principle of love, which constrains them to promote, with so much zeal, the eternal welfare of mankind. This is the root, the tree, from which acts of genuine charity grow. And even were it proved that the Liverpool Ladies expended more upon the *spiritual*, than the *temporal* necessities of the indigent, we could find for them a satisfactory defence against such charges as those of M. Dubois, in the consideration of the superior worth of the soul, to the body and all its concerns. But never was it known, that the temporal wants of the poor were neglected by persons, who, from a correct view of the nature and condition of the soul, and of the Remedy provided for its recovery from the Fall, gave attention to its interests, as of paramount importance.



The Abbé might have spared his insinuations of the same description, at pp.150, 151; for it would have cost him very little trouble to ascertain that the Protestants in India pay great attention to the necessities of the Poor. He has, probably, heard of the "Friend-in-Need Society," and "Native Hospital," at Madras, and of similar Charitable Institutions at Calcutta. I know not a Mission Station in South India where the poor are not relieved, and provided with rice, "cumbelees," and cloths.

But to return from this digression. — The principal means upon which Protestant Missionaries in India calculate for producing an immediate effect upon the Native Mind, is, *the preaching of the Gospel*. It is not much that *they* can do in this most important department of Missionary Labour; the climate, the languages, the habits of the people, being all against them. Though there are some, whose strength of constitution, correct pronunciation, and intimate acquaintance with the Native Tongues, enable them to preach almost as constantly and intelligibly as they could do in Europe, yet this is not often the case: consequently, they feel the necessity of qualifying pious and intelligent Native Christians for the Ministerial Office. For



this purpose, the Colleges and Seminaries, already enumerated, were established at different Mission Stations; and the success that has hitherto attended the preaching of this class of persons, justifies the anticipation of the happiest and most extensive results, when a competent number shall be sent forth to preach to their own countrymen "the wonderful works of God."

In reference to this important class of Native Labourers, and to the good effect that may be expected from their exertions, the Committee of the Church Missionary Society say, in their Twenty-third Report—

"At their head stand Two Ordained Missionaries—the Rev. Abdool Messeeh, and the Rev. William Bowley, whose steady and useful course may serve to assure the Society that the Natives of India are become competent, under the Divine Blessing, to form Christian Churches from among their countrymen, and to instruct and edify those Churches."

In confirmation of this remark, the Reader need only refer to the various Letters and Journals of these two persons, published in the Missionary Register (*passim*), and in the Reports of the Society to which they belong. From the same sources he may derive infor-



mation as to the qualifications and piety of John Devasagayam, Native Superintendent of the Schools of the same Society at Tranquebar. He may refer also to the Abstract of East-India Missions, published in 1814, by the Christian Knowledge Society, for an account of the zeal and talent of the First Four Native Priests ordained at Tanjore, but particularly of Sattianaden. In the various Reports of the Baptist Missionary Society, accounts to the same effect, equally satisfactory, may be seen. The Letter addressed, about a twelvemonth ago, by a Native Youth and other Members of the Serampore Congregation, to their Countrymen, evinces a talent and spirit of a superior order; and is calculated to convince the most sceptical, that much, very much benefit to the Cause of Christianity in the East may be anticipated, from the attentive and religious cultivation of the Native Mind*.

It would detain the Reader too long to make all the citations from these references which my inclination would prompt me to transcribe. I shall, therefore, content myself with giving one more example of piety, zeal, and talent, in a Native Christian. He

* This "Address" was reviewed in the *Friend of India*, and has since appeared in the *Asiatic Journal* for Sept. 1823.



was a pupil of the late Swartz ; his name, Veesoovasanaden ; he was ordained by the Christian Knowledge Society's Missionaries, at Tanjore ; had the charge of the Congregations of that Society in the Tinnevely District ; and laboured for some years under my own immediate inspection. He was generally my companion, on my visits to those Congregations. His piety, ability, and Christian meekness, commanded the love of the Native Converts, and the respect of the Heathen and Mahomedans. I have conversed with him on various subjects ; and heard him preach and pray, in a manner that shewed how remarkably the Divine Blessing had followed the instructions which he had received.

In proof of his zeal, I will state the number of Converts made from Idolatry, chiefly through his instrumentality, during the four years that he was with me :

In 1817	25
1818	52
1819	34
1820	122

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This statement is sufficient to warrant the most sanguine expectations from the labours



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of such Preachers, when their numbers shall be increased.

In proof of the ability of this man, I will here transcribe the conclusion* of a Religious Tract, which he wrote for his Countrymen, when the Cholera Morbus prevailed in our district.

“ If you are desirous of renouncing sin, becoming the Children of God, and walking in the path of holiness, Jesus Christ will give you whatever strength you require for that purpose. He will remove all afflictive trials from his Children, who turn from evil, and do that which is right; and will preserve and bless them. Therefore, forsaking all False Gods, Devils, and Idols, which are unable to save you, love Jesus Christ, who hath saved you hitherto from suffering. And if you trust in Him, and assent to His Holy Word, in order to obtain the pardon of your sins, and the Divine Blessing, you will read and meditate therein every day, as the food of wisdom for your souls. Then will you be righteous, die happily, and be saved.

“ The Lord has sent this dreadful affliction into the world, that you may forsake your sins and repent, in the present season of mercy. If you repent, this awful disease

* The whole would be too long for insertion.



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will prove a blessing to you: if not, it will be the sword of Heaven, to destroy you. Every one of you, therefore, that has witnessed this great calamity, if, through fear of the Lord's anger, you repent and amend your ways, you will obtain innumerable blessings—you will live happily in the enjoyment of the Lord's mercy, both on earth and in heaven.

“Should there be any among you that have read or heard this Religious Book, whose soul is distressed—in whom there is a commencement of true wisdom, and who wish to learn and understand accurately the doctrine of Salvation—you need not go away in despair, saying, ‘What shall we do? Who will shew us the way to heaven?’ For if you go to the Minister (who lives &c.), he will receive you with pleasure; will instruct you in the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is the true and even path that leads to salvation; and will give you such books of wisdom as you require for that purpose. Strengthened by the excellent knowledge that will hence dawn on your minds, you will grow and increase more and more in understanding, wisdom, godliness, and faith; the showers of Divine Mercy shall fall, on you, your wives, and children; and at last, God having called you to his Kingdom through the pas-



sage of a happy death, he will encircle your heads with the Crown of Salvation. Most earnestly and repeatedly do I entreat you, in the Name of the Lord, to become meet for this most glorious happiness! Oh may your souls live for ever in felicity with the Lord!

“Nazareth, in the Tinnevelly Mission,

“Sept. 21, 1819.”

I will only add to this, that the writer was unacquainted with any European Language or Science. We see, then, in him, to what an intelligent Native *may* be brought, even without all those advantages which the present Missionary Colleges and Seminaries in India furnish.

But while I thus explain the *means* which Protestant Missionaries employ for the Conversion of the Natives of Hindoostan; and maintain, in opposition to the Abbé Dubois' assertion to the contrary, that they are more likely to accomplish that end than any which the Jesuits have used; I nevertheless beg to state, that, without God's blessing, they do not *depend* upon *any* means for success. Fully do I concur in opinion with him, as he restates his position, “that, under existing circumstances, there is no *human* possibility of converting the Hindoos:” (p. 2.) I know the difficulties; have grappled with



them as well as he; and again and again have been compelled to stand still. But, praised be God! this has not always been the case; and one instance of success has appeared to me an ample remuneration for the labour expended upon twenty failures. In reference to this mighty undertaking, I know not the Missionary who will not say, in the words of his Gracious Master, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible:" (Matt. xix. 26.) Tell me not, This is not *reason*. It is perfectly reasonable to believe that Omnipotence can effect the work! It is not *carnal*, but it is *spiritual* reason. It is the *reasoning of faith*, which God approves, and which He will honour; because *He* is honoured by faith in His Word and Power, and by the success which is thus ascribed solely to Him! Trusting then in Him who hath said, that the "Word that goeth forth out of His mouth shall not return unto Him void, but that it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto He sends it," (Isaiah, lv. 11.) the Missionary is animated to the contest with the Ignorance and Idolatry of the East. While he feels it to be his duty to publish that Word abroad, and instrumentally prepare the Native Mind for its



reception, he looks implicitly to the Author of that Word to give it effect. Were the heart of the Hindoo harder, and his prejudices more inveterate than they really are, Jehovah hath declared, "Is not My Word like as a fire; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" or, were his mind more opaque than it confessedly is, yet the entrance of that Word giveth light: and He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can shine into *every* heart, "to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." In this confidence, every Missionary, who knows and performs his duty, will continue to plant and water; leaving it with the Almighty, in His own time, to give the increase.

St. Paul affirms, that we are saved by Grace, through faith: (Eph. ii. 8.) And the Abbé Dubois admits, that "Faith, and other supernatural virtues, are merely a gratuitous gift from God, which He bestows on whom He pleases, when He pleases, and on what conditions He pleases:" (p. 110.) But it never seems to enter into his own contemplation, or that of his Brethren, that God may bestow these graces on the poor Hindoo! He says, again, that "after the coming of Christ, the True Religion was promulgated all over the



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world; and had such extraordinary successes, amidst every kind of discouragement and contradiction, that it is quite impossible to account for it, but by the supernatural and invisible interference and assistance of the Divine Agent, who alone was able to overcome the otherwise insuperable obstacles that opposed its progress, and to extend its empire over so large a proportion of mankind:" (pp. 106, 107.) And is not the same Divine Agency capable of overcoming "the obstacles" that in *India* also oppose themselves to the progress of the truth, how "insuperable" soever they may appear to human calculation? Surely it is! The Abbé Dubois himself will not reply in the negative. Indeed, that agency *must* be exerted in the conversion of every individual soul to God, whatever be his nation, superstitions, or sins. It is Divine Grace alone that can silence "those passions and prejudices which impede the march of Truth" (p. 92); enable the mind to comprehend, or dispose the heart to love it; and thus bring the whole man into a state of willing subjection to the Prince of Peace. And I contend, that the truth, when applied by the Spirit of God, will convert the Hindoo, who is the subject of that operation, as readily as the professor of any other Creed.



This is enough for the Christian Missionary. He has the promise of his Lord, that with this faith he shall accomplish things otherwise impracticable: (Matt. xvii. 20.) He, therefore, who labours for the Conversion of the Hindoos, with this confidence in God to prosper his endeavours, cannot be, as M. Dubois more than insinuates, a "*deluded victim*:" (p. 120.) He *feels* his duties to be "trying" and "arduous" (p. 80); but, instead of deserting his post in despair, he will adopt the noble sentiments which appear at one time to have supported the Abbé's own mind. "In such discouraging circumstances, without any apparent human means to improve the Cause of Christianity in this country, there only remains to the persons of our profession to look up with calmness and resignation to Him who holds in His hands the hearts of men, changes them when he pleases, and *is able, even of stones, to raise up Children to Abraham*, when the time appointed by Him for the purpose arrives. In these deplorable times, in which Scepticism and Immorality threaten to overwhelm every nation and every condition, it only remains to us *to weep, between the porch and the altar*, over the iniquities of the people; to water the sanctuary with our tears; to



bewail, like Jeremiah, the general corruption; to edify the people by our lessons and examples; to look to the Father of Mercies—to pray to Him to bring about better times, *to spare His people, and not give His heritage to reproach*: and, if our interposition cannot stem the torrent, and our altars are finally to be overthrown by the sacrilegious hands of Modern Philosophy, let us have, as our last resource, resolution and fortitude enough to stand by them to the last, and allow ourselves to be crushed down, and buried under their ruins:” (pp. 84, 85.)

This is worthy of the Missionary Cause! And though the Spirit that dictated these resolutions seems to have forsaken the bosom of the man who penned them, I pray that it may rest upon the heart of every one that now labours to propagate the Gospel through distant lands. Then, though many fall “victims” to the Cause, it will not be under a “delusion”; for they will both toil and suffer cheerfully, for His sake, who sacrificed Himself as an Expiatory Victim for the recovery of an Apostate World; and under every suffering, every privation, every discouragement, they will be animated by the Saviour’s promise—“Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or



mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My Name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life:" (Matt. xix. 29.) The *infidel* calls this *delusion*: but I am arguing with a professed Minister of Christianity; and I challenge him to prove, how it is possible to make too great a sacrifice for our Lord Jesus Christ; and how the man who even lays down his life for the Redeemer's sake, can, upon Christian principles, be called a "deluded victim!"

While, however, the power and promise of God, and the design of the Gospel Covenant, justify the assertion that the Hindoos *may*, and ultimately *will*, be converted to the Christian Faith, my conclusion is fortified by the actual commencement of the work of Divine Grace in Hindoostan.

I will not dwell upon the Native Congregations—amounting to about One Hundred and Sixty!—assembled by the Baptist, the Church, the Methodist, the London, the Scottish, and the American, Missionary Societies, in different parts of India, since they do not consist entirely of Christians. I will, however, state, that those Societies can enumerate nearly Three Thousand Converts*, who have renounced all their superstitions, have

* These are exclusive of the Converts in South Travancore, of whom the Abbé speaks so contemptuously.



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embraced the Christian Faith upon principle, are living according to the Saviour's commands, and thus adorning their profession in the midst of Idolatry and iniquity. The strictest attention is paid to their moral conduct: and when it is not in conformity with their profession, they are suspended, and denied the privilege of Communion, until the Missionary is satisfied as to the sincerity of their repentance. Many have died in the Faith, and given every proof that Divine Grace had regenerated their hearts.

Here I might close my argument with triumph!—When it is proved that such a number of Hindoos are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, every Christian will be satisfied that the work of Grace is *begun* in India; and will feel “confident, that He who *hath* begun the good work,” can and “will carry it on” until it be complete. If this fail to convince the Abbé Dubois, and to remove his “scepticism” on the subject, it will only furnish an additional proof of the utter inutility of holding any argument with *prejudice*.

But I have not done.—There is a body of Christians in South India to which I have not referred. They are the fruits of the labours of the Danish Missionaries at Tran-



quebar, and the German Missionaries of the Christian Knowledge Society, and have been converted at different periods during the last Century. They occupy eight principal Stations—Vepery, Tanjore, Tranquebar, Trichinopoly, Tinnevely, Cuddalore, Madura, and Ramnad. They are to be found also, in small numbers, scattered through many of the villages of South India. M. Dubois has some acquaintance with these people; and will, perhaps, know, that when I state them at twenty thousand, I estimate them far below their actual number.

But he entertains a low opinion of their character: (p, 17—20.) I have visited all these Stations, except Cuddalore; and from what I have observed, and the accounts I have received from the Missionaries, I know them to be much superior, in a moral point of view, to the description which the Abbé gives of his own people.

Of a considerable number of these Native Christians I can speak more particularly, having lived amongst them for some time, and had the management of their spiritual affairs (under the direction of the Madras District Committee of the Christian Knowledge Society), and not unfrequently the adjustment of their temporal difficulties.



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The Abbé describes these people in the following terms :—“ There are, besides, a few Protestant Christians dispersed chiefly in the Tinnevely District ; but in such small numbers, that they do not deserve the name of Congregations :” (p. 19.)

I cannot reply to this better, than by giving a brief description of these people. Their number is about four thousand, and they are scattered through sixty-three villages. Some of the Congregations *are* too small “to deserve the name :” but there are several amounting to near and upwards of one hundred, one of three hundred, and another of four hundred souls ! The last two Congregations form *two distinct Villages : in each is a Church, a Boys' and a Girls' School, a Native Priest, Catechist, and two Schoolmasters. There is not an Idolater or Papist among them ; nor is a Popish Image, a Heathen Idol, or an Altar, to be seen in any corner of their streets.* I have addressed them several times, when the Churches were always crowded. The transition from the noise and idolatrous symbols of Pagan Towns, to these peaceful abodes, was more refreshing to my spirit than any thing I ever remember to have enjoyed out of my native land.

Such are the fruits of the Missionary



Jænické's labours, assisted and succeeded by the Country-priest Sattianaden, and other servants of the Christian Knowledge Society! —The Reader will now judge of the accuracy or candour of the Abbé's description of these interesting people.

He will probably ask, 'Are they not of low castes?' Some of them are persons of respectability, but the majority are Shanaars (cultivators of the palmyra and cocoa-nut trees). But does their humble origin and occupation affect their Christian character? This objection has always been raised against the lowly disciples of Jesus, by those who glory more in secular distinctions, than in the name and service of God. "The common people" have always heard the Gospel "gladly:" in every age it has met with a more ready reception from them, than from the mighty, the noble, the learned, and the rich: and the soul of a Shanaar, or even a Pariah, is as precious, in the Redeemer's sight, as that of a Namboory or Poorohita Brahmin.

But he advances a more serious objection against them: their moral character, he asserts, is worse than that of the Roman-Catholic Christians: this, therefore, demands a more particular reply.



I admit the Tinnevelly Christians will disappoint the man who expects to find them an intelligent and highly spiritually-minded people. But when their situation is known, such expectations would be most unreasonable. When I first arrived amongst them in 1816, they had been ten years without a Missionary; nearly that time with only one Country-priest; their Schools had gone to decay; and they were almost destitute of the Scriptures and Elementary Books. What reason, then, have we to be surprised, if their knowledge and religion were at a low ebb? Yet I will affirm, that, in both respects, they were equal to what any town or village in Christendom would be, if left for the same length of time under similar circumstances.

During the ten years that they were left to themselves, their Heathen neighbours persecuted them in an arbitrary and vexatious manner: but they bore the trial with patience, without one, as far as I could ever learn, apostatizing, to avoid personal suffering. Let this be contrasted with the apostacy of 60,000 Roman-Catholics, upon the command of Tippoo Sultan to have them circumcised and "made converts to Mahomedanism!" (pp. 74, 75.)

During the prevalence of the Cholera Morbus in Tinnevelly, many of the Roman



Catholics united with the Heathen in the Devil's-dance, and other Idolatrous Ceremonies, to avert that awful calamity.—*Not an instance of the kind occurred among the Native Protestants of the same district!*

The Abbé Dubois sufficiently accounts for the unsteady character of his own people. He admits that they are “ordinarily” from “among out-casts, or are quite helpless persons, left without resources or connections in Society;” that “they, generally speaking, ask for baptism from interested motives:” (pp. 73, 134.) No wonder, then, that they continue in their Christian profession no longer than they find it conducive to their interest or convenience!

He speaks of the Protestants as consisting “half of Catholic Apostates, who went over to the Lutheran Sect in times of famine, or from other interested motives:” and says, that he once became acquainted with some “who regularly changed their religion twice a-year, and who, for a long while, were in the habit of being six months Catholic, and six months Protestant.” (p. 20.)

During the four years that I was in Tinnevely, the Converts from Popery formed about one-sixth of the number of persons



received into Communion with us. I know not to what period the Abbé refers, when he charges the Members of his own Communion with going over to the Protestants from interested motives, and that once a-year; but I am certain that, for some years past, no Protestant Missionary would have acknowledged them as Christians. In South India we might have had whole Congregations of Catholics, had we paid no regard to their character, or to their object in embracing the Protestant Faith. None were received, until they had given proof of their sincerity, and until their character and motive had been carefully investigated. Contrary to the Roman-Catholic policy, they are required, as a *sine qua non*, to renounce every *semblance* of Idolatry. As far as my experience extends, they can serve no secular purpose whatever in becoming Protestants; nor is any such inducement held out to them. Had the Abbé resided amongst them, he would have found something more than "a vain phantom, an empty shade of Christianity;" which, he confesses, is all that his own people exhibit: (p. 63.) He, no doubt, finds it convenient to stigmatize them as "Catholic Apostates:" but, upon the same principle, he would apply this opprobrious appellation to our own



ancestors, and to the German Reformers in the days of Martin Luther; for they also were Separatists from the Romish Church.

Of the Roman-Catholics he says, that "the practical virtues of Christianity are almost unknown to them:" (p. 65.) Their drunkenness and other vices are proverbial; and they are allowed by their Priests to live in this state of iniquity, without interruption, provided they make "confession" now and then, and pay for "absolution." *I never knew a Native Protestant addicted to intoxication.* Any one detected in the commission of sin that brought reproach upon the Christian Profession, was severely reprimanded, and suspended from Communion, until he gave evident signs of repentance.

M. Dubois complains that his people cannot understand what is preached to them: (p. 67, &c.) Among the Protestants he would have found many intelligent men and boys, and now and then *a woman*, who could answer him any questions put to them upon a subject on which he might have been discoursing. Some will carry home with them the whole Sermon. I know those, among our own people, who have numerous Sermons collected in this way, and written by them upon cadjans. Several of our Catechists were



accustomed to preach these Sermons over again.

Though (at p. 83) he says, that there are some "irreproachable men among the Native Christians, into whose hands he would not hesitate to entrust his own interests," yet (at p. 164), in writing to a different correspondent, he endeavours to dissuade him from trusting, "in any capacity whatever, a Native who has renounced, or who slights the usages of his caste or the prejudices of the country. I shall, above all," he says, "never advise you to make such a man your butler, or your treasurer. In the former case, you would soon find that your liquors were fast wasting; and, in the latter, you would, ere long, find a large deficit in your chest. For you may, at the first outset, and without further inquiries, judge that a person of this description is a quite lost character, and that his first steps to improvement, after having renounced the usages and prejudices of his caste, will be to turn a drunkard and a rogue."—Since these cautions are given without any qualification whatever, they are, of course, calculated, and perhaps intended, to bring all Christians, how sincere soever they may be in embracing Christianity, under this odious imputation



and suspicion. They will apply, therefore, to his own Converts, who, he says, are "irreproachable," and to whom "he would not hesitate to entrust his own interests"—unless, indeed, he defend himself here against the charge of inconsistency, by allowing that they never "renounced the usages and prejudices of their caste." In that case they were not Christians. But, then, he may be asked again, what he means by so frequently lamenting that the majority of his Converts are of this base character? And if he thought *such* Christians worthy of *his* confidence, why does he endeavour to depreciate their character in the estimation of *others*? or why abandon his Mission in despair, upon the plea, that it is in vain to attempt making *real* Christians in India, when they may at least become "irreproachable," and worthy of being entrusted with their masters' interests? Or what does he mean by lamenting (p. 120), that "a Native Christian," "who happens to fall in the way of an European," should, "(after having been surveyed with a stern and scornful countenance,) be welcomed by him with this insulting reproach, 'Why hast thou forsaken the religion of thy forefathers, to embrace a foreign worship?'"—and, that "the name of a Native Chris-



tian and a Rogue shall sound as synonymous in the ear of a prejudiced European"—What, I ask, does he mean by deploring this, when he can himself use such strong, such unmeasured terms, to bring the most sincere and devout Native Christian, as well as the most abandoned outcast, under this very suspicion and contempt?

I leave him to extricate himself from these dilemmas as he may, while I proceed to affirm, that his charge is not applicable to the Native *Protestants*. I have proved the integrity of some: others I know, who have held places of trust under Europeans, and fulfilled their duties to the satisfaction of their employers: and nothing can be more satisfactory than the testimony borne by the Serampore Missionaries to the character of several in their service*.

I can give an instance of a Heathen, also, who knew how to appreciate their character. When I was at Tanjore, in 1821, the Rajah † of that Fort was gone on a Pilgrimage to Benares, attended by a retinue of Brahmins and others.—Whom did he select for his *purse-*

* *Vindiciæ Seramporianæ*, pp. 49, 50.—See also pp. 24, 25.

† This is the Heathen Prince who some years ago gave an endowment of land, producing an annual revenue of 500 pagodas, towards the support of the Protestant Mission in his dominions.



bearer on the journey?—I was informed, by a Gentleman there, that a *Native Protestant* was appointed by him to this responsible office!

But, supposing the Protestants, as a body, deserved one-half of the reproach which M. Dubois so unsparingly heaps upon them, they would at least prove this point, in opposition to his assertions, that the Hindoos *may be weaned* from their idolatrous practices. Though he will not allow that the 23,000 Protestants in India have attained to Christian perfection, yet, since not one of them is allowed to retain any Pagan Superstitions, he can no longer maintain his position, that their prejudices &c. are “insurmountable.”

If he object to this conclusion, that they are persons from the lowest castes, and that therefore they had less to relinquish than those in the higher ranks of society, I reply, that *many* of them are from the most respectable castes. I myself am acquainted with several *Moodalyars* and *Pillays*, and I know of some *Brahmins*. These, though they form the minority of Native Christians, are more than enough to support my argument, in favour of the possibility of converting the Hindoos. But even were the assertion, that all the Native Protestants are from the lowest castes, correct, it would not form an objec-



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tion against my position ; for the Abbé himself admits, that “ the low-born Pariah ” is tenacious of “ the childish distinction of the Right and Left Hand,” lays “ *much stress* ” upon it, and considers it “ the most honourable distinction of his tribe ; ” and says, that if you try to persuade him to lay aside that distinction, as “ wholly incompatible with the first duties imposed upon him by the Christian Religion,” “ your lectures, your instructions, your expostulations, on such subjects, will be of no avail ; and your Christians will continue the slaves of their Anti-Christian prejudices and customs : ” (pp. 64, 65.) This, we are to conclude, is the experience of himself and other Jesuit Missionaries : and any one who has read with candour the description, given in these pages, of the means which they have employed to convert the Hindoos, or to establish them in the faith when converted, will not be surprised at their failure. But Protestant Missionaries have met with better success. I could have shewn the Abbé, when in India, some devout Pariah Christians, who have entirely renounced “ the childish distinction of Right and Left Hand,” and are leading exemplary lives. Indeed, I know not the Pariah *Protestant* that has *not* renounced that distinction : and though all



the 23,000 Native Protestants in India were of that low caste—(they form, however, the minority of the 4000 in Tinnevely!)—they would still furnish ample grounds for my conclusion, that the Protestants have found it *possible* to convert the Hindoos to the faith of Jesus Christ.

Still, however, my argument requires not so great a number of Converts for its support. I have no occasion to endeavour to prove, that they are all real Christians, and the subjects of Divine Grace. There is no Congregation, and perhaps there never has been, of which this can be said: the tares and the wheat have always grown together. My object is to shew, that the work of Grace is *begun* in India: and this I have done already, in the characters given of several Native Teachers employed in various parts of that country. I will affirm of several, with whom I am intimately acquainted, that, as far as one human being can judge of the heart of another, (and “by their fruits ye shall know them,”) I *have* met with “*sincere and undisguised Christians.*”—I will detain the Reader with only two or three proofs of this, in addition to what has been already stated.

In 1821, when travelling from Tanjore to Tranquebar, I was stopped, about midnight,



at Combaconum, and conducted to a building where refreshments were prepared for me. I soon found that the person who was paying me such attention was a Native Protestant, named Pakeyanaden, the English Interpreter of the Court at that Station—a man of respectable abilities, and who, but for his *Christian profession*, would, I have no doubt, rise to the highest post a Native can fill.

After I had finished my repast, he conducted me to his house, where his family were waiting to receive me. After some conversation, and being joined by several other persons, we united together in singing a Hymn, reading the Scriptures, and Prayer, in the Tamul Language. This was the first time I had joined in the devotions of a Native Christian Family at their own house, and I could not but express my approbation to my host. But he replied, that this was nothing new; that they always commenced and closed the day in the same manner; and that on that evening they had deferred their devotions to that late hour, in expectation of my arrival.

Europeans, who view only the surface of Native Society in the East, contend that the Missionaries are doing nothing amongst the Hindoos. But what will be said to this instance, of a small company of Christians, in



the very midst of Idolatry, rearing an altar to the Redeemer, and offering thereon the tribute of prayer and praise, morning and evening? Let those who may feel disposed to deny that *any* good impression is made upon the Natives of India, move from their couches; break through the circle of sycophants through whom they have hitherto received their information, and who, before they reply to their master's questions, endeavour to ascertain what kind of answer will please him; and then let them go among those Natives to whom Protestant Missionaries have directed their attention, and they will find many instances of the kind I have just quoted.

A few weeks ago, I received a Letter from this Combaconum Christian; which may, perhaps, be admitted in evidence of his own Christian spirit, and that of the two Natives of whom he writes.

“ Reverend and Kind Sir,

“ I am overjoyed by hearing, from different Gentlemen, that your health is tolerably well since you arrived in England; and I am happy to tell you, I and my Family, also our good Veesoovasanaden, the Native Priest at Tinnevely, enjoy a very good health. Only his daughter, of five years old,



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died: he is however comforted, by the blessed assurance that his daughter became one in the number of Angels that serve the Lord in heaven. He is now blessed with a son, in the latter end of December. I find him a good Labourer in the Vineyard of our Lord. The Christians are much attached to him. The Missionaries at Tanjore intend to send for, and station him at this place,

“ I rejoice that the number of Christians increases in this Heathenism Town. I hope you might have heard of the Rev. Mr. B.’s arrival, and establishment of a Mission here: our good friend John Dewasagayam Pillay, with him, is much busy in arranging the new Establishment, and often goes to Tranquebar, Negapatam, and to our neighbourhood, on his duty. He joins me, with my family, in presenting our most dutiful respects to you and worthy Mrs. ———, praying frequently for your and Family’s health and comfort, and speedy return to our country.

“ Recommending ourselves to your blessing and fatherly kindness,

“ I remain, with great regard,

Rev. and kind Sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

“ PAKEYANADEN.”

“ Combaconum, 12th June, 1823.”



I think it will be allowed, by the candid Reader, that the language of this Letter, especially when considered in connection with the writer's exemplary character, and with his practice of assembling his Family, every morning and evening, for devotional exercises, is no common proof of the reality of his Christian Profession.

It will be remembered, that I have already spoken of the two Native Teachers about whom he writes. In proof of Vesoovasaden's piety and ability, I have given an extract from a Religious Tract of his composition: and I will now, for the same purpose, insert part of a Letter I received from John Dewasagayam, the evening before I sailed from India.

“ Reverend and Kind Father,

“ It is a severe trial and deep distress to us, to hear that you have been lately so ill, and are obliged to leave India so soon for England. How hard and grievous this event may be to us, we trust, and we are sure, that the ways of the Lord, in this respect, are also full of mercy, and gracious to you, and to all those who regret on this occasion.”—Then, after praising the “ dear Name” of the Lord, for what had been done in the Cause of Christ



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in that part of India, he proceeds: "We are sure He will be now your and your respectable Family's great support and comfort. I still trust, that if it would be in the sight of the Lord necessary to continue your services for my poor nation, He will change your plan, and keep you for some years more here. But if He wants to bring you from your heavy labour to some rest even in this world, He will permit your removal from us. But even in the sea, or any part of the world, He will sweeten your life, and enrich your Family with Divine Blessings.

"Praying sincerely to the Lord that you and your Family may long enjoy health and comfort in this life, and commending myself, my poor Family, and my Scholars, to your paternal blessing and prayers,

"I remain,

My dear and Reverend Father,
Your ever faithful and obedient servant,

"JOHN DEWASAGAYAM."

"Tranquebar, 16th Jan. 1822."

I doubt not but the pious Reader will agree with me, that the man who can feel such compassion for his Heathen Countrymen, and such fervent desire for their salvation—such Christian love for those who are



engaged in promoting their conversion ; such regard to the superintending providence of the Almighty ; and such entire acquiescence in His will, when the labours of His servants are suspended ; must be a Christian of no ordinary attainments in the school of Jesus Christ. I will only add, that I have seldom been more refreshed and edified by the Christian discourse of an European, than I was by the conversation of this *Native Christian*.

Here I might speak of a Catechist of high caste, who, by eating and drinking in my presence what was handed to him by a *Pariah servant*, gave incontestable proof of his having renounced caste, and all Pagan distinctions, for the sake of Christ. After this, he continued in my service several months ; and I had every reason to be satisfied of his sincerity, and to be thankful to God for the success that attended his labours. I might dwell also with satisfaction upon the character of another Catechist, whom I employed about four years in a confidential situation. The humility, piety, zeal, and integrity of this man were as evident fruits of the Spirit as I ever remember to have witnessed. To these I might add several private Christians among the Tinnevelly Protestants, who, I had every



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reason to believe, were sincere Converts : also several Priests, Catechists, and Laymen at Madras, Vepery, Tanjore, Tranquebar, and in North India. But my object is, not so much to count the number of Converts upon whose sincerity we may rely, as to shew, *from my own experience, that the Work of Conversion is actually begun in India.* One instance is sufficient, to establish my point, and overturn the whole of the Abbé Dubois' reasoning and conclusions. I have given three cases, at least, of Native Converts, who have come under my personal observation, and of whose "real" *conversion* I can speak with some confidence.

The argument, then, may be summed up in few words—

M. Dubois maintains, that the Roman-Catholic Mode of Worship is well adapted to the conversion of the Hindoos to Christianity. But, by his own shewing, it has totally failed. Therefore, the Ceremonies of the Roman Church are *not* adapted to the end in view.

Again : He maintains, that the means employed by Protestants are the *least* likely to succeed. But they *have* succeeded, in several instances. Consequently, of all the means hitherto tried, they are the best suited to our purpose.



Again: Upon the failure of the means used by the Jesuits, he, by a *petitio principii*, concludes, that the Natives of India are doomed to reprobation, and that to attempt to convert them is nothing less than warring against the manifest purposes of God.

Christian Love, and a due sense of our own infinite obligations to the Redeemer, would suggest the expediency of trying *other* means, before we abandon them to that awful and irrevocable doom.

Other means have been tried; and they have succeeded beyond expectation. Therefore, we ought to regard that success as a token of good from the Lord to the inhabitants of Hindoostan; and to persevere in the use of the same means, in the assurance, that the Lord's purpose is not to doom the Natives of India to reprobation, but to gather a People from that Pagan Land, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in His Heavenly Kingdom.

The Abbé Dabois may object to this conclusion, that the instances of Conversion produced—though we take them at Twenty-three Thousand!—are, after all, as a drop to the ocean, as the small dust in the balance, when compared with the One Hundred Millions of Souls in our Eastern Dominions!—



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True. But we regard them as the first sprouting of that "grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which, indeed, is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." It is the beginning of that leaven to ferment, "which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." (Matt. xiii. 31—33.) I have abundantly shewn, that the mass is, humanly speaking, preparing for this operation, by means of Schools and various Publications. I have proved, also, that the Divine Grace *has* taken effect. How difficult soever it may be to convert the adult Heathen, we have seen that it is NOT "impracticable." What the Holy Spirit has accomplished in one case, He can accomplish in another, and in all.

The Abbé Dubois, like the Ten Spies from Canaan, would discourage us, by reports of the stupendous difficulties in the way of evangelizing the Inhabitants of the East; and he predicts the destruction of Christianity in India within the space of fifty years. I, though in spirit and faith inferior to Caleb and Joshua, am yet returned from the same land that the Abbé has visited, and bring a



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similar report of the obstacles to be encountered. I do, however, with those two faithful Israelites, encourage Missionaries to go up and possess the land. The Lord has shewn that He is with *us* also: He will conquer by us. Then, "rebel not ye against the Lord:" (Num. xiii. and xiv.) Joshua's God is our God: and in the day of His own power He will redeem even India to Himself. Behold the foundation of the Redeemer's Temple laid in that Pagan Land! and look confidently for the day, when "He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace, unto it!"

"Rise, crown'd with light, Imperial Salem, rise!
Exalt thy towery head, and lift thy eyes!
See a long race thy spacious court adorn!
See future sons and daughters, yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies!
See barbarous Nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend!
See thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate Kings,
And heap'd with products of Sabeen springs!
For thee Idume's spicy forests blow,
And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountain glow.
See Heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in a flood of day!
No more the rising Sun shall gild the morn,
Nor evening Cynthia fill her silver horn;

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But lost, dissolv'd in thy superior rays,
One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze,
O'erflow thy courts: the Light Himself shall shine
Reveal'd, and God's eternal day be thine!"

POPE'S MESSIAH.

SECTION V.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE SYRIAN CHURCH
IN TRAVANCORE, TOGETHER WITH THE SUC-
CESS THAT HAS ATTENDED THE MEANS USED
FOR ITS AMELIORATION.

SPEAKING of the Syrian Christians in Tra-
vancore, the Abbé Dubois expresses his sur-
prise "at the exaggerations" of the late Dr.
Buchanan, "on this and many other impor-
tant points:" (p. 21.) It would have been well,
had he explained to what particular "exagge-
rations" he alludes: we might then have ex-
amined into the justice of his accusation.—
It appears, from his Letters, that he does not
know the state of the Syrians, from personal
observation; and he has neglected to spe-
cify any one "point" which Dr. B. has mis-
represented. That that Author's descrip-



tions are written in glowing language, and under the influence of animated feelings, I allow : but the candid Reader, who has travelled over the pages of his "Researches in the East," accompanying him, from Bengal, through the horrid scenes exhibited in Orissa; the darkness, superstition, and misery, of other intervening Provinces; and arriving with him at last in South Travancore; will not be surprised at the warmth of his emotions, on discovering an isolated body of Christians among the mountains of that kingdom. And, when he finds that, amidst every local disadvantage, in the face of successive and obstinate persecutions from the Papists, and under the dominion of Idolatrous Rulers, they had, for many centuries, retained much of their Primitive Faith, and an unqualified reverence for the Word of God and implicit deference to its authority; he will, I think, allow, that *no* language can adequately express the feelings which such circumstances must excite in the mind of a Christian, panting, as Dr. B. did, for opportunity to promote the glory of God, and the best interests of man. I confess, that I thought his representations of that interesting people highly coloured; and did not venture to anticipate all the pleasure from a visit to them, which



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his account seemed to promise. But, when travelling amongst them, and visiting their Churches, I compared his statements with all I heard and saw: and the result was, that in no instance did I find that the Doctor had overstated facts; and, on more than one occasion, his description did not equal my own feelings on the spot.

But, before M. Dubois had presumed to charge a man, of the late Dr. B.'s principles and character, with publishing "exaggerations" to the world, he ought to have been certain of the accuracy of the information upon which his accusations were founded.

He says, "he has heard that some Protestant Missionaries had recently prevailed upon many of the Syrian Clergy to marry; and that it was the only success they had to boast of." (p. 60.)

Previous to exposing the inaccuracy of this assertion, I shall correct his statements in reference to two or three points, which I do not remember to have seen answered in any other Publication*.

* I had marked for insertion M. Dubois' accounts of their Origin, Name, Creed, Sacraments, &c. &c., and shewn their inaccuracy in many respects. But, as this is not necessary to my purpose, and the Abbé is so ably confuted, on these and several other points, by the Author of a "Brief History of the Syrian Churches," given

in

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He says, "They have numberless Fasts during the year ; they use candles, tapers, incense ; and have many more external Ceremonies than the Catholics, in the exercise of their religious functions," &c. (pp. 59, 60.)

That there is much of superstition in their Religious Services, I admit ; and was pained to witness so close a resemblance in them to the Ceremonies of the Roman-Catholic Church : but that they "have many more external Ceremonies than the Catholics," is true only of the Roma-Syrians, *i. e.* those who have embraced Popery altogether, or incorporated Popish Superstitions with the Forms of the Syrian Church. But of those Syrians who adhere to their ancient Ritual, it is not true. In the midst of their Service on Sabbath Morning, I witnessed what I never heard of in a Roman-Catholic Chapel, either in India or Europe, *viz. the reading of the Lesson appointed for the Day, in the Vernacular Tongue.*

He says, that their Clergy "use the Syriac in their Liturgy and Religious Ceremonies : " (p. 60.) This, if intended as an objection, comes with a very ill grace from a

in the Appendix to the Seventeenth Report of the Church Missionary Society, I shall refer the Reader to that able and interesting article, for the information required on those subjects.



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Roman-Catholic Priest; who, in common with the rest of his order, uses the Latin “in the Liturgy and Religious Ceremonies” of his Church; a language equally unintelligible to the Laity in India, and to the majority even in Europe.

This objection is less formidable, in reference to the Syrians, than to the Roman-Catholics. For it is contrary to the laws of the Roman Church to pray in public in any other language; whereas the Syrian Metropolitan informed me, upon my putting the question to him, that they had no Canon which prohibited the translating of the whole of their Liturgy into the Vernacular Tongue, for the use of the Church; except, indeed, a few Prayers, which are addressed to the Virgin Mary.

But when the Abbé goes on to assert, (p. 22,) that “all the science of their Clergy consists in being able to read, or rather spell, this language, in order to be qualified to perform their Religious Ceremonies”—and says, that “he has been assured that there is at present no one amongst the Catholic or the Nestorian Clergy capable of properly understanding or explaining two phrases of the Syriac Books”—I answer, that this is an unfair representation of their present state. That, at the time he



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received his information, *few* of them knew more than is here asserted, *may* have been the case. But they have always had some Syriac Doctors (Malpans) amongst them; and in 1820, when I visited them, the Cattanars read the Prayers with fluency, and I conversed with several who were masters of the language. And as to M. Dubois not being able to “see of what utility the project of supplying them with Syriac Bibles can be,” (p.60.)—this arises from his neglect to inform himself better as to their ability to make use of them. Upon the presumption that “no one amongst them is capable of understanding that ancient language,” his surprise that the Bible Society should think of sending them Syriac Bibles is not unnatural. But, then, all this is mere presumption—not fact. The Priest who officiated at the Syrian Altar, on the occasion just alluded to, made use of *one of the Bible Society’s Syriac Testaments*, when he read the Chapter in the vernacular language: and as his eye passed over the Syriac page, he rendered it into Malayalim with such facility, that I thought the book before him was written in that tongue, until informed to the contrary. Two Missionaries and myself spent an evening with the same man, when we discussed some of the princi-



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pal doctrines of Christianity. He sat with another of the Bible Society's Syriac Testaments before him; and referred to it, in confirmation of his opinions, with a readiness that proved him to be familiar with the Sacred Text. Several of the Catanars, whom I saw in the interior, shewed me, with apparent pleasure, their copies of the same work, carefully folded up in white cloth; and gave me reason to believe that they knew the value of the boon. When Dr. Buchanan was with them, they were much in want of the Syriac Bible; and it was only upon his promise to repay them an hundred-fold, that they entrusted to him their most valuable Manuscripts. Just before the arrival of the first supply from England, they grew so impatient, that they began to suspect that the Doctor had imposed upon them. But their suspicions were soon removed; and I had the satisfaction of hearing them express their gratitude for the treasure which the Bible Society had sent them.

The Abbé Dubois says, (p. 22,) "The Jesuits, on their first arrival in India, hearing of them, in one way or another converted the greatest part to the Catholic Faith." It was not till upwards of forty years after the arrival of the Portuguese in India, that any attempts were made to



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seduce the Syrians from their own Communion, or *compel* them, "in one way or another," to enter into that of Rome: and the duplicity, stratagem, arrogance, cruelty, and violence, even unto blood, of Don Alexion de Menezes, Archbishop of Goa, and other persecutors, cover their names with infamy; and fill us with admiration at the constancy of the Syrians, who resisted *such* means used to *convert* them*.

"There remains," he says (p. 22), "still among them, large Congregations, consisting of 70,000 or 80,000 Christians, of whom two-thirds are Catholics, and a third Nestorians."

By this estimate, he computes the number of Faithful Syrians at about 25,000. At the time I was with them, their number was stated to be 53,000. They have since been reckoned at 13,000 families; which, allowing 5 to a family, will raise them to 65,000.

He says, "They are all designated under the contemptuous name of Nazarany, and held by the Pagans in still greater contempt than the Christians of this part of the country. The Nairs chiefly keep them at the greatest distance." (p. 22.)

It will be seen, by reference to La Croze,

* The history of these transactions is given in the Seventeenth Report of the Church Missionary Society, just mentioned.



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that, at the time the Portugese arrived in India, and for a few years subsequent to that period, the Syrian Christians stood high in the estimation of their Heathen Rulers and neighbours. They enjoyed many privileges under the Native Princes; ranked with the Nobility of the Country; the authority of their Bishops was allowed to extend to all Civil as well as Ecclesiastical affairs; they were carefully instructed in the use of arms, from their eighth to their twenty-fifth year, and were excellent hunters: the more of them a Pagan Prince had in his dominions, the more was he feared and esteemed; and not more than two hundred years ago, they furnished the Rajah of Cochin with 50,000 of the best soldiers: on that account, as well as on that of their fidelity and strict attachment to the truth in every thing, the Native Princes cherished and countenanced them in every possible way. In virtue of privileges granted by Sharen Permaul, former Emperor of Malabar, they took precedency of the Nairs, who are the Nobility of the country; and they were second in rank only to the Brahmins. The Kings themselves manifested an extraordinary veneration for them. The inferior castes looked up to them for protection against the oppres-



sions of the higher castes. They depended directly on the Prince or Minister, and not on the Provincial Governors. They themselves punished any infringement of their privileges, or insult offered them, by a Pagan. The Nairs, who are the Nobility and Warriors in Malabar, then respected them very highly, and considered it a great honour to be regarded as their brothers. So numerous were their privileges, that La Croze says it would be tiresome to describe them all. It was permitted only to the Brahmins, and them, to have inclosed porches before their houses. They were authorised to ride and travel on elephants; a distinction accorded only to them and the Heirs of the Crown. They sat in presence of the King and his Ministers, even on the same carpet; a privilege granted to Embassadors only. The King of Paroor, having wished, during the preceding century, to extend this privilege to the Nairs, the Christians declared war against him, and obliged him to restore affairs to their former state.

Lieutenant-Colonel John Munro, late Resident at the Court of Travancore, in his* "Address to the Government of Fort St.

* This Address was published in the Appendix of the Twentieth Report of the Church Missionary Society.



George on the State of Christianity in that Residency," cites this account of the Syrians' privileges and respectability, in proof of the extraordinary advancement of the Christian Religion in a country governed and inhabited by the Hindoos. I quote it, to shew that they were not, in La Croze's time, so contemptible in the eyes of the Heathen as the Abbé Dubois represents them at present. At the period of the Roman-Catholics' unwarrantable interference with them, they lived in the full enjoyment of these immunities : and though they subsequently lost much of their respectability (for which they have to blame only their Popish persecutors), they are *yet held in greater estimation than the Native Roman Catholics*; and at the very time when the Abbé wrote the Letter in which he asserts the contrary, and represents them as held in great contempt, they were actually rising again in respectability, and in the estimation of their Rulers.

In 1818, three years subsequent to the date of the Abbé's Letter, Lieutenant-Colonel Munro, who had for some time known the Syrians intimately, thus described them, in his Address to the Madras Government, already referred to—

“ Notwithstanding the misfortunes which



they have suffered, and the disadvantages of their situation, they still retain, however, some of the virtues by which they were formerly distinguished. They are remarkable for mildness and simplicity of character, honesty, and industry ; their pursuits are confined to agriculture and trade ; and, although they have lost the high station and elevated sentiments which they once possessed, yet they are still respected, on account of their integrity and rectitude of conduct.”

Then, after explaining the improved state of their Ecclesiastical affairs, this enlightened Statesman proceeds—

“The temporal situation of the Syrians has also been materially improved. I have frequently taken occasion to bring them to the notice of her Highness the Rannee of Travancore ; and her intelligent, liberal, and ingenuous mind has always appeared to feel a deep interest in their history, misfortunes, and character. She is aware of the attention excited to their situation in Europe ; and her anxiety to manifest the sincerity of her attachment to the British Nation has formed, I believe, an additional motive for the kindness and generosity she has uniformly displayed towards the Syrians. She has appointed a considerable number of them to



public offices ; and lately presented the sum of 20,000 rupees to the College of Cotym, as an endowment for its support. The Syrians are most grateful for her goodness ; and cherish, in no ordinary degree, the sentiments of affection and respect toward her person that are entertained by every class of her subjects."

Such were the respectability and improving circumstances of these people, when M. Du-bois published his representation of them, as more contemptible in the eyes of the Pagans than even the Roman-Catholic Christians!

He says—" Their Clergy lived till lately in celibacy:" (p. 60.) La Croze informs us, that the Priests are not engaged to celibacy ; nor was it universal among them, prior to their persecution by the Jesuits. Menezes found several of them married, whom he commanded to put away their wives ; and those who refused obedience to his unauthorised mandate, he excommunicated.

With respect to his insinuation, "that all the success which the Protestant Missionaries stationed among them had to boast of was, the having prevailed upon many of the Catanars to marry," I beg to state, that Colonel Munro, and Mr. Norton (the first Protestant Missionary who devoted attention to the Sy-



rians), seeing the immoralities which the celibacy of the Priests occasioned, represented to them the duty and necessity of marriage.

“The Bishop saw the evil of the practice, and wished to remedy it. One reason, among many that was urged in its favour, was their poverty: they were too poor to maintain a wife and family. To obviate this difficulty, the Resident (Colonel Munro) offered to give 400 rupees to the first Priest that should marry; and promised so to arrange matters, that the Clergy, in general, might marry, and support their families.”

“The Metropolitan, a short time after, issued a Circular Letter to all the Churches; in which he stated the prohibition of Sacerdotal Matrimony to be, not of the Church of Antioch, but of the Church of Rome; and desired that the Clergy would take the matter into consideration, and comply with the ordinance of marriage, when convenient. Two of the Clergy were, in consequence, soon after married; and forty more entered into bonds that they would marry as soon as some provision should be made for the support of their families, should they have any*.”

The other Missionaries promoted the practice, as far as they thought it compatible with

* Missionary Register, March 1818, p. 99.



their situation to interfere. When I was at Cotym, thirty-five of the Catanars had married, and the number has since increased. Whatever the Abbé Dubois' feelings upon this success may be, *Protestants*, at least, may return thanks to God, for having so far prospered the efforts made to do "away with that which has been, among the Syrians, as well as in the Church of Rome, a prolific source of immorality."

But his principal objection against the Syrians appears to be, that "they, above all, deny the Blessed Virgin the title of Theotocus, or Mother of God, asserting that the Son of God did not assume a soul and a body in her womb." (p. 59.)

This title, Θεοτόκος, was first given to the Virgin Mary by the Greek Church; and Origen, I believe, was the person who proposed it. It was applied to her by several of the Greek Fathers after him; and was at last confirmed by the Council of Ephesus, which was called to adjust the dispute which arose upon Nestorius, and his Presbyter Anastasius, denying her that title—τῆ Νεστορίῃ τὴν ἁγίαν Μαρίαν εἶναι Θεοτόκον ἀρνούμεν.

The literal signification of the title is, "She who brought forth Him that is God;" and it may originally have been intended to mean



no more, than that she was the Mother of the Human-nature of Him who was God as well as Man. In this sense Nestorius himself would allow her the title: and what renders it probable that this was the meaning at first attached to the name, is, that the Greeks did not call her *Μητέρα τοῦ Θεοῦ*, until Leo the Great, and other Latin authors after him, translating "Theotocus," *Dei genitrix*, and *Dei-para*, those Latin names were rendered back into Greek, *Θεοῦ Μητέρα*: and thus, at last, they both called her, plainly, *Mother of God*.

But it is not correct to say of the faithful Syrians, that they deny that the Son of God assumed a soul and a body in the Virgin's womb. M. Dubois may think this the inevitable consequence of their refusing to call her "Mother of God:" if so, he must assume that the Soul of Christ was His Divinity, which every Protestant agrees with the Syrians in denying. They receive the Athanasian Creed, without its damnatory clauses; and, accordingly, hold, with us, that Christ was both "perfect God, and perfect Man;" "God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the world: and Man, of the Substance of His Mother, born in the world." The Virgin was the parent of His Manhood only, which consisted of "a reasonable soul, and human



flesh." To assert the contrary, and maintain that she was the Mother of God, is to convert "the Godhead into flesh," and involves one or the other of these heretical conclusions—either that *the Virgin Mary was a divine being*, or that *Jesus Christ was not divine*. For, since He could not, in the natural order of things, derive from His Mother a nature which she did not possess, if she were the parent of his Divinity as well as Humanity, she herself must have been divine previous to her conception of Him. On the other hand, if she were not divine, and He possessed no nature but what He derived from her, He cannot be God.

But I shall not discuss this question more fully; my object being merely to remark, that the Abbé Dubois, when—in a Letter to an English Clergyman, and he a Dignitary* of our Church—objecting against the Syrian Christians that they denied to the Virgin the title of "Mother of God," ought to have recollected, that, instead of rejecting this as an heretical tenet, or denouncing the Syrians for holding it, we hail it as a point of orthodoxy on which we are agreed.

"Behold the Nestorians in Travancore!"

* The Archdeacon of Bombay.



he exclaims. "Interrogate them; ask them for an account of their success in the work of Proselytism in these modern times? Ask them, Whether they are gaining ground? and, Whether the interests of their ancient Mode of Worship are improving? They will reply, that so far from this being the case, their Congregations, once so flourishing, and amounting (according to Gibbon's account) to 200,000 souls, are now reduced to less than an eighth of this number, and are daily diminishing." (pp. 25, 26.)

They would reply no such thing!

When the first Missionaries from Syria arrived in India, (whether in the Fifth Century, or at what precise period cannot be very accurately ascertained,) they succeeded in establishing the Christian Religion to a wide extent, converting Hindoos of the highest castes, Nairs, and even Brahmins, to their Faith*. La Croze informs us, that, in his day, the Diocese of the Syrian Bishop contained more than One Thousand Five Hundred Churches, and as many Towns and Villages. It has already been shewn what privileges they then enjoyed, and how

* This is forcibly adduced by Lord Teignmouth, in argument to prove the practicability of converting the Hindoos to Christianity.—*Considerations*, p. 24.



high a character they maintained among the Heathen : also, how greatly they have fallen, and to what causes their decline is to be attributed. In the state of ignorance and dejection in which Drs. Kerr and Buchanan found them, it required all the efforts and perseverance of the Bishop and Catanars to protect their flocks against the subtlety and violence of the Jesuits and Carmelites. Not content with despoiling them of every vestige of civil or ecclesiastical liberty, Menezes, and others, robbed them of their most valuable books, and committed all they found to the flames. Thus did they deprive their helpless victims of the possibility of cultivating their minds : and is it not too much for a Jesuit now to exult over their fallen state !

Having shewn, that when the Abbé Du-bois wrote this, the temporal circumstances of the Syrians were improving, I now proceed to prove the same of their Ecclesiastical affairs. The fostering hand of a British Officer, another Cornelius, (Lieut.-Col. Munro,) was endeavouring to raise them from that state of depression to which the Roman-Catholics had reduced them. Amidst all their errors, they had for centuries defended their Altars and their Creed against Papal aggression ; and that, too, with a spirit that



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commands the admiration, and under sufferings that move the sympathies, of every free people. And, before the Abbé Dubois had so committed himself, *in the year 1823*, as to *publish* this erroneous statement, he ought to have acknowledged, that a liberal, a charitable, a Christian Nation, had, for years, taken a lively interest in their affairs, and already done much to raise them from the dust.

But he speaks from "*such information as he possesses*:" he has "*been assured*" of such and such things. It seems, then, that *he* also, notwithstanding his invectives against "a Reverend Gentleman" for doing (as he asserts) the same thing, can fill his pages with "inaccuracies, exaggerations, and misrepresentations" (p. 202.), and, upon such questionable authority, impugn the statements of a man like the late Dr. Buchanan.

But to proceed—

Lieut.-Colonel Munro, finding, within the sphere of his influence, such an interesting race of people as the Syrian Christians, like a judicious and a Christian Statesman, saw the policy, acknowledged the duty, and valued the privilege, of endeavouring to ameliorate their condition. This could not be effected without much toil and perseverance :



but no impediments were suffered to defeat the plans, or check the operations, of this Philanthropist. "I have afforded," he says, in the Address already quoted, "since my first arrival in Travancore, the most decided protection to all classes of the Christians, and in particular to the Syrians. I experienced, however, some difficulty, for a time, in improving the condition of the Syrian Christians, in consequence of internal dissensions among themselves." These he proceeds to describe; but they need not be here repeated. He then adds, "The death of the Bishop, and the elevation of the Ramban to his office, removed some of the impediments that had opposed the measures which appeared to be requisite for the general amelioration of the Syrian Community." "But the assistance of intermediate agents was essentially necessary to the success of those measures; for the Syrians themselves were lamentably deficient, in knowledge, energy, and ability."

Colonel Munro applied to the Madras Corresponding Committee of the Church Missionary Society, to send as many Missionaries as could be spared, to assist in the execution of his designs. Accordingly, in 1816, the Rev. T. Norton was sent to Tra-



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vancore, and stationed at Allepie, a large town on the Malabar Coast, and in the vicinity of the Syrians. In November of the same year he was joined by the Rev. B. Bailey, another Missionary from the same Society. Mr. Norton paid the Syrians as much attention as he conveniently could; but the distance of his Station from their Bishop's residence, and other Missionary duties demanding his attention, prevented his devoting himself to them so exclusively as was necessary to render them effective assistance. It was therefore thought adviseable to remove Mr. Bailey to their principal Station; and, accordingly, in the beginning of 1817, he took up his abode at Cotym.

In the autumn of 1818, Mr. Bailey was joined by the Rev. Joseph Fenn; and in the following year, by the Rev. Henry Baker; both Missionaries of the same Society.

In their joint Report of the same year, they write—

“The Mission at Cotym is very extensive and important: it is immediately connected with a body of 50,000 or 60,000 professed Christians; and has attracted the notice of the Government and Natives. The extreme limits of the Syrian Churches, from south to north, are distant from each other more than



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150 English miles : from east to west, at least thirty. They have not, till the last few years, enjoyed any kind of protection ; and, consequently, those who used to oppress them are jealous of their present advantages, and in innumerable ways distressing them. The presence of an European puts an immediate stop to these disorders. At Cotym is a celebrated Brahminical College : at a little distance is another, lately established, for the cultivation of the Sanscrit Language. How important is such a Station ! and how necessary such help, as may give energy to our proceedings !”

“ It is, in all cases, necessary to the prosperity of any plans, that there should be an entire union among those concerned, both in their formation and their execution ; but it is of pre-eminent importance in this Mission. The best method of ensuring caution, and, at the same time, progress, will be, by watching and taking advantage of the gradual enlargement of the views of the Metropolitan, and of the Clergy more immediately surrounding him. Hence the absolute necessity, that all, directing their efforts to the reformation of this Church, should reside together, and be in the habits of daily intercourse with the Metropolitan and his attending Clergy*.”

* See Twentieth Report of Church Miss. Society, pp. 167, 168.



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Such were their views of the importance of their undertaking ; and their arrangements for the accomplishing of their designs were in accordance with the judicious sentiments here expressed.

I shall now give a summary view of the State of the Mission at the close of 1820 ; when I visited the Missionaries, at the request of the Madras Corresponding Committee.

Mr. Bailey, the Senior Missionary, was engaged in translating the New Testament into Malayalim. He also performed Divine Service, every Sabbath, in the same language ; and was, besides, employed with his Brethren in the general objects of the Mission.

To this Translation I have already alluded. This was one of the first objects to which Colonel Munro wished him to direct his attention. In January 1819, that officer wrote—

“ The Translation of the Bible is a work of the first importance, and also of great difficulty. The Version of the Four Gospels printed at Bombay is now found, as our Missionaries advance in the language of Malayalim, to be so very bad in every respect, in fidelity, meaning, and language, as to be unfit for use ; and the Version of the whole



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Scriptures, lately made at the College, by the Catanars, from Syriac into Malayalim, is equally bad. Mr. Bailey, whose proficiency in Malayalim is great, is obliged to make a complete Version of the whole, resembling, indeed, a New Version, more than a Revision; and this work must necessarily be slow*.”

When I was with Mr. Bailey, he had made considerable progress in the Translation, considering the short time he had been employed upon it. He was assisted by some of the most respectable Catanars, Nairs, and even a Learned Brahmin; and his Version, as far as he had then advanced with it, was approved by the best Malayalim Scholars.

Mr. Bailey had translated a great part of the English Liturgy, also, into Malayalim: and I had the pleasure of being present, when he performed Divine Service, in that language, in an old Syrian Church, which was nearly filled with Syrians. A good proportion of Catanars were present; and the person who officiated as Clerk, reading the Responses, and even the Lessons, was the Malpan (Syrian Professor in the College), whom I had seen, on the morning of the same day, perform the office of Priest in the College Chapel.

* See Twentieth Report of the Church Miss. Society, p. 170.



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On expressing my surprise at his taking so humble a station, I was informed, that he so admired our Liturgy, that he was proud of the honour of taking any part in the Service. It was highly gratifying; and proved how soon the prudent and conciliatory conduct of the Missionaries had won the confidence of both Priests and Laity, to see them thus voluntarily, and contrary to the long-established custom, joining in Public prayer in *the vulgar tongue*, and without the slightest recognition of the Virgin Mary's supposed mediatorial influence.

Mr. Fenn, the Second Missionary, had charge of the College.

This Institution was *founded*, I believe I may be permitted to say, by Lieutenant-Colonel Munro. It was built in 1815, by the sanction of her Highness the Rannee of Travancore, who contributed liberally towards its erection; and gave, as already noticed, in perpetuity, an endowment of land, and grants of money, equal to the support of Fifty Students.

In reference to the beneficial results to be anticipated from the College, Colonel Munro wrote, in 1819—"It is only by an efficient course of instruction at the College, that a respectable body of Native Clergy can be procured for the Service of the Syrian



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Churches, and for the propagation of Christianity among the Heathen.”

Besides the Superintending Missionary, the College is provided with Two Syriac Professors (Malpans); a Hebrew Professor (Moses Sarphati, a liberally-minded Jew from Cochin); Two Native Teachers of Sanscrit; and an English Teacher and Assistant.

When I was at Cotym, there were about Forty Students in the College, whom I examined: and though the Institution was then in its infancy, the progress of several of the Boys was highly creditable to themselves and their Teachers.

I shall here give an Abstract of the last Report of the College—

There were then Fifty Students; twelve of whom had passed through the initiatory ordinations. One of them was so far advanced in his knowledge of the English Language as to read some of our Poetry. He had made great progress in Latin also, and was then beginning Virgil: he had, likewise, commenced the study of Hebrew.

In the Latin Class were Thirteen Students.

The whole were studying English and Syriac, and several of them Sanscrit.

In reference to their behaviour, abilities, and the hopes they encourage the Missionaries to entertain, those Gentlemen write—



“The conduct of the Students is remarkably good. They behave with the greatest respect; while they are entirely free from all servility. Their natural dispositions, their desire of learning, their ability and application, are not at all inferior to what is found among Youths in Europe. If present hopes do not prove fallacious, in less than ten years, with the assistance now sought, and the Blessing of God, there may be 50 or 100 Learned Priests, belonging to this venerable Church, nourishing their own flocks, and spreading the triumphs of the Gospel around them*.”

The following Extract, from the same Report, will shew the reputation which the College has, in so short a time, attained among these interesting people.—“The whole of the Syrian Population look to the College as the eye of their body, and make it their boast; and the exertions of some of the present Students will, ere long, justify this feeling.”

Not long after the organization of the College, the Missionaries projected the establishment of Three Seminaries, upon the plan of Free Grammar-Schools in England—one for the Central; a second for the Northern; and a third for the Southern Division of the

* See XXIIIrd Report of the Church Missionary Society, p.130.



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Diocese. The most promising Youths in these Schools are to be selected for the College, and translated thither as vacancies occur. The Central School was erecting at Cotym when I was there. It has now been completed some time; and contained Thirty-nine Scholars, at the date of the last Report.

The Third Missionary, Mr. Baker, superintends the *Parochial* School Department. Previous to the arrival of the Missionaries, the Syrians were almost without Schools for Children designed for secular occupations; but those Gentlemen soon resolved to supply this great desideratum; and the latest account states the number at Thirty-seven, containing 921 Scholars. There were yet about Fifteen Parishes unprovided with Schools; but several of them are, I have no doubt, by this time supplied.

Such were the Seminaries, and such the progress of Education to, among the Syrians, when M. Dubois published the Letter, in which he asserts, "they have no Houses of Education, no Teachers, no Professors; but only some Schools, kept by their ignorant Priests, for the purpose of teaching persons, destined to the Ecclesiastic Profession, to read this language"—the Syriac. (p. 23.)



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But, though the Missionaries, for the better accomplishing of their common object—viz. the amelioration of the whole Syrian Community—have made this division of labour, yet, in the translating of Religious Tracts and other Elementary Works, in holding intercourse with the people, in visiting the Churches in the interior, and, in a word, in all the general affairs of the Mission, they act in concert with each other.

It was one of Colonel Munro's original plans, to establish a Printing-press at Cotym. This is now accomplished ; and the Board of Superintendence for the College of Fort St. George have kindly permitted a fount of Malayalim Types to be cast from their matrices, for the use of this Press*. It is needless to observe how much more efficient this will render the Mission.

It is not the least encouraging circumstance, that the Metropolitan is associated with the Missionaries, in Council and operation. He has apartments in the College;

* It is worthy of remark, in proof of the respectability of the Syrian College, and of the approbation with which the Missionaries' proceedings are regarded, that the College of Fort St. George has presented to the College of Cotym a Copy of each of its Publications ; with an intimation from the Board of Superintendance, of their intention to present to that Institution a Copy of every Publication which may hereafter issue from their Press. (See XXIII^d Report of the Church Missionary Society, p. 242.)



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where they meet him every week, upon the business of the Mission. He is acquainted with all that is passing; and nothing is done without his concurrence. A report to the contrary was circulated in India about three years ago. It was said that the Missionaries were interfering with the Syrians, in opposition to their own Metropolitan's wish. This having reached the ears of the late Bishop of Calcutta, that lamented Prelate, when returning from the last Visitation he held at Bombay, stopped at Cochin, and sent for the Syrian Bishop, in order to ascertain whether or no it were the fact: and, upon the Metropolitan's declaring that there was no truth in the report, and that the Missionaries were labouring with good effect and in perfect harmony with himself and his Clergy, his Lordship expressed his satisfaction, and shortly after took his leave.

Colonel Munro writes, in the Address already noticed: "In several conferences which I had with the Bishop and Syrian Clergy, during a visit which I made to Cotym in December last, they expressed, with warmth, their satisfaction and gratitude, at the course of measures adopted to enlighten and restore the Syrian Church." They, and the Bishop in particular, expressed the same



to myself: and the Syriac Letter* which they sent by me to the Church Missionary Society conveys an official and grateful acknowledgment for the many favours they had received.

I was favoured with several interviews with the Syrian Bishop; and can with truth say, that he appeared to be a man of genuine piety, sound judgment, and humility; devoted to his people and his God; and in every respect qualified for the important duties of his station. The Missionaries write of him—"The Metropolitan is a man deserving of all honour; not only from his rank, but from his character: he is a wise man, and an humble man. He is the head, not only of the Syrian Church, but of the Mission. Nothing takes place within the Mission without acquainting him with it; nor is any thing allowed, to which he at all objects."—"The Metropolitan's affection and respect for us increase. Mar Philoxenus †, who lives an hundred miles to the North, ends all his Letters to our friend Mar Dionysius at Cotym, 'Let no abatement of the regard of the Sahibs ‡ at Cotym befall us ||.' "

* An English Translation of this Letter was published in the Missionary Register for October 1822. pp. 431, 432.

† The retired Syrian Bishop.

‡ Gentlemen.

See XXIId Report of the Church Missionary Society, p. 153.



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Thus, by the happy combination of wisdom, prudence, and perseverance, the Missionaries have accomplished, in six years, what the duplicity and violence of the Roman-Catholics, though exerted for centuries, could never have effected. They have ingratiated themselves with the Metropolitans, Malpans, Clergy, and the whole body of Syrians. Their conciliatory, consistent, and truly Christian conduct has impressed all ranks with the conviction, that they are come amongst them for no other purpose, but to improve their condition, and promote their present and future happiness. Their counsel and example have quickened the long-torpid spirits of many, and called them forth actually to *co-operate* with them in the prosecution of their work. They have given them several useful and religious works, in their own language; and the Translation of the Scriptures is advancing. They have prevailed upon parents to send their sons to a distance from home (a thing which before they were scarcely known to do), to be educated at the College, *under the care of foreigners*. They have collected already fifty promising Youths (as many as the College can receive), and are educating them, *according to the European mode of instruction*, for the Sacred Work



of the Ministry. They have established a System of Education for all ranks, nearly throughout the whole of the Diocese; and even persuaded some of the Syrians, poor and penurious as they found them, to contribute towards the support of the Schools. They have exercised amongst them, and taught them to admire, a purer mode of worship than their own; and that without making one observation, upon the vanity of the superstitions of their Church, that could wound their feelings.

Let this conduct be contrasted with that of the Jesuits towards this interesting people: and let these facts speak in reply to the Abbé Dubois' assertion, that all the success the Missionaries had to boast of among them was, the having prevailed upon many of their Priests to marry.

But he is greatly mistaken, if he think that they "boast of" even this unexampled success. Promising as appearances are, and happily as every thing concurs to promote their object, they attribute all to the superintending Providence of the Almighty. In their weekly consultations, previous to entering upon business, they unite in prayer to God, for wisdom and direction: in the same spirit of dependence upon Divine Aid, they



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prosecute all their labours: and sure I am, that, so far from "boasting of" what they have done, they render the glory to Him, to whom only it is due.

SECTION VI.

THE DUTY AND POLICY OF PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA; AND THE NECESSITY OF IMPROVING THE CHARACTER OF THE SERVANTS OF GOVERNMENT, BOTH EUROPEAN AND NATIVE.

IT has long been customary, in certain quarters, to decry all Missionaries in the East, and to predict the downfall of our Indian Empire, as the inevitable result of their proceedings. And, though the experience of more than twenty years has proved that such apprehensions are without foundation (*the extension and increasing stability of our Eastern Dominion having more than kept pace with the progress of Missionary Exertion*), yet even now there are not wanting individuals, who, upon every shadow of a pretext, step forward to repeat assertions, which have been often confuted, and to retail prophecies, which the



actual issue of the measures upon which they are founded have long since proved fallacious.

The Abbé Dubois is one of this number. He also sounds his note of alarm upon the question; though he must know it to be as "*stale a subject*" as that of burning the Hindoo Widows upon the Funeral Pile.

I also beg leave to sound an alarm—though with a very different trumpet. Instead of predicting the ruin of the Honourable the East-India Company's dominions, as the consequence of Missionary undertakings, I hesitate not to assert, that it were better to abandon all their Eastern acquisitions, than to discourage the propagation of Christianity; or even to stand neuter, and use no means to promote that object, throughout their extensive Empire. A fearful load of responsibility rests upon them! The history of all Nations proves, that every event is under the Almighty's controul. By Him "*Nations and Empires rise and fall, flourish and decay.*" The triumphs and defeats of armies, unless viewed in connection with the sovereign purposes of God, are of less moment, in His sight, and in that of every wise and good man, than the descent and evaporation of the morning-dew. But when regarded as



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links in that chain of events upon which the stupendous designs of Jehovah are suspended, they assume an importance, with which no other consideration can invest them. We may instance the successive rise and fall of the Chaldean, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman Monarchies; compared with the Sacred Prediction, and actual accomplishment of designs, which were fulfilled, without the intention, or even knowledge, of the immediate agents employed, by a wise and all-controlling Providence, to carry them into execution! Let us instance, also, the universal success of the Roman arms in the reign of Augustus, so evidently intended to tranquillize the world, and prepare it for the Advent of the Prince of Peace!

Every one conversant with the history of the British Empire in India will know, that the acquisition of territory has long ceased to be the object (if indeed it ever were the object) of the English in waging war with the Native Powers. Self-defence alone seems to have called them into the field, against the French, Hyder, Tippoo, and other formidable enemies. At the close of the last Marhatta War, the Marquis of Hastings publicly and distinctly avowed thus much, in reference to that campaign: and I know not of a single



instance upon record, wherein the British have taken up arms for the purpose of molesting an unoffending Prince, however insignificant and defenceless, much less of despoiling him of his dominions. Sir John Malcolm*, speaking of the extension of the British Empire in India, says, "We have been reluctantly compelled, by events far beyond our power to controul, to assume the duties of Lord-paramount of that great Continent." "Increase of territory will, in spite of all our efforts, come too rapidly. The cause which has compelled, and will continue, beyond all others, to compel us to increase our dominion, lies deep in the character of our power†." This he proceeds to explain: but it shall suffice here to remark, that God has often seemed to permit the Wicked Spirit (as in Ahab's case, 2 Chron. xviii. 18—22.) to inspire the Counsellors of Native Princes with the spirit of infatuation which has urged them on to provoke hostilities against themselves, until the British have had no alternative, but to deprive them of all power in future to disturb their peace. In this way has the major part of our Indian Territory been transferred to our

* *Memoir of Central India*, vol. II. p. 264.

† *Idem*, pp. 207, 268.



hands, contrary to our expectations, and often against our wish.

For what purpose, I ask, has the Almighty conferred upon a Company of British Merchants a more extensive dominion than any earthly Monarch governs? Can it be for their personal aggrandizement?—to enrich our nation, and indulge us with exotic luxuries? No; there is not the shadow of a reason to conclude that His object is different from what it has generally been, in permitting one nation to triumph over another. That object is, to prepare a way for the Ambassadors of Peace, and to extend the boundaries and blessings of His Kingdom. To deny this, or to suppose that the case of the British Power in India forms an exception to the Almighty's general design, is to provoke Him to subvert that mighty Empire. We glory in the achievements of our arms: but soon will their splendour be tarnished, soon shall our Indian Possessions be taken from us, and given to a Nation more zealous for the honour of our God, unless we inscribe on our banners, "*Holiness to the Lord,*" and follow up our successes by rendering them subservient to the promotion of His glory in the East.

How vast then, how tremendous, the responsibility of our Indian Government! I



tremble for the mortal that shall presume to endeavour, either to extenuate its magnitude, or, by word or action, to divert the Rulers of our Eastern Empire from discharging that debt which they owe to *The Lord of Hosts!* He has given them an opportunity to acquire a more splendid renown than ever rewarded the hero of the field. If they avail themselves of it, by diffusing the light of Revelation wherever they bear sway, then, when hereafter they shall see countless myriads flocking from the East to meet the Ransomed from the West, they themselves will enter with the throng into the realms of unfading glory. But, if they use no means to promote this object, still it shall be accomplished—for it is the Almighty's purpose: and He hath declared, "I will work; and who shall let it (turn it back)?" "My counsel shall stand; and I will do all My pleasure." No hostility or inactivity of man shall prevent the achievement of the Redeemer's triumphs in the East: and if those, who are instrumental in effecting those conquests, shall find their future joys proportionably increased, the remorse of every opponent to the work, when he shall witness its completion, can neither be described nor conceived!

Often has it been objected, that the propa-



gation of Christianity in India is a measure fraught with imminent danger to our Eastern Possessions. Suppose, for the sake of argument, we allow the possibility of the thing: yet will any man, of right understanding, and impressed with a moderate degree of reverence for the authority and holiness of the Supreme Being, urge this as a sufficient reason for the omission of so sacred, so obvious a duty? Shall secular interest be allowed to stand in competition with the performance of that duty? No!—Will not such an one say, Let our Indian Empire go to its natural owners, to any one, rather than retain it on condition that we withhold therefrom the Light of Revelation, and thereby incur the Almighty's displeasure!—What is the wealth of the Indies, without the favour of God?—we should soon find it more worthless than dross. If, in order to preserve our Eastern Dominions, we deny to the millions of our Indian Subjects, that “Light” which was revealed for *the express purpose of enlightening the Gentiles*—the God who has bestowed upon us the vast Continent of Hindoostan, may soon be provoked to recall that costly acquisition.

An able officer, already named, (Sir John Malcolm) argues, upon principles not dissi-



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milar, for the diffusion of "knowledge and truth" throughout our Indian Possessions. He says, at the conclusion of the work above quoted—"The relation of the Natives of India to the English is that of a conquered people to its conquerors. Since we have obtained sovereignty over them, we have greatly ameliorated their condition; and all rational means have been employed to promote their happiness, and to secure to them the benefits of good government. By premature efforts to accelerate the progress of the blessings it is our hope to impart, we shall not only hasten our own downfall, but replunge the Natives of India into a state of greater anarchy and misery than that from which we relieved them. Let us, therefore, calmly proceed in a course of gradual improvement; and when our rule ceases—for cease it must (though probably at a remote period), as the natural consequence of our success in the diffusion of knowledge!—we shall, as a Nation, have the proud boast, that we have preferred the civilization to the continued subjection of India. When our power is gone, our name will be revered; for we shall leave a Moral Monument, more noble and imperishable than the hand of man ever constructed!"



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This liberality of sentiment is worthy of the man, and of the subject which he advocates : and all that I require is, the application of the principle to the Cause for which I plead. If the enlightening of the Native Mind, with the knowledge of European Literature, is a duty paramount to every personal or political consideration, and should make us rise above every sordid calculation of secular interest—and if it be more honourable to retain possession of India for a few years, while employing every means to improve the mind and condition of the Natives, than to keep them for treble the space of any given period in a state of *mental* darkness as well as corporal subjection—we have only to consider the vast superiority of Christian Knowledge over every human science or natural acquirement—and also the unadulterated, the imperishable enjoyments to which it leads—in order to be convinced how unworthy it is of the man, who has any pretensions to the character and hopes of a Christian, to deny the inestimable blessings of our Religion to the Natives of India, upon the plea, that it will endanger our dominion over them, and our possession of their land.

But while I concede, *ex animo*, that it is incumbent upon us to instruct the Natives of



the East in the arts and sciences of the West, notwithstanding the danger to our Indian Empire which Sir John Malcolm apprehends from their improvement* ; yet ought it not to be maturely considered, how that effect of their advancement in knowledge can be best counteracted? The Ethics of a Socrates or a Seneca can never curb the natural freedom of the spirits that have nothing better to restrain them. But if you call in the aid of Christianity, you apply a remedy, and the only effectual one, to obviate the evil you dread. To impart to your Indian Subjects merely secular knowledge, *may be* to supply them with weapons against yourselves. Certainly the most dependence can be placed upon their allegiance, after they shall become better instructed, when they are brought also under the influence of the precepts and principles of the Gospel.

If this reasoning be correct, we see that Christianity, instead of endangering our Empire in the East, will tend to increase its sta-

* Though I reason upon the supposition that this effect *may* result from the mental improvement of the Natives, yet I think it questionable. When their minds are more enlarged than they are at present, we may reasonably anticipate, that they will be better able to appreciate the nature and advantages of our government : and when that shall be the case, we may expect them to yield us a *willing* obedience.



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bility. So far then from its being *impolitic* to promote its diffusion through that Pagan Land, I am prepared to maintain, that it is the most politic measure that could be adopted. In this assertion I am supported by two authorities, which few will refuse to admit. The first is that of Lord Teignmouth, “who, after serving the Company for above five-and-twenty years, in various subordinate offices—and after having been associated, for the last three or four of them, with Lord Cornwallis in the Supreme Council—when some changes of extreme importance were to be made in the East-India Company’s system, was, without recommendation or interest, selected, solely on the ground of his high integrity, tried abilities, and *perfect acquaintance with East-India affairs*, to fill the high office of Governor-General of Bengal. A few years ago, that Nobleman published to the world his sentiments on this subject; and distinctly declared his strong and clear persuasion, that it was not only practicable, but expedient, on grounds of political interest, as well as just and right on the principles of Religion and Humanity, to communicate, prudently and discreetly, to the Natives of India, the knowledge of Christianity; and thereby, through the Divine Blessing, to improve their



wretched state in this world, as well as to open to their view the prospect of eternal happiness*.

Such are that Nobleman's general sentiments upon the subject of evangelizing India. His view of the question, upon which I now more particularly quote his authority, I shall transcribe from his own Pamphlet.

“Major Scott Waring asks if it can be possible ‘that thirty thousand British subjects could retain an Empire containing fifty millions of people, if the Christian Religion was universal in India?’ The question will not at this time be deemed to require a solution: and on his principles the case will never occur. But it is more pertinent to ask, Whether the British Dominion in India will not acquire additional solidity by the accession of a body of Natives united to us by the bond of a common Faith? Major Scott Waring foresees no danger in the operation of bigotry, superstition, and prejudice; which, whilst they exist in their present force, must oppose a bar to a cordial union between the Natives of India and their European Rulers. I see the subject in a different light; and, without wishing to circumscribe the limits of that toleration which has hitherto been adopted, feel the necessity of introducing a

* Christian Observer, Vol. XII. pp. 266, 267.

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principle of counteraction and melioration, by implanting amongst them the doctrines of Christianity*.”

Without comment upon this extract, I will merely subjoin the Query of the Writer in the *Christian Observer*, already cited: “Shall Lord Teignmouth’s judgment of East-India affairs, so highly and universally respected in every other particular, be called in question in this instance only?”

My other authority is, that of Lieutenant-Colonel Munro, whose talents and assiduity, when young in the Service, attracted the notice of Government, and subsequently marked him out as a fit person to be entrusted with the responsible and important situation of Resident of Travancore. In the Address to the Madras Government, so frequently noticed in these pages—by which it will be seen what a comprehensive view he took of the subject relative to the improvement of the Natives of India, and with what discretion and perseverance he projected and executed plans for their amelioration—he says:

“The facts which I have described seem to authorise the conclusion—a conclusion, which, I am convinced, will be further confirmed the more the subject is examined and studied—that whatever impediments may be

* “*Considerations*” &c. pp. 44, 45.



opposed to the progress of Christianity, will proceed from political, and not from religious jealousy. They who cherish sentiments of hostility against the British Power; and hopes of its instability, will, of course, decry any measures calculated to unite the interest of a body of the people with its permanency. That power is exposed to greater danger from secret conspiracy, than from open resistance; and this danger must increase with the extension of the British Possessions, which augments the disproportion, in numbers already so immense, between the Rulers and the Subjects. But, in establishing a body of Native Subjects connected with the mass of the people by a community of language, occupations and pursuits, and united to the British Government by the stronger ties of Religion and mutual safety, ample means would be acquired of procuring information of the proceedings of the people, and of all machinations against the British Power. In the course of time, still greater advantages would arise; and the support of a respectable body of Christian Subjects would contribute to strengthen the British Power, in those junctures of commotion and difficulty, which must be expected to occur in a country like India, that has been in a state of revolution for ages. The introduction of



Christianity, in some of the Provinces, may be attended with delays ; but, in Travancore and Cochin, there is already a numerous body of Christian Inhabitants, who, with moderate assistance and encouragement from the British Government, will firmly attach themselves to its interests, and may prove of material service in supporting its power."

If there be still a doubt on the Reader's mind, as to the policy or safety of Government countenancing the propagation of Christianity in India, let him look at the Island of Ceylon, where the experiment has actually been made. The Dutch Government, from their first possession of that island, and subsequently the British Government, have openly countenanced Missionaries, and furthered their designs for the Religious improvement of the Natives. That Colony "has been highly favoured, in the beneficent views of persons in authority. A deserved testimony is borne on this subject, in the following passage of the Tenth Report of the Colombo Bible Society*"—

"It is not solely to the number of Copies of the Scriptures which the Committee have been enabled to circulate, important as that object undoubtedly is, that the advantages

* Missionary Register for January 1824, p. 64.



arising from an institution of this nature are to be estimated. Much, very much, is to be expected from the beneficial influence of example. The Natives of this Colony have now, for a long course of years, beheld the Governor of the Island, and all the principal Officers of the Government, however various and dissimilar may be their general habits and pursuits, steadily combined together in cordial and zealous co-operation for the advancement of one object, obviously disinterested on their part, and solely intended to promote the welfare of the people."

The popularity of several Gentlemen who have been most active in these proceedings, and the absence of the faintest appearance of dissatisfaction on the part of the Natives, furnish an undeniable proof of the safety with which a similar countenance might be afforded to the promulgation of Christianity upon the Indian Continent.

I had been led to believe that Sir John Malcolm opposed the introduction of Christianity into our Indian Empire, and took up his "Memoir of Central India" under that impression. But I find nothing in that interesting work which can be construed into hostility against Missionary pursuits, or that bears at all upon the general question of evangelizing the East. I should have been



surprised and pained to have found this intelligent Officer lending the authority of his respectable name in support of the outcry vociferated against this majestic and momentous undertaking. If I understand him—and I have taken pains to do so—he admits, and even enforces, the duty of instructing and ameliorating the Natives. It is upon the measure, to be adopted for *this* purpose, that he recommends *caution* and *patience*; and I know not the Missionary in India that would not unite with him in the suggestion. It is worthy of observation, also, that his remarks even on Education are not intended to apply to the whole of our Eastern Dominions—not to the Presidencies and their neighbourhood, nor to the “towns and provinces long under the British Government,” but to newly-conquered countries. “Nothing could be more dangerous,” he says, “at the present moment, than the extension of this plan of Education into countries just emerging from anarchy; and the bad impression made upon ignorant and agitated minds, by the misrepresentations of our intentions in such a measure, would far exceed any good that could be effected by its establishment. These sentiments led to the rejection of a proposition *

10 * Sir John here subjoins the following Note.—“A proposition for introducing Schools was made to the Hon. Mr. Elphinstone, when



made by pious and excellent men for its immediate introduction over our late Conquests; and the same caution led to very strict rules being laid down to prevent any European Merchants or Adventurers settling in Central India, or having any money concerns with its inhabitants."

There is nothing in this Extract (and I find no stronger language upon the subject in the work from which it is transcribed) that can justify the conclusion, that the writer has enlisted himself on the side of those who are opposed to Missionary Proceedings in the East. Instead of applying to the Advocates of the Cause, as is sometimes done, contemptuous epithets, he speaks of them in respectful terms, as "pious and excellent men;" and explains his reasons for rejecting their proposition, to arise, not from any hostile feelings towards them or their object, but from that caution which he thought it necessary to observe in reference to all other Europeans not immediately in the service of Government.

The same author has forcibly shewn the when Commissioner of the Poona Territories; as well as to me, when in charge of Central India. An answer, grounded on the reasons that have been stated, was given, by both, for rejecting its adoption."



necessity of peace throughout the British Empire in the East, in order to preserve its stability. The propriety of the measures which he suggests for the purpose, on their adaptation to the end in view, I presume not, nor does it fall within my province, to discuss. One additional expedient, however, I may be permitted to mention, in consistency with the design of the present work; viz. The introduction of Christianity. No policy can be compared with this! No enactments, no concessions, no judicial or financial arrangements, can so tranquillize the minds of men, as the genial influence of our Holy Religion. Peace is its appropriate characteristic. It reveals how peace was effected between God and apostate Man, by the Atonement offered on the Cross. It calms the fears of the guilty conscience, and reduces the turbulent passions of the soul to peace. When thus received into the heart, it will unite all the members of the body politic, to their Rulers and to each other, in one bond of amity and love. Visionary as these anticipations may appear to the partial observer, they are the very predictions of Holy Writ. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the top of the mountains,



and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob! and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more:" (Isa. ii. 2—4.)

"Come! behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth! He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: He burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still; and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the Heathen; I will be exalted in the earth:" (Ps. xlvi. 8—10.)

Every Christian, who has felt the power of Religion in his own heart, will declare, that such must be the universal effect of its diffusion through the world. And hence it is obvious, that there can be no sounder policy than to promote its advancement in the East.

That Sir John Malcolm has not noticed



this, in his enumeration of the measures calculated to preserve the tranquillity of India, cannot be fairly construed even into indifference, much less hostility, to this great subject. It may, and, probably, ought to be attributed to the same cause which I assign for not entering into the *political* view of the question—it did not fall within his province.

But while I argue thus for the policy of propagating Christianity in the East, I must not be understood to recommend the Government to take an active part in the work. Not because I think, with the Abbé Dubois, that it would “prove detrimental to” the Cause, “by increasing the jealousy and distrust of the Natives” (p. 48); but because I am persuaded that it would occasion the Church to be crowded with multitudes who would prove a disgrace to our Religion. When, in the reign of Constantine, Christianity was first made the Religion of the State, such was precisely the effect produced. The unassuming, the self-denying Genius of the Gospel fled before the Spirits of ambition and cupidity, which now possessed the Church. “External piety flourished; Monastic Societies in particular places were also growing; but faith, love, heavenly-mindedness, appear very rare: yet among the poor and obscure Chris-



tians, I hope," says Milner, "there was far more Godliness, than could be seen at Courts, and among Bishops and persons of eminence. The doctrine of Real Conversion was very much lost, or External Baptism was placed in its stead; and the true doctrine of Justification by Faith, and the true practical use of a Crucified Saviour for troubled consciences, were scarce to be seen at this time. There was much outward Religion, but this could not make men Saints in heart and life." "True humility and charity were now little known in the Christian World, while Superstition and Self-righteousness were making vigorous shoots; and the real Gospel of Christ was hidden from men who professed it*."

Notwithstanding the confident assertions of M. Dubois and others, respecting the invincibility of the Hindoos' attachment to their customs and superstitions, I will venture as confidently to predict, that the Church of Christ in the East will soon become as crowded, and as soon degenerate into this secular, heterodox, and vicious character, when the Natives shall find it conducive to their temporal welfare to embrace the Christian Religion. *They would flock by thousands to the*

* Church History, vol. II. p. 49.



standard of the Cross, if they found it the passport to wealth and distinction. Send me forth with an unlimited commission from the Ruling Powers, and, were it possible that I could undertake so impious a task, I would engage to return you as many Converts, with a large proportion of Holy Brahmins among them, as I had lucrative situations to confer at the Baptismal Font!! But it is not the object of *Protestant* Missionaries to extend the name of Christianity, without its spirit; and, therefore, they studiously withhold from the Natives every *secular* inducement to embrace our Holy Faith.

While, however, I do not propose to the East-India Company to engage in any direct measures for the Conversion of the Hindoos, there are yet two or three points deserving mature deliberation.

First: The Missionary may, in various ways, be assisted in his humble, laborious, and self-denying task, at little or no expense to Government. While he behaves with prudence, and refrains from interfering with Civil or Military Affairs, the Company's Servants might receive express orders to shew him that respect which they pay to each other. The Natives of India seldom pay much regard to an European from whom they have



nothing to expect, especially when they observe that he is neglected by his Countrymen. Consequently, when a Missionary is scowled upon by the Gentlemen at his Station, it tends to degrade him in the eyes of the Heathen, and impedes the influence which his character and exertions might otherwise command. Whatever opinions may be entertained of Missionary pursuits, and their probable results, the devoted men, who have embarked in the Cause, are deserving of honour from all ranks. They have forsaken all that is dear to man on earth; renounced every worldly prospect; literally presented themselves as *living* sacrifices to their God and Saviour; and that, with no one object in view, but to promote the present and future happiness of their fellow-men. Such characters are very undeserving of that contempt, with which I know they are sometimes regarded. Were their personal feelings only concerned, they would hardly thank me for speaking thus in their behalf: but it is their office, their situation among the Heathen, which requires this small tribute of respect: and when it is withhold from them, and impediments are unnecessarily thrown in their way, for no other purpose but to annoy them, it is calculated



to discourage them in their work, and to diminish their influence. It has been said, and the Abbé Dubois repeats the calumny (p. 176), that the interference of the Protestant Missionaries with the prejudices of the Hindoos has produced "irritation, opposition, and resistance." Why has he not given an instance in support of his assertion?—because the experience of upwards of a century, from the arrival of Ziegenbalg at Tranquebar, to the present moment, cannot furnish one! Of all European Residents in India, the *Protestant* Missionary is the truest friend to Government. The Soldier protects their frontiers, and preserves the internal tranquillity of the State; the Magistrate takes cognizance of individual transgressions of the Laws, and dispenses justice impartially to all; the Commercial Agent promotes industry among different classes of the Natives, and conducts and improves the commerce of the Empire; the Collector promotes the cultivation of the soil, and replenishes the Public Treasury: *but all these labour for reward.* The humble Missionary, *without any pecuniary remuneration from the Government,* devotes himself exclusively to the improvement of the Subjects of the Realm; and, in proportion as he succeeds, he accomplishes, or



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rather anticipates, much of the Public Servants' duties. The effect of his doctrines and precepts is, to preserve peace on earth, and thereby to supersede the use of arms: whilst all ranks, *learning* from him their duty to God and Man, and seeking, through his directions, Divine assistance to *perform* their duty, will leave to the Officers over the different Departments of the Service little more to do, than to gather in the fruit of his labours. And, above all, instead of holding the Natives in submission by constraint, he binds them (at least those of them who are converted by his means to Christianity) to their Rulers, by *an identity of interest*, and by *the bond of Christian Love*. Then is it too much to demand, for this useful class of Individuals, that attention which their character ought to command, and which the nature of their services so justly merits? I am not impugning the conduct of our Indian Rulers in this particular; and am persuaded that they would never sanction any marked and unmerited incivilities towards Missionaries: but surely it is not too much to hope that they will make known, throughout the Service, that it is their pleasure to have every respect shewn to Missionaries, so long as they do nothing to forfeit it.



It would greatly facilitate them in the prosecution of their work, were the Collectors instructed to furnish them with a piece of ground, on which to build their Schools and Churches, where they do not interfere with public buildings or private property.

When their Converts are persecuted by the Heathen—as I have known them, even to the deprivation of their property—it is but an act of justice in the Magistrate to inquire as patiently and impartially into *their* case, as that of the Heathen or Mahomedans. Government, doubtless, conclude that this is done: but there have been, and may be again, Europeans in the Service, who treat the Native Christians with contempt, and dismiss their complaints in a manner that appals them; gives their enemies occasion to triumph over them, and to repeat the vexatious and unjust persecutions; and leaves them without the hope of redress. This would, I have little doubt, be prevented, by the issuing of express orders, requiring that the same protection be afforded to the Christians as to every other class of Natives.

The Converts might, and ought, to have the same advantages as their Countrymen in the Public Service, where they are found to possess equal abilities. This would be



effected, by simply abolishing those Regulations which require, that all the highest Offices which Natives can hold, shall be filled by Mahomedans and Hindoos*. It is not just, and, perhaps, is not intended by the East-India Company, that the profession of Christianity alone should exclude a Native from situations of the first respectability: but such is the operation of the Regulations to which I refer; and, so long as they continue in force, they must be regarded as an impediment to Missionary Exertion.

The Second point for consideration is, The Establishment of Schools throughout the Company's Dominions, for the Education of their Servants in the English and Native Languages.

By this means, attention could be paid to their morals, and right principles inculcated. The bribery of the Upper Servants, the cruelty and extortion often of even the Peons, are notorious. This must make an impression on the Native Mind, greatly to the prejudice of Government; which is, of course, considered responsible for the acts of its Servants. It

* Extracts to this effect, from Regulations passed by the Governor in Council of Fort St. George, are given in Appendix B of the "Diary" of a Field-Officer of Cavalry.



answers little purpose to punish individual offenders: the evil must be eradicated. While the Native Servants are left to pick up their education as they can, what else is to be expected, but that they will make the most of their situations, without much scruple of conscience? But give them a proper education, and you fortify them, as much as lies in your power, against the temptations of office.

Sir John Malcolm recommends the encouragement of the Native Village Schools in Central India, as “the best means of commencing, if not completing, the introduction of knowledge amongst them, and thereby gradually ameliorating their condition.” I know not the character of *those* Schools; but with the Native Schools in South India I have some acquaintance; and will venture to say, that it will answer no good purpose to encourage them, while their present system is continued. Their character cannot be better described, than in the words of the Superintendent of the Church Missionary Society’s Schools at Tranquebar—

“Among the Schoolmasters of the common Native Schools, many are to be found who give themselves to some open vice. I may say, there is not one who does not, publicly or privately, encourage his Scholars,



almost daily, to steal some trifle or other from their parents' homes. They are accustomed to bring betel-leaves every morning after breakfast, a piece of wood in the evening, and sometimes cash and areka-nuts: consequently, the Native Children are very early accustomed to the vice of stealing; and, when they are grown up, they continue the same practice; so that, when they are afterward employed in Public Duties, they do incalculable mischief to their Superiors and inferiors. These facts being well known to our English Superiors, and seriously lamented by many who have these Natives in their service, I need not dwell more on the subject. The vices of stealing and bribery in the country are beyond description; and thousands of poor people become objects of severe distress, by the dreadful corruption of the Native Public Servants*."

Nothing, humanly speaking, can remedy these evils, but the establishing of Free Schools, by Government, throughout their dominions. This "will be one of the most successful means of correcting the children in their early vices, and of impressing on their minds the blessings and credit of honesty†." Unless such an expedient be

* Missionary Register, October 1823, p. 444.

† Idem.



adopted, this corruption, and these oppressions, will continue to grow; until, *if any thing* can provoke the Natives to resistance, they will be roused to throw off a yoke, under which, contrary to the intention or regulations of the Government, they are made to groan.

It is true, the children are taught in these Schools to repeat Native Proverbs, some of which contain excellent morals: but none of them understand the poetic language in which they are written. I remember once reading over a string of them with a Learned Brahmin, who was, every now and then, at a stand for their signification. Some he carried home with him, talked over them with his friends, but, after all, could not give me a proper explanation of their meaning. A short time before I left Madras, I went into one of the Native Schools, and requested the Teacher to let me see what the Boys were reading. He shewed me some Ollas, on which were written the Sayings of Ouyyar. I desired him to explain them to me; when he took up another Olla, which contained the interpretation, and began to read. I stopped him, saying, that I wished him to tell me, from his own mind, what he supposed to be the sense of the Proverbs, or even of



the written interpretation: upon this, he looked in my face, and confessed, with a smile, that he understood neither the one nor the other. Such is the ignorance of most of the Native Schoolmasters! and it is evident, that their Scholars can derive no moral benefit whatever from repeating Sentences, however sound the morality they contain, unless they are made to comprehend their meaning and application. But if Government would take up the subject of Education, the advantages that would result, from the measure, to the Natives, and ultimately to themselves, are too obvious to be named.

It would tend also to conciliate the minds of the people. Several of their favourite Authors speak of the establishment of Schools for the Education of the Young as one of the most laudable actions, and loudly celebrate the praises of those who have founded Seminaries for Learning. Few plans could be adopted that would more effectually convince them that their Rulers took a real interest in promoting their happiness.

The knowledge of the English Language acquired in these Schools would prove another bond of attachment on the part of the Natives towards the Government. In



the event of the invasion of India by any Foreign Nation, a powerful auxiliary would be found in the body of Natives acquainted with our language and the rudiments of our literature. Of the vast number of Natives now in our Service, a very small proportion speak English. Some of the Head-writers, and most confidential servants in our Cutcher-rees and Courts, understand not a word of our language: many of the English Writers, even, comprehend not one sentence in five of what they transcribe: and seldom do you meet with a Native who can pronounce English intelligibly, or converse with you in it, upon any subject out of the common routine of business. The reason is, there are very few facilities beyond the Presidencies for the study of the language; as not many Natives can afford to pay for instruction from a master capable of teaching it: those, therefore, who aspire after employment in the English department of the Service are often obliged to acquire the language as they can from other Natives, who, often without understanding its construction, and but imperfectly acquainted with its pronunciation, engage to teach it upon moderate terms. This is a subject deserving the immediate attention of Government. Intelligent Youths,



descendants of Englishmen, might be selected, from the Asylums at the different Presidencies, for this service, and receive an appropriate education. Many capable young men of this description have long been employed in the Financial, Medical, and Surveying Departments; and they would be equally useful as Schoolmasters. Two were engaged in that capacity in the English Schools of the Church Missionary Society in Tinnevely: their writing and pronounciation were as good as could be expected from Englishmen in the same rank of life; and had a little more attention been paid to their education, they would have equalled any ordinary Schoolmaster in Great Britain. If this subject be taken up by Government, it will find respectable employment for an increasing and interesting body of people, and turn their labours to a very good account.

A Third subject deserving attention is, The abolition of every practice that outrages the feelings and sympathies of human-nature, and of which British Law would take cognizance.

Notwithstanding the Abbé Dubois' affected apprehension, that "the putting a stop to Suttees, by coercion, appears a measure too pregnant with danger to be attempted," (p. 198,) I maintain that it would tend



to confirm our political power in the East. It might alienate the minds of the interested few who profit by these immolations; but it would conciliate the bulk of the Natives, and attach them the more cordially to our Government. Remove every barbarous superstition that paralyzes the affections of the soul, and instantly will you perceive the feelings of humanity begin to revive. Each chord entwined about the heart will soon vibrate to the sounds of parental, filial, and fraternal love; and even the Hindoo, no longer a misanthrope, or deaf and blind to the charms of society, shall own and rejoice in the relative ties by which man is bound to man. The heart-melting gratitude with which the Rajahpoot Mothers presented at the feet of Colonel Walker the Children preserved through his humane perseverance; the conduct of the Widow rescued from the funeral pile at Chicacole towards her Benefactress, and the subsequent behaviour of her relatives; are alone sufficient to vindicate the Hindoo's claim to the feelings of humanity; and to shew, that these anticipations will, in all human probability, be realized, when the obstructions that now prevent the exercise of those feelings shall be removed.

But how strange is it, that men, who can



reason so fairly on other subjects, should advance their theories, again and again, upon the political danger and commotions to be more than apprehended (as they say) from any change that may be attempted in the Hindoos' practices! "The *ancient rules* for the collection of the Revenues have been changed and modified in innumerable instances"—"the Revenue System, both in *principle* and *practice*, has undergone a fundamental alteration." "In opposition to *ancient rules and customs*, the public assessment in Bengal has been declared fixed and irrevocable." "The Revenue-Officers have been deprived of the judicial power which they had *from time immemorial* exercised: they have been made amenable to the Courts of Justice for acts done in their official capacity." The "discretionary authority" and "extensive influence" which "the great Zemindars or Landholders possessed," "during the Mahomedan Government," "are now completely annihilated; and the greatest Landholder in Bengal possesses no more influence than that of an English Gentleman of extensive landed property." Thus, the *former customs* have undergone a total alteration, to the great benefit of the community at large.

"With respect to the *Criminal Law*, the



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British Government adopted the Mahomedan Code, by which it had been antecedently administered; and the sentences of the Criminal Courts are regulated by that Code, ‘*excepting in cases in which a deviation from it may be expressly directed by any Regulation passed by the Governor-General in Council.*’”

“Thus the *Regulations*, in the very outset, intimate some exceptions.” In the instances of trials for murder—the admission of the testimony of such witnesses as, on account of their Religious persuasion, the Mahomedan Law rejected—the capital punishment of “a person deliberately intending to murder one individual, and accidentally killing another”—the Law of Retaliation, by which a murderer “might escape the punishment due to his crime”—in all these instances, the Mahomedan Law has been altered; and the very titles of some of the *Regulations* express, that they are enacted for the purpose of modifying the Mahomedan Law.

So, also, in reference to the Hindoos. In 1795, the Government of Bengal put a stop, in the Province of Benares, to the Brahmins’ establishing *koorhs*, during which they lacerated their own bodies, threatened to swallow, and sometimes actually swallowed, poison, and wounded or killed their female



relations or children, "on the approach of any person to serve them with any process, or to exercise coercion over them on the part of Government or its delegates." By the same Regulation, they were forbidden to sit *dhurna* also. To recover a debt, or extort charity, they were accustomed to take their seat at the person's door of whom the demand was made. Provided with some offensive weapon or poison, in order to wound or kill themselves upon any one entering or quitting the house, they sat fasting until their object was attained; and it was considered "equally incumbent on the party who was the occasion of such Brahmins thus sitting, to abstain from nourishment until the latter were satisfied."

"The rules and measures adopted for putting a stop to these abuses, and for preventing the revival of the still more savage custom, which, until within these few years, had been generally prevalent among the Tribe of Rauje Koomars inhabiting the borders of the province near Joinpore—of destroying their infant female children, by suffering them to perish for want of sustenance—are hereby enacted, with modifications, into a Regulation*."

* Twenty-first Regulation of the year 1795.



“By the Hindoo Law, to occasion the death of a Brahmin, either directly or indirectly, is an inexpressible crime.” The disregard of this prejudice, in the distribution of justice by the English, has been already shewn; also the abolition, by order of the Civil Authorities, of Infanticide, at Saugur, at several places on the Ganges, and at Guzerat, and drowning in the River Jumna.

In short, “the British Government in Bengal has wisely proceeded in the task of reformation, with cautious and measured steps; yet the Civil Institutions of the country have undergone, in the last twenty-five years*, a total alteration.”

“The Regulations, which, by deviating from ancient *rules*, have so much contributed to the comfort and happiness of the people, were, in many instances, at the time of their establishment, considered as hazardous innovations, repugnant to the feelings and prejudices of the Natives of the higher class. Accustomed to a despotic form of government, they were incapable of appreciating the benefits of a different system. Slaves and tyrants by turns, the great Landholders, in the exercise of arbitrary power, found some

† This was written in 1813.



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compensation for their submission to it; and although they have derived peculiar benefit by the innovations introduced by European Authority, the power and influence which they enjoyed under the former system were not resigned without reluctance, and the loss of them is still regretted." But no commotions have resulted from the alteration of the old system, to endanger the British Empire in India.

The same may be said of the *Regulations* "enacted for the purpose of modifying the Mahomedan Law."—"I do not learn," says Lord Teignmouth*, "that these modifications have disgusted the Professors of that Law, who have quietly admitted the justice and propriety of them. Yet, were it told at Cairo or Constantinople, that, in opposition to the Divine authority of the Korân, and the Expositions of their Holy Imaums, their Laws had been altered by the authority of profane European Infidels, the Muftis of those cities would exclaim, 'Impiety!' and 'Revenge!'"

Since these alterations have been made without the slightest resistance from the

* "Considerations" &c.—The whole of this account of the Changes effected in the Laws and Usages of the Mahomedans and Hindoos is borrowed from that Pamphlet: pp. 12—20.



Natives whom they respectively affected, may we not hope that measures will be speedily adopted for the abolition of *Suttees*, and every other inhuman custom? Will it be pretended that the Natives of India are more tenacious of the privilege of destroying helpless Widows, than of their natural rights, long-established laws, ancient customs, and prejudices?

However, were it likely for the Hindoos, on being commanded to desist from immolating the Widow upon the funeral-pile of her deceased Husband, to resist the order, what possible danger to our Indian Government could arise from their opposition? They would form a very small minority of the Natives—not One in Twenty Thousand. Unless, then, it be imagined, that the haughty Mahomedans who look down with supercilious contempt upon the whole race of Idolaters, and the hundreds of thousands of apathetic Hindoos who are quite indifferent about the burning or burying of Widows alive, will all make common cause with the incensed few, and take up arms in defence of those abominable practices, there is little more to be feared from their abolition, than from the interruption of the Native Children's play. Be it remembered, that I am not



hazarding a rash assertion here; but drawing a legitimate conclusion, from past experience of the safety with which other changes, much more likely than this to provoke irritation and rouse into action every interested feeling, have actually been effected.

A Fourth point which I would take the freedom to suggest for consideration, is, That every practicable effort be made, to improve the Moral Character of the Honourable Company's Servants.

The Abbé Dubois describes but too accurately, the conduct of many of those persons, and its sad consequences upon the minds of the Natives. "I will refrain," he says, "from entering into details on the low state of Christianity among the Europeans living in this country; as this part of the subject is your* province, rather than mine. I will content myself with saying, that if their public and national virtues are a subject of praise and admiration to all castes of Hindoos, the bare-faced immorality, the bad examples, and disregard of every sense of Religion, exhibited by a great many amongst them, are not the least among the many obstacles which oppose the progress of their Religion in this country, by

* The Archdeacon of Bombay.



increasing the prejudices of the Natives against it, and rendering it particularly odious to them, when they see it so ill observed by those who were educated in her bosom, and who come from countries where this Religion alone is publicly professed. They think that there can be no advantage in embracing a Religion, which seems to have so little influence on the conduct of those who profess it: nay, a great many among them, judging from outward appearances, question whether the Europeans living among them have any Religion whatever. I have been many times challenged to bear testimony on this fact; and very seriously asked by them, whether the Frangy (Europeans) acknowledged and worshipped a God." (pp. 83, 84.)

"It is a well-known fact, that it is precisely those of the Hindoos who are most familiar and most connected with the Europeans, who manifest the strongest disgust and aversion to the Religion and manners of the latter. In proof of this assertion, I appeal to all the Officers, both Civil and Military, serving under the Three Presidencies in India." (p. 48.)

"Should the intercourse between the individuals of both nations, by becoming more intimate and more friendly, produce a revo-



lution in the Religion and usages of the country, it will not be to turn Christians that they will forsake their own Religion, but rather (what, in my opinion, is a thousand times worse than Idolatry!) to become perfect Atheists: and if they renounce their present manners, it will not be to embrace those of the Europeans, but rather to become what are now called Pariahs." (p. 50.)

"Many persons who come from Europe to India with unsettled and wavering Religious Principles, finish, on beholding the variety of Worships prevailing in the country, by laying aside what they term the prejudices of education, becoming Free-thinkers, and adopting the broad principle of Modern Philosophy, that all Religions are equally acceptable to the Deity, and conduct to the same end:" (p. 137. See much more to the same effect, at pages 115, 120, 152, &c. &c.)

Is not this state of things awful and alarming in the extreme! Such conduct must tend, not only to alienate the affections of the Natives from their Rulers, and counteract all the liberal efforts of Government to reconcile them to their present situation, but to call down the vengeance of Almighty God upon the men, who thus cause His Religion to be reproached among the Heathen!



It is a fact, that, although the most irreligious of the Company's Servants are the most indulgent (and often ridiculously and unnecessarily so) towards the Natives, in regard to their superstitions, they cannot gain their confidence and attachment. They are not consistent in their behaviour towards all classes : and they seem to think, that their giving way to the childish superstitions of the more respectable, will be received as an atonement for their abuse, neglect to pay their debts, and general ill-treatment of the rest. But they greatly mistake. The Natives know very well, that *all* Europeans regard their Idolatries as irrational and absurd ; and, therefore, never give us credit for sincerity, whatever respect we may pretend to shew them. But nothing can cause them to esteem the men, whose debaucheries, injustice to their tradesmen, and, in a word, disregard of all appearance of Religion, are the general topic of conversation among them, and scandalize all castes.

On the other hand, it is equally deserving of observation, that Gentlemen of the opposite character, though they evince a perfect indifference about the foolish Ceremonies of the Natives, are yet the objects of their admiration. In familiar conversation with them,



I have heard their remarks upon persons attentive to their Religious and Moral Duties; and could give a striking instance of confidence, on an occasion of importance to the Revenue of Government, being reposed in a JUNIOR of this character, which was, and would continue to have been, withheld from his irreligious SUPERIOR. So true is the observation of Lieutenant-Colonel Munro, in his Address to the Madras Government: "The Natives of India still retain an admiration of excellence, and a high veneration for virtue and sanctity: and the purity of morals, sublimity of doctrine, and extraordinary adaptation to the condition of mankind, of the Protestant Religion, are eminently calculated, when understood and *when their effects are seen*, to engage Converts."

Surely, then, there can be no question as to the importance of using every possible means, to improve the Moral and Religious Character of all classes of Europeans, but particularly of the Company's immediate Agents in India. Waving the consideration of *duty* on the part of Government to give serious attention to the subject, its own interests, the stability, the very existence of our Eastern Empire demand it. No Government, indeed, can *ensure* the good conduct of



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its servants or subjects, however excellent the means used for the purpose: but much may be done to preserve the character of our Religion in India, and to ensure a strict observance of the Ordinances of our Church, in every part of the Empire where Europeans are stationed. Much of the immorality and infidelity among the Company's Servants, complained of by the Abbé Dubois and others, arises, I am persuaded, from the habits of indifference to Religious Exercises, acquired by a long residence among the Heathen, at a great distance from the Ordinances of Divine Worship, with every possible facility for the gratification of their passions. Under such circumstances, they must be more than human to preserve a reverence for the parting admonition of Parents, a recollection of lessons received from Religious Preceptors, and keep their youthful propensities under moral restraint. Launched into a world peculiarly abounding in temptations, before reason is matured, or sacred principles are formed, to guide them in the paths of Virtue and Religion, what wonder if their passions precipitate them into every vicious excess! Thousands of hopeful young men have thus been ruined, and brought to a premature grave, for want of timely admonition, Religious Instruction,



and the authority of superiors, to controul them in their wicked and destructive career!

Will it be said, that Government, since it does not sanction, is not responsible for their crimes? No; that cannot justly be pleaded, until every preventive means has been employed. The Ecclesiastical Establishment in India, though extensive, and a great blessing to the country, is yet inadequate.—But this is too important a subject to be treated of in the concluding observations of the present Work. I shall, therefore, confine myself to one point; viz. *The due observance of the Sabbath.* To the habitual violation of that Sacred Day, may be traced the major part, if not the whole, of the evils of which we complain. Until men have so renounced the authority of God as to disregard His command to consecrate the Sabbath to holy employments, they will not abandon themselves to an unrestrained course of iniquity: but when once accustomed to profane the Holy Day of Rest, the transition to every other sin is easy and natural. I conceive, then, that proper attention to this important duty will contribute greatly to obviate the demoralizing tendency of Eastern habits and indulgence. The means to promote this desi-



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erable end are few, obvious, and easy to be adopted.

First—Divine Service should be *publicly* performed on *the morning* and *evening* of the Sabbath, *at every Station*. If there be no Chaplain, the Senior Officer, Civil or Military, should be required to read, or empowered to appoint a junior to read, the Service, and a Discourse. Even where there are but two or three Officers at the Station, they should not neglect this duty. It may be objected, that it is enough, in the case of so small a number, for each individual to retire to his room, and perform his devotions in private: but this is to forget, or undervalue, the gracious promise of the Divine Presence and Blessing vouchsafed to “*two or three assembled together in*” the Name of God. No individual who feels the importance and privilege of Prayer, will neglect *private* devotion, because required to unite with one or more individuals in the Public Service of the Church; or think that the one duty should supersede the other. It would also defeat another object in the public performance of Divine Worship, viz. to let the Natives *see* that we are not so regardless of Religion, as they have hitherto had too much reason to think us. And thus may we hope to remove



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both among Europeans and Natives. 297

that suspicion of us as an Atheistical People, which an inattention to Religious Ordinances has produced in their minds.

At some *Military* Stations, this duty is attended to. This was the case at Palamcottah, previous to my arrival there as Chaplain. The Commanding-Officer, the late Colonel Charles Trotter, required all the Military Officers to assemble for Divine Worship; and two or three of the Civilians joined them, *until deterred by the ridicule of their companions.*

Secondly—For the due performance of Divine Service, a Chapel should be built at every Station. At present, all *the Chaplains'* Stations are not provided with Places of Worship. That this desideratum should be supplied with the least possible delay, few will hesitate to allow: and, in reference to the erection of a small Chapel at every other Station, I shall adopt the suggestion of a late Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army (General M'Dowall). That Officer had been addressed by the Government of Fort St. George, desiring to know from him whether there was any truth in the report, that the Mutiny at Vellore was occasioned by attempts made to convert the Natives to Christianity. To which he replied—



“ It may occasion some degree of surprise, that the people of this country should be brought to believe, that those who apparently conduct themselves with so much apathy in respect to what concerns Religious Worship, should have formed any serious scheme for the converting whole nations, of different castes and persuasions, to the Christian Faith. None but the weakest and most superstitious could have been deluded by so improbable a tale: and, accordingly, we find the rumour alluded to was by no means general; and, except at Hyderabad, it had made little or no impression.

“ In making the above remark on the indifference which is manifested in the Adoration of the Supreme Being, I must add, in justice to the Military Character, that it chiefly proceeds from a want of places (and, at several Stations, of Clergymen) exclusively appropriated for Divine Service: and I trust I shall be excused, if I suggest the propriety of having convenient Chapels, of moderate price, constructed in all situations within the Company's Territories, where European Troops are likely to be quartered. Whatever may be urged to the contrary, I am convinced that such an improvement, independent of the obvious advantages, would ren-



der the British Character more respected by the Natives, and be attended by no evil consequences."

The whole of this Official Communication was published by the late Dr. Buchanan, in his "*Apology for promoting Christianity in India.*" Since, however, the Vellore Mutiny continues to be ascribed to attempts to convert the Natives, and knowing that the judicious suggestion and observations of General M'Dowall, though made nearly eighteen years ago, have not yet been attended to, I shall not apologise for supporting my position by the copious Extract transcribed above.

A Third point for consideration is, The supplying of every Chapel with a large Bible and Prayer-Book, the Book of Homilies of the Church of England, Religious Discourses, and such other Publications, as Government, or the Bishop of Calcutta, may think proper to select.

Fourthly—Particular orders should be issued against the transacting of public business on the Sabbath. Notwithstanding the Regulations that already exist to this effect, and the close of Public Offices at the Presidencies, and of all Judicial Courts, it is a fact, that some Gentlemen, situated in the interior,



attend to their Cutcherrees, and keep their Native Writers employed, almost as much on the Sunday as on any other day. Were this strictly prohibited, unless in cases of emergency, I am of opinion, that those who have thus thoughtlessly violated the Sabbath would begin to think more seriously and correctly upon the subject, and refrain from incurring the displeasure of Government.

Fifthly—All kinds of Diversion should be prohibited on that Sacred Day. How incongruous must it appear to the Natives, to see Gentlemen go from Church to the card or billiard-table, and spend the Sabbath Evening in feasting, dancing, and mirth. These evils I have often had occasion to deplore, but could not, *only for want of a Government Regulation forbidding them*, prevent. When the late Colonel Trotter first took command of Palamcottah, the Junior Officers were accustomed to spend the Sunday Afternoon at the Fives Court! This he immediately put a stop to, by stationing a sentinel at the entrance, with a written order that no one was to play there on the Sabbath, which he was desired to shew to every Gentleman that came. This had the desired effect; and the practice was never repeated as long as Colonel Trotter lived. Easy were it for Government



to apply a similar remedy to every such flagrant impropriety of conduct.

Sixthly—Even the Natives in the Service of Government should be required to pay some respect to the Sabbath. It is a violation of the Fourth Commandment* to employ “the stranger within our gates” on that day: and I know, from my own experience, and that of several Europeans who never employed Native Workmen on Sunday, and required all about them to reverence the day, that they cheerfully comply with the requisition, and, when acquainted with their motive, actually honour the Gentlemen who demand of them this tribute of regard. Sir R. Brownrigg, when Governor of Ceylon, ordered that all shops, bazars, and other places of trade, whether belonging to Heathens, Mahomedans, or Christians, should be shut up on the Sunday, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M., on pain of fine or imprisonment. And I remember a Captain of the Madras Army informing me, that when, at Colombo, he wished to remove some baggage on a

* I am aware that the application of this command to the present race of Hindoos has been questioned. A writer, under the signature of Philo-kalon, published a Letter on the subject, in the Calcutta Journal of January 31, 1820, which I was requested by a friend to answer. As the question is of great importance, I shall give both Philo-kalon's Query, and my own Reply, in an Appendix to this Work.



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Sunday, he could induce no Cooley to carry it for him; such was the respect paid to the Sabbath by all classes of Natives, in consequence of the Governor's order! It is in the power of the Indian Government to procure a similar reverence for that Sacred Day, at every European Station throughout its dominions; and I feel persuaded, that, in doing so, the British Character would be raised in the Natives' esteem.

These Regulations should be published in the vernacular language of every Station, for the information of all classes of Natives; for it is of importance to the Government, that the inhabitants should at length know how to distinguish between the Acts and Regulations of the Rulers, and the misconduct of their Agents; otherwise the character of the former will continue to suffer from the delinquencies of the latter.

By such precautions as are here suggested, I am confident that a great improvement will be effected in the Anglo-Indian Character. They will do more to consolidate our Eastern Empire, than any merely political arrangements that have ever been adopted. They will tend to command the respect and attachment of the Natives. And when that object is accomplished, I will not hesitate to



predict, that our possession of India will be retained to a period far beyond the most sanguine expectations, on the nicest calculations, of the Statesman or Philosopher. But if no such means are adopted to improve the British Character in India, and ingratiate the English with the Natives, then will there be equal grounds to anticipate the downfall of our Eastern Empire, at a period not very remote. The Natives cannot be expected to submit to the government of Foreigners whose irreligious character they despise, when they shall once possess the power of delivering themselves from their rule.

The Abbé Dubois with justice remarks, that the present degraded and idolatrous state of India “reminds us of the great obligations under which we stand to the Divine Author of Revelation, the common Father of all Mankind, for having, without any previous deserving on our part, chosen us, among so many Idolatrous Nations, to be His adopted people. What ought not our gratitude to be to Him for this, the greatest of all His Divine favours?” (p. 136.) To this I will only add, that when we *do* know the value of Revelation, we shall feel bound, by gratitude to its Author, to communicate its doctrines and precepts to those under our controul. If we



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neglect this obvious duty, we shew that we know not how to appreciate the heavenly boon, and that our hearts are devoid of gratitude to the Donor: and in the want of this principle is implied every thing odious to God!

“Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dicis.”

To draw this Work to a close—If the propositions laid down in the preceding pages are established, and the conclusions fairly drawn, it is plain that the sure method of preserving the dominion which the Almighty has so graciously and so wonderfully bestowed upon us in the East, is, to promote the accomplishment of His design, to extend *His* Empire also over the hearts of the millions of Immortal Beings whom he has brought under our sway. Thus let us follow the guidance of His Providence; and then may we expect that He will *continue* to us the means of fulfilling His purposes towards the Natives of India, until their Redemption be complete.

On the other hand, we see also, that to neglect the duty which we are so obviously commissioned to perform, is the most probable way of provoking the Almighty to pluck the laurel from our brow, despoil us of our wealth, and lay our honours in the dust!



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APPENDIX.

*To the Editor of the Calcutta Journal; dated
Central India, Jan. 31, 1820.*

“Ought *Christians* to allow People of any Faith or Sect, as *Hindoos*,
Mussulmans, &c., to work at their Houses on Sunday?”

SIR—

THE only passage in the SCRIPTURES that could have raised a doubt on this head, is the following: “The Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, &c., nor thy cattle, nor *the stranger that is within thy gate.*” In this, the prohibition is so explicit, that nothing more than an assurance of its being addressed to *Christians* can be requisite to enable us to answer the question. Let this point, then, be examined.

The Jewish Religion was given to the Jews exclusively: it did not exact belief or profession from any other nation of the earth; and in no part of the Scriptures were the Jews commanded to diffuse it. For what reason, then, do people, who profess a Religion which superseded and annulled it, suppose themselves bound to pay it obedience? The Jews, we are told, are under

the displeasure of God, for continuing their adherence to it, and for rejecting Christianity: and yet Christians refer to it; and, to supply what they imagine deficiencies in their own Faith, select doctrines and mandates from this.

Conduct so egregiously irrational could proceed only from the supposition of its having been enjoined by our Saviour, or by some of his Apostles. Accordingly, passages from the New Testament are cited to justify it:—"Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am come, not to destroy, but to fulfil." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" (2 Tim. iii. 5—16.) But these passages have not the meaning ascribed to them.

Of the first, the import is this—"I am come to fulfil all righteousness, by a thorough and personal obedience to that Law of Holiness; and no part of the Typical Ceremonies of the Law shall be unfulfilled, and no obligation of the Moral Law shall be waived." Our Saviour having, in his own person, fulfilled all the Typical and Prophetical part, and obeyed rigidly and minutely all the Moral and Preceptive part, abolished the whole; it having answered the ends for which it was given, and having received, in its completion, due honour and glory. This His Apostles declare, in every page of their writings—"We are not under the Law." "We are delivered from the Law, that we should serve God in newness of spirit, not in the oldness of the letter." "The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ



Jesus hath made us free from the Law of Sin and Death."

With respect to the second passage, the Scriptures may justly be said to have been written for our instruction; as they contain innumerable instances of piety, holiness, and obedience; and will furnish the most instructive lessons on the awful justice and the immaculate purity of the Divine Being, in his dreadful judgments on graceless offenders. They were to be consulted, also, that we might perceive the perfect correspondence of the Prophecies regarding our Saviour, with their accomplishment in Jesus; and that we might, consequently, attain the firmest conviction of the Divinity of our Faith.

It appears, then, that we have no injunction from our Saviour or His Apostles to regulate our conduct by Judaism. And why is this particular Commandment deemed obligatory on the followers of Christ, when many other directions of Moses, and all the Ritual and Ceremonial parts of his Law, are supposed to be abrogated? In the Chapter in which the Ten Commandments are delivered, is an order to Moses to build an altar—and not of hewn stone: and the reason assigned is, that the altar would be polluted, if any tool were lifted on it. Why do not Christians avoid building an altar of hewn stone? Why do not we either obey the whole, or reject the whole? Surely we are not to cull such parts of a Religion as may suit our individual inclinations! The truth is this: The Jewish Law was adapted to the rude and unenlightened age in which it was delivered; and it now requires not observance, either from Jews or



Christians: it was a "shadow of good things to come:" it has been naturally succeeded and removed by the substance.

The old Law, then, being abolished, by what are we to guide ourselves? The answer is obvious: By the Precepts of Christianity; and by those old Jewish Laws which are noticed and imposed on us by Christ and His Apostles. Surely, nothing necessary for our guidance can have been omitted by our omniscient Saviour?—In what part, then, of the New Testament are we prohibited from employing Heathens on the Sabbath? In no part.—Then we may employ them? Certainly.

Scripture, then, not forbidding the practice, let us examine if REASON will condemn it.

Now, by employing Heathens to work on the Sabbath, we do not compel them to act in opposition to the dictates of their conscience, or notions of rectitude; or to do any thing, which, if left to themselves, they would refrain from doing. We do not prevent them from discharging any duty, moral or religious; or from the performance of any, to which their reason or inclination might direct them. But, if we dismiss them on Sunday, with orders to return and work as usual the following six days, we shall manifestly deprive them of the produce of a day's labour: we shall cause them to loiter and saunter about, a burthen to themselves, and useless to others: we shall thereby expose them to fall into the vices of idleness, drunkenness, and gambling; and, consequently, to the probability of acquiring habits, which will render them unfit for the sober occupations they have hitherto pursued: hence, in-



famy, poverty, and misery, are almost inevitable: in short, from the prevalence of these vices, by which we ourselves have been enabled to gain an ascendancy over them, wretchedness and ruin, both temporal and spiritual, are necessarily consequential.

Such dreadful evils may result from depriving people of employment on Sundays. If we attend to the progress of the human mind, when unoccupied, from folly to folly, and from sin to sin, we shall readily acknowledge the probability of such a lamentable gradation of iniquity. Does it not follow, then, that if, with this knowledge of what is likely to ensue from divesting labouring men of their ordinary occupations, we persist in dismissing workmen on Sundays, we shall not only not be pious and holy, but become ourselves guilty of those crimes which we thus allow them to be excited to commit? Christianity shews us, that it is equally criminal, to commit sin, and not to prevent its commission. The deplorable end above mentioned may certainly not happen to one out of five; but it also may happen to the whole: and, according to our Religion and to Reason, we are criminal, if we do not guard against even the probability of sins being committed.

This practice, however, though proved to be agreeable to reason, and not repugnant to Scripture, is yet productive of an evil.

The Sabbath is set apart—for the care of the soul; for the worship of God; for the reading and hearing of His Holy Word; for prayer, meditation, and self-examination; for repentance of

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errors; for humble acknowledgment of them; for making resolutions of reformation and amendment; and for thinking and conversing on Spiritual matters. Whatever tends to prevent or obstruct the performance of these duties, it behoves us to remove. If, therefore, we have people to work at our houses on Sundays, and, as usual, instruct them in their work, we shall cause a prejudicial intermixture of worldly and spiritual concerns, and shall untune and unfit our minds for the due discharge of the duties just mentioned. On the other hand, if we merely allow Heathen Workmen to continue on the Sabbath their daily employment, while we ourselves are retired, and feel not, from their presence, the slightest interruption, this evil will be removed, and, with it, every scruple against the practice in question.

(Signed) PHILO-KALON.

*To the Editor of the Calcutta Journal; dated
Southern India, March 10, 1820.*

“Ought *Christians* to allow People of any Faith or Sect, as *Hindoos*, *Mussulmans*, &c., to work at their Houses on Sunday?”

SIR,

IN your Number for January 31, there is a communication from Philo-kalon, on the above-stated Query, which the writer appears to have solved to his own satisfaction: but he must not be disappointed, to learn, that his conclusions are not sufficiently powerful to force conviction



upon every mind that has been nurtured within the pale of our incomparable Establishment.

The Church of England, in common with the Kirk of Scotland and all the Reformed Churches of the Continent of Europe, have followed the example of the Church of Christ from its earliest stage, in adopting the Ten Commandments of God which were delivered to Moses at Sinai, and inculcating them as of universal obligation to all that worship the God of Israel. With such precedents then, the most punctual observance of the Sabbath, how erroneous soever in the Writer's estimation, should, in the outset, have commanded a little more respect than to be termed "egregiously irrational;" and it would have given us no unfavourable opinion of his candour, had he suspended his judgment on a point, which, so far from being questioned by the Fathers of our Church, received the concurrence of their deliberate Council. Be it observed, that Philokalon's objections are as applicable to the whole of the Commandment enjoining the celebration of the Sabbath, as to the particular clause against which he points them; for there is *no direct* injunction regarding the Sabbath in the New Testament. He must, therefore, be considered as impugning the wisdom of our Ancestors, in requiring this, or any other Mosaic Precept, to be taught our children at the earliest dawn of reason, to be repeated by them with the first accents of the lips, and to be read every Sabbath in the public Congregations of the Church; unless such precept can be found, *verbatim*, in the New Testament. I grant, that could the strict observance



of the Sabbath, according to the Law of Moses, be *proved* to be unscriptural, no human authority would justify its continuance: but until that be done, I must continue to think that our forefathers were guided by the Word of God in enjoining its observance, and that every deviation therefrom is a departure from the same unerring standard.

Your Correspondent remarks, that "the only passage in the Scriptures that could have raised a doubt on this head," is that contained in the Fourth Commandment, which prohibits the employment on the Sabbath of "the stranger that is within thy gate." And is not this enough? What is this passage, but part of a Divine Law? And if it can be shewn that this Law remains unrepealed in the New Testament, it will have all the force of a precept delivered by Christ himself. Human Laws often become obsolete, when the circumstances that occasioned them no longer exist; but, until formally abrogated, they remain among the Statutes of the Realm, and every one that transgresses them does it at his peril: and how many instances have we known, of a busy and unkind informer taking advantage of such antiquated decrees, to bring an unconscious offender to justice! But no part of the Ten Commandments can be called obsolete, while they continue to form a portion of the First Lessons of our Children, and are publicly read in the Church every Sabbath.

The *onus probandi*, then, rests with Philokalon; for he is evidently bound to shew, where, when, and by whom, any single passage of the



Decalogue has been annulled, before he can have a right to demand proof of the whole being repeated in the New Testament. He has indeed attempted this, by confounding the Preceptive with the Ceremonial parts of the Mosaic Institution; and, thus united by him under the term Judaism, has endeavoured to shew that the whole system was abolished by Christ. But, surely, I need not remind him that every thing about the Temple at Jerusalem, both internally and externally, together with all its offerings, services, furniture, and implements, were typical of the Redemption of Man by Jesus Christ; and that, *therefore, they* were abolished when he had completed the work of Salvation, and fled, like the shadows of the morn before the rising orb of day. It is to this the Apostles allude, when they speak of the abolition of the Law: and when they assert their liberty, it is their freedom from the painful rite of Circumcision, and the *now* unnecessary Services of the Temple. (*Vide* the Epistle to the Hebrews, *passim*.) But, if such passages are to be applied to the *didactic* parts of Judaism, what is this but making the Apostles declare that they considered themselves free from all Moral Obligation.

It is true, the Apostle does declare, "The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the Law of Sin and Death;" and many passages of the like import are scattered through the Apostolic Writings. But every one who reads the portion of Scripture from which the above text is selected, will find, that the Apostle, so far from arguing (as your Corre-

spondent states) that Christ “abolished” “the Moral and Preceptive part” of the Law, by “rigidly and minutely obeying it,” actually commends that Law as “holy,” and the Commandment as “holy, just, and good :” (Rom. vii. 12.) The subject of his lamentation is, that he, through the debility of his nature, the strength of his passions, and the unconquerable propensity to evil that he finds within his heart, cannot observe that Law so perfectly as he ought, and whose every precept he confesses to be founded in wisdom, purity, and justice: (Ibid. v. 13 to the end.) And the ground of the exultation with which the next Chapter commences, is, that—notwithstanding his inability to keep the Law of God, and thus render himself worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven—he has nothing to fear from the penalties annexed to it; for that Jesus Christ has paid the price of his ransom from eternal death. “There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death :” (Rom. viii. 1, 2.) I feel persuaded that Philo-kalon, upon a more mature consideration of this concluding passage, in connexion with its context, will see that he has mistaken its signification; and that nothing could be further from the Apostle’s intention, than to assert that the *Moral* Law was abolished by the *Obedience* of Christ, as was the *Typical* by the *offering of His body on the cross*.

The Laws of Moses were given to the Children of Israel; who have been preserved, to the present



day, as a distinct people, for wise and gracious purposes, on which it is beside our present purpose to enlarge. But how it can be said, that their Religion was given to them "*exclusively*"—when its privileges were extended to men of every nation, colour, or superstition, who submitted to and performed all its requisitions—I am at a loss to comprehend! And equally unable am I to account for another of your author's assertions; viz. that the Jewish Religion was "*superseded and annulled*" by the Christian. I have always understood that Christianity was but a more advanced stage of the *same* Religion as was promulgated to the Jews; that it abolished only its externals, but retained the same object of adoration; obeyed the same Divine authority; required the same qualifications of contrition, confession, and faith, in the worshippers; and trusted in the very same Redeemer for pardon and reconciliation: for the Jew believed in the Messiah promised; the Christian believes in Him who hath fulfilled all the promises of the Saviour of Mankind. Hence it would appear, that Christianity is rather the *perfection*, than the *abolition* of the Jewish Religion; for they are *substantially* the same: and, therefore, there can be nothing very "*irrational*" in the "*conduct*" of those who scruple to violate any of the Ten Commandments, unless it can be proved from the New Testament that they have been annulled.

It may be asked why the Saviour did not enjoin the strict observance of the Sabbath, if he intended the day to be kept in conformity with the Commandment. But, before this objection can

have any force whatever, it must be proved that it was *necessary* for our Lord to *repeat* the Commandment, word for word, and sentence by sentence, in order to ensure the obedience of His Disciples to the duty in question. But this it was not; for Christ saw that the persons whom he addressed were already strict observers of the Sabbath, and most tenacious of the slightest interruption to its sacred duties. Nothing, therefore, remained for him to do, but to sanction the celebration of the day by his own example, and correct what was amiss in those who professed obedience to the command of Moses; and, consequently, we find that he did both.

For the first: It were tedious to cite all the passages from the Four Evangelists, which declare that our Lord paid attention to this hallowed day, according to the command of God: nor is it requisite; for one of them, St. Luke, informs us, (ch. iv. 16,) that it was "*His custom*" to go into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day.

For the second: He found the Pharisees had so disguised the Commandment by their false glosses and traditions, as to persuade themselves, and the people, that it was requisite to refrain from works of mercy, and even from acts of necessity, on the Sabbath-day. But, instead of acting from a tenderness of conscience, their motives were those of the basest hypocrisy; substituting numerous Services and privations that were not required, for that Spiritual observance of the day which alone could prove acceptable to God. In this manner did they "make void the Law by their Traditions;" and render the Sabbath a bur-



densome and painful duty, rather than a refreshing day of rest. Our Lord, with a bold and decisive hand, drew aside the veil, unmasked their dissimulation, and declared — what? — not that they should run into the opposite extreme, and violate the command of Moses, but that they should celebrate the Sabbath as the Law required, without any adjuncts of their own: (Matt. xii. 9-13.)

But a Query arises here; which, if Philo-kalon is unable satisfactorily to solve, will leave the whole of his reasoning with a very slender support. Since the Saviour did all that could be necessary to ensure the continuance of the Sabbath in his Church; had He, on the other hand, intended to make *any* alteration in the observance of that day, was it not absolutely requisite for Him to *state* that alteration, and not leave us to *guess* at the particular clause or clauses of the Commandment that might be omitted with impunity? I think every candid mind will allow that it *was* requisite: otherwise it would expose our Heavenly Teacher to the imputation of leaving His Disciples in the dark, as to His intention on a point of such moment. And, since he has not done so with respect to any single passage of the Commandment, but has left the whole as He found it (except, indeed, that He has freed it of its numerous perversions), the only fair and legitimate inference can be, that He intended the Law regarding the Sabbath to remain in His Church unaltered.

Since, then, our Lord sanctioned the Sabbath by a personal observance of its duties, and took such pains to correct the abuses which the Jewish



Rulers had introduced—while He made no alteration in the Law itself that commanded the observance of that day—can we be reasoning on the principles of sound logic, to infer that we are at liberty to employ Heathen at our houses—*i.e.* to let “the stranger work within our gates” on Sunday—merely because it is not prohibited in the *New Testament* as well as in the *Old*? And can it be fairly concluded, from the Saviour’s omitting to repeat the Fourth Commandment, that we may reject the whole, or such part of it as it suits not our convenience or inclination to observe?

I would beg once more to refer your Correspondent to the Redeemer’s express command “to the multitude and to *His Disciples*,” contained in Matthew xxiii. 3: “All, therefore, whatsoever they (the Scribes and Pharisees, ver. 2) bid you observe, that observe and do:” and the reason for this command is given in the second verse—they “sit in Moses’ seat.” This does not seem to accord with Philo-kalon’s assertion, that the whole of the Jewish Religion, as well the Preceptive as the Typical part, is annulled and superseded by Christianity: and, to my view at least, it amounts to a *command to observe the Sabbath according to the Jewish Religion*; for this, it is well known, was one of the principal laws which the Scribes and Pharisees enforced. It will avail nothing to say, that this command may have been addressed to the People as *Jews*, for it was given to *His Disciples* at the same time: and had He meant the latter to be free from any part of the law in question, on their renouncing Judaism,



He would have told them so, and they would not have failed to publish the same to the Churches which they afterwards established: but not a single passage to this effect is to be found, throughout their Writings.

I never before heard or saw it gravely stated, that we were not at liberty to employ workmen when we please, without incurring "the guilt of those crimes" which the vicious may commit when we cease to keep them at work. But I think it unnecessary to swell this Paper, by a reply to the latter part of your Correspondent's Letter; else it were easy to shew, that the man who is really disposed to gambling, drunkenness, and the like, will surely pursue his vicious propensity at one time, if not at another: and a caviller might contend, that knowing a workman or servant to be so inclined, would furnish a good reason for his dismissal altogether; since, by giving him employment, you (doubtless, unintentionally) add fuel to the flame of his passions, for you enable him thereby to provide himself with the means of illicit gratification.

But, having shewn it to be the Christian's *duty* to observe the Sabbath in this particular as well as every other, he has nothing to do with the consequences. Let him obey the Commandment of God, and he will keep his own "conscience void of offence," whatever happen to those whom he may forbid to work upon his premises on this hallowed day.

Philo-kalon, however, may not have given it a thought, that his arguments on this point, make the Jews equally guilty with Christians, for dis-



missing the Heathen from their work on the Sabbath ; yet he will surely allow, that they were right in obeying the Divine Law.

I am quite at a loss to divine what could have been Philo-kalon's intention, in making this attempt to weaken the Christian's obligation to observe the Sabbath ; for I give him too much credit for consistency with the name he has assumed, to think he could have contemplated or suspected any evil to result from it. Yet, if it be fair to judge of a person's respect for the Sunday by the manner in which he spends it, I would venture to say, that there are many who would heartily thank your Correspondent, could he relieve their consciences of the Sabbath altogether ; and I feel persuaded, that such will hail his Letter as a welcome harbinger, to set them at liberty from the burthensome and unwelcome tasks of the day. They find themselves permitted to have workmen about the house, provided they shut *themselves* up ; but, feeling no taste for the sacred occupations which Philo-kalon assigns them, it is not likely that they will submit long to what they must consider little short of incarceration : hence, they will not find much difficulty in persuading themselves, that there can be no great harm in looking at the people, giving one or two directions, and so forth ; until they will be found entering into a regular superintendence of what is going on, and disregarding every duty that was intended to distinguish the Day of Rest.

Philo-kalon must be too well acquainted with mankind, not to know that many will argue and practise thus ; and I cannot but think he would



regret to have afforded any, the slightest aid, to entrench themselves in error and vice. I should like to see such a pen as his, employed in defence of the bulwarks of Sacred Truth and Virtue; but he must excuse me if I say, that his present communication appears to me calculated to weaken, and even undermine them. Some contend against the Sabbath altogether, for the very reason that he assigns for dispensing with that clause of the Commandment which forbids the employment of "the stranger within our gates," viz. because it is not commanded in the New Testament: and they have nearly as much reason on their side as he has. Infidelity, like a swelling stream, exerts all its force to shake the embankments by which it is confined. The removal of one restraint will be as an opening at which it will enter: soon will the breach be widened; one stone will fall after another; until the torrent rush on with an impetuosity that shall defy all resistance, wash down its ancient barriers, overwhelm every Divine Institution, and leave us the sport of each noxious and varying blast that assails us. This unhappy prospect has been realized in the fate of too many victims of the Law, who have confessed that their vicious career began in the neglect of the Sabbath. And—if I have succeeded in impressing others with my own conviction, that the habitual disregard of the clause of the Fourth Commandment now in question will, in most cases, if not in all, lead to the rejection of the Sabbath altogether, as its natural consequence—every true *lover of that which is good* will see the danger of surrendering the disputed point, and the necessity, the



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APPENDIX.

expediency, of maintaining, that the Law which Jehovah made for the celebration of the Sabbath is as binding on the Christian as it was on the Jew.

(Signed) PHILO-ALETHINON.

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