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THE BRAHMO SOMAJ AND CHRISTIANITY.

A SYMPOSIUM.

I.

It is matter of no surprise that different persons equally well-informed should arrive at widely different judgments respecting the Brahmo Somaj and its future prospects. The movement is the result of the meeting of Hinduism and Christianity, and these two forces, like the muddy waters of the Rhone and the clear waters of the Saône below their junction at Lyons, seem to flow side by side and to contend for the mastery. The following sentences extracted from the Report of the Brahmo Somaj of India for the past year will illustrate this statement:

"The attitude of the Church of the New Dispensation towards Christianity was always friendly and respectful, and it is hoped that this feeling was reciprocated by many of the Christian persuasion. A complete understanding or harmony was not possible where old sectarian feelings were still so general. But the Brahmo Somaj of India always recognises it as its most important and grateful duty to show the utmost respect to Christian missionaries, and it never missed an opportunity for effecting a harmony wherever a common platform was found.... Whatever might be the opinions of Christians themselves, the attitude of the Brahmo Somaj of India was clear. It was one of ever-growing friendliness to and respect for Christ and Christianity...."

"What has been said above applies equally to the Hindu community. The drama of the New Dispensation has convinced the leaders of the community that the religion which we profess is essentially
Hindu in its dress and spirit, and the reunions held occasionally showed that it was not at all difficult for them to sympathize with and join in our movements, devotional or secular.”—*New Dispensation*, Feb. 18, 1883).

What will the ultimate result of this dual character be? Will the turbid elements which the stream of Hinduism has brought down from the fields of the past sink to the bottom, and only its sweet waters be left to swell the current of its sister stream? Or will they overpower and obliterate altogether the translucence of that stream of Christian truth which the movement has received?

I will mention what appear to me some cheering features in the Brahmo Somaj, which encourage a hope in the better issue. And in doing so, I shall speak only of that section of Brahmis which is known by the name of the Brahmo Somaj of India, this being the one with which I am best acquainted.

1. In the past the Brahmo Somaj has shown a tendency to throw off errors when once it has clearly recognised them; and accordingly the most important steps it has hitherto taken have been forward and upward steps.

When first started by Rajah Ram Mohan Roy the movement was simply a protest against idolatry in worship and an assertion of the principle of Monotheism. In every other respect the Church was still Hindu. It regarded the Vedas as the infallible Word of God; its services mainly consisted of the recital of Vedic texts to which none but Brahman were admitted; and every Hindu social custom, even though involving idolatrous ceremonies, was maintained as before.

The next step was taken about twenty years later. The study of the Vedas had shown them to be anything but infallible and to be inconsistent with the monotheistic principles of the Church. They were accordingly cast aside, and the intuitive testimony of the human mind was made the basis of the theism of the new Church. This was a second step in the right direction. But yet Brahism continued to be little more than the creed of a private club, and had not much affected the social life of its followers. A third step, however, also in the right direction, was taken when Debendra Nath Tagore and Keshub Chunder Sen carried out their principles by boldly breaking caste, performing marriages without idolatrous ceremonies, and even uniting in matrimony parties of different castes.

Other changes of importance have occurred in the twenty years since this last step was taken, notably the rupture
between the Sadharana Somaj and the Brahmo Somaj of India. These, however, are too complicated to be justly characterized in this brief paper. It will be enough for my purpose to state that on the whole the Brahmo Somaj has moved forward, and that Christian ideas have a more prominent position, and Christ Himself receives a more general and unhesitating reverence in the Brahmo Somaj to-day than at any previous time.

When a movement has so creditable a past history to show, and exhibits so distinct an advance from lower to higher platforms of truth, why should we not accept the augury, and hope that its future may be brighter still?

2. Another hopeful sign in the Brahmo Somaj is the growth among its members of the spirit of prayer. In an interesting lecture delivered two years ago by Babu Protap Chunder Mozumdar on the “Changes in the Brahmo Somaj,” he states that “for a long interval of nearly ten years our devotions consisted of mere adorations and praise-givings. We scarcely knew prayer.” Then having pointed out how they outgrew this state of things, he goes on to say that “for all spiritual growth and sanctification in the Brahmo Somaj there is now but one law, and that is the great law of Prayer.” He adds that while indebted in some matters to Hinduism, “for this spirit of prayer we must say we are largely indebted to the spirit of Christianity.” — (Indian Mirror, November 13, 1881). Keshub and his fellow-apostles constantly affirm that much of their time is spent in prayer. Now we who believe that God has said “Ask, and ye shall receive” and has promised that He will “give good things to them that ask him,” cannot but be hopeful of every member of the Brahmo Somaj of whom it can be said “Behold, he prayeth!”

3. Many of the most prominent errors of the Brahmo Somaj are of such a kind that time and study ought to correct them. No feature of the Brahmo Somaj is more astonishing than the persistency with which it heaps together the most inconsistent names in a ludicrous jumble, and talks of harmonising direct contradictories. The Church that couples together Christ and Chaitanya, Christ and Muhammad, and acknowledges equal loyalty to them all; that proposes to “harmonize all Scriptures,” to “reconcile pure Hinduism and pure Christianity”* (in any sense which will not empty

* See Indian Mirror, November 6th and December 11th, 1881.
one or other of the terms of all its meaning) is clearly divided against itself; and until these heterogeneous elements are separated, it cannot stand. The mixture, as Mr. Joseph Cook remarked, is "so inclusive as to be explosive." This state of things can scarcely last long. I cannot but feel that it arises largely from lack of exact historical information. Keshub's admission that he reads but few books is perhaps the explanation of the matter; for it is obvious that those who write these things have never accurately gauged the lives and principles of the persons whom they thus incongruously link together. The bare facts of the story of, say, Chaitanya, if told without expurgation or abridgement in a style as colourless as that of the Gospels, would be enough to undeceive any one. But such historical investigations being foreign to the genius of the Hindu mind, are reluctantly entered upon. While the Western mind first lays a foundation of solid and irrefragable facts and then proceeds to build upon that, the Eastern mind first idealises its heroes and then reverences them without any enquiry into the exact historic facts. But just as at the first the Vedas, although unexamined, were accepted by them as the Voice of God, and only afterwards were weighed and found wanting; so may we not hope that in course of time they may sit down to examine what the ideal teachers, whom they have been indiscriminately extolling were really like, and—rub their eyes to find them so different from what they thought. Those who have candidly made the examination know that when removed from the glamour of scenic illumination and studied in the tell-tale light of day, their splendidors will be discovered to be those of tinsel, while Christ will rise immeasurably by the comparison and approve himself the One among Ten Thousand and the Altogether Lovely.

The above are some of the signs which lead me to take a hopeful view of the future of the Brahmo Somaj. The movement, however, is beset with various dangers which might prove fatal to it, and of these I will mention two.

One is the danger of too rapidly crystallizing its system of belief. The Brahmo Somaj is in the position of a still growing child. If it continue to grow as it has hitherto done it has a noble future before it, and will come to the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus. But if its growth be prematurely arrested, and its body of doctrine and form of organization be fixed at the present stage, it can only prove a dwarf and a blight.
It is disappointing sometimes after having heard from the lips of Brahmists words of noble truth and lofty devotion, to find that, after all, their meaning was not what it seemed to be, that they were juggling with sacred words whose significance they had not comprehended, asserting the name but denying the thing, and so were of those

That palter with us in a double sense,
That keep the word of promise to our ear
And break it to our hope.

Under this very frequent provocation a warlike Christian is apt to feel his blood boil to take up arms and confute them. But I think they should not be attacked too seriously, lest, in their eagerness to defend themselves, they consolidate their system of opinion in its present crude state; and that would be a disaster indeed. Treatment like this is what ruined Theodore Parker and made half the infidels of Europe. The spirit of the Brahmist leaders has hitherto been admirable, and for this they are entitled to full credit; but many of their doctrines require to be treated as only the early judgments of a novice feeling his way to truth. There is danger in assailing them as though they were hardened opponents who need to be over­borne by superior might. The wiser course is to seek, rather in brotherliness than antagonism, to point out the incon­sistencies of their position, and meanwhile to commend them to the guidance of the Spirit of God until they come by experience to know that above all other Masters is Jesus only.

A second danger to which they are exposed is that of taking up the position of Indifferentism and Compromise, which has always been characteristic of Hinduism, and is always tempting to the human mind. Brahmists state that the religion which they profess is “essentially Hindu.” What is Hinduism, is a question very hard to answer. Is it the teaching that is based on the Vedas as its ultimate standard? Then, when Debendra Nath Tagore and his followers repudiated the Vedas, they should have ceased to be Hindu. Is it a form of Pantheism? The Brahists are Theists. Is it conformity to a certain set of social observ­ances, such as caste, &c.? Consistent Brahmists have repudiated allegiance to both caste and custom. But they claim to be Hindu still. What is Hinduism? I venture to suggest that the spirit of Hinduism has from the beginning been compromise. It is notorious that the most opposite doctrines and social observances are followed by
those who are universally acknowledged to be orthodox Hindus. The only principle that seems to cover all classes of the Hindu community is that of mutual unconcern. Every opinion and practice will be tolerated on condition that it tolerates every other. Established belief, however erroneous, must be regarded as having a prescriptive right to live undisturbed. Now this spirit Brahminism has drunk in with its mother's milk. It appears in every number of its periodicals. It vitiates all its reasonings and endeavours after truth. It may be called by the well-sounding names of Eclecticism or Charity or Toleration or Liberality of Thought; but it is indistinguishable from Indifferentism (based, it may be, on ignorance). In the following words from the New Dispensation the principle is openly avowed.

"In the Mahabharata there is an excellent passage, which in liberality of spirit and catholicity of doctrine has never been surpassed, and which represents most faithfully the central idea of the New Dispensation. 'That religion which is hostile to other religions is not true religion, it is false religion; that religion which is hostile to no religion is the true religion.' Is not the New Dispensation the only creed that is a friend to all creeds?"

Christianity is tolerant of all persons, however erroneous and however hostile, because there ever remains the possibility of their reclamation; but it is intolerant of all systems of error, since these can only change by ceasing to be. Hinduism on the other hand is tolerant of all errors however great, but intolerant of persons so soon as they become unyielding in attitude. Between these two stands Brahminism, courting now one and now the other, halting first on one foot and then on the other, not knowing which master to serve. If questioned, it replies "I serve both masters, and acknowledge both creeds." But inasmuch as many essential features of Christianity (whether regarded as a life, a revelation, or a system of thought) can no more live with Hinduism than fire with tow, its doctrines when adopted in name are first carefully emptied of their meaning and life-giving power. To adopt them in their New Testament sense would be to make a final breach with Hinduism. Hence the strong temptation to assume the traditional attitude of Indifferentism which is fatal to all moral earnestness. But Christ the Saviour will never accept a position of equality along with any who are mere teachers, however noble they may have been; for both as to His person and His mission He differs from them in kind. And so to Brahminism as a movement,
just as to each enquirer as an individual, must come the
critical time when it must break either with Christianity on
the one hand or with Hinduism on the other. The choice
when it comes will probably cause another breach like
that which separated the Audi Somaj from the Progressive
Party, and the Sadharana Somaj from the Brahmo Somaj of
India. The salt of the movement now is its Christian
element. If that is lost, the whole will perish; if that is
retained without being robbed of its pungency, the move­
ment will continue till the whole is salted.

It is scarcely to be expected that all those who now con­
stitute the Brahmo Somaj will reach the same goal. It is
not a solid phalanx guided by a well-defined purpose, and
marching or manoeuvring in a compact body. It is rather
a movement, a tendency of many restless minds journejd forth out of the Egypt of Hinduism to some better land,
they know not whither. Some of its leaders far in advance
of the rest are pressing forward with noble aspirations, and
are even now much more Christian than they know. The
whole desert behind them is dotted with stragglers, and
many in the far rear are still unable to tear themselves away
from the fleshpots of Egypt. While the more open-hearted
will be guided by the pillar of cloud and fire until they
reach the Promised Land, others less in earnest will fall
behind and lose their way in the wilderness of doubt and
man-made philosophy.

E. P. Rice.

II.

The Brahmo Somaj is the outcome, on the one hand, of a
dissatisfaction with Hinduism, and the expression, on the
other, of an unwillingness to yield to the claims of Christi­
anity. It was suggested by the conflicting elements of the
various creeds of the world, and is strongly fostered by
Western education and free-thought.

That the movement has much good in it cannot be disputed.
In its religious and moral teachings it is very far in advance
of the paganism which surrounds it, while in social reforms
it has been most commendably active. In battling against
infant marriages, in encouraging widow re-marriages, and in
breaking through a paralyzing conservatism, none have
been more brave and useful than Brahmins. Thus as
preachers of monotheism, and social reformers, their influence has been distinctly beneficial.

But if I am questioned as to the attitude of the Brahmo Somaj towards Christianity I am bound to answer that, from its principles of Intuition, it seems to me to stand in opposition, and to present a hindrance to the progress of the Gospel. Personal acquaintance with some active members of the Somaj convinces me that it is easier to press the claims of Christianity on bonâ fide Hindus than on the Brahmins. Some of the latter, when professors of the Hindu religion, lent a ready ear to what was said to them; but since accepting the teachings of the Somaj they have manifested a decided unwillingness to hear Christian truth.

The following points will indicate the chief hindrances presented by this movement to the Christian cause.

1. Among a people who always venerated religious teaching from any competent authority—a Veda, for example—the Somaj has produced an overweening, self-sufficient spirit. It ignores all revelations and scorns all knowledge derived from books, no matter of whatever origin. Although it culls religious precepts from every source to which it can gain access, yet nothing has any authority to overrule the intuitive knowledge of its members. Each man is a Veda or Bible to himself! This cuts at the root of all extraneous influence, and places the Brahmos beyond the pale of honest religious enquiry.

2. The Brahmins believe in direct communication with the Supreme Being, and in the possibility of intimate knowledge of spirit life and the spirit world. "Western scientists" said Babu Keshub Chunder Sen in his late annual lecture, "say God is unknowable. This assertion is to me abominable. I see my God and love Him. This is my daily salvation." God is their Father, and they are His children; nothing has seriously estranged them from Him. This doctrine obviously excludes all idea of the necessity of a Mediator.

3. They have no idea of the enormity of sin. Repentance is sufficient expiation for the very worst offence. In this respect the Brahmin is much worse than the Hindu. The latter recognises the necessity of a sacrifice. Without at all discussing whether the Hindu idea is, or is not, commensurate with the Divine demand for propitiation, it is enough for us to see that the principle is admitted which the Brahmin stoutly ignores. All sins are so small in his view, that nothing more is needed for reconciliation with God than
a little sorrow. Regarding the punishment of sin in the next world he has no adequate idea. According to the Brahmist, God is a Being of such easy good will that it is preposterous to think of Him as punishing sin for ever in the world to come. This compromises the holiness and justice of God, and makes the Moral Governor of the Universe little else than a weakly generous human father.

4. The Somaj explains away the distinctive doctrines of Christianity, and more especially the divinity of Christ. Just as the bee goes from flower to flower, appreciating all, and all alike; so Brahism receives Christ as one Master among many. We must not be led away by the rhapsodic references sometimes made to Christ by the Brahmist leader, for there is always an underlying adverse meaning, or they are immediately counteracted by other statements. In one part of his recent annual lecture, Keshub says: "India will one day acknowledge Christ as an atonement—an atonement for all mankind." The lecturer was dwelling on the need of universal fraternity, and wishing to have a hard rock to lean upon, made the above statement. He means by it merely that Christ preached the doctrine of universal brotherhood, and was in that sense a Saviour of the world. For in the same lecture he says, "Christ never preached sectarianism. He preached universal fellowship. Socrates, Buddha, Confucius, Chaitanya, all these were Christ!" There is no difference between Christ and these men, excepting in degree! Surely teaching like this can in no sense be considered a stepping stone to Christianity.

I have already acknowledged that the Somaj contains much valuable truth. But so does Muhammadanism; and yet we know that that very fact keeps the Muhammadan aloof from Christ. I very much fear we shall have greater difficulty in winning over Brahmists to Christianity, than in attracting any of the ordinary Hindu sects.

Job Paul.
GATHERED SHEAVES.

III.

SHUDDHA.

The chief interest attaching to the conversion of Shuddha arises from the fact that he was one of the first three converts gathered from Viranagere, a village close to the city of Mysore. The story of his conversion illustrates most forcibly the mental struggle necessary to break away from the religion and traditions of one's childhood, the strong courage that will do and dare the worst, the powerful opposition of friends and foes that must be encountered, the persistent petty persecution that must be endured, and the ultimate triumph of consistent steady adhesion to principle and truth.

Shuddha was an only son, and though such a one is dear to parents in all lands, he is doubly dear in India. He is looked to, not only as the support of his parents in old age, but also as their deliverer from the terrors of the world to come; for only a son can perform those ceremonies which shall free his parents from the yoke of Yama, the god of the regions of the dead. The family god was Hanumantaraya, whose temples are thickly scattered over the province, and whose image, carved in the granite rock, often confronts the passer-by. The young lad was early instructed to visit the temple of this god and perform the proper puja, or worship, as a means of propitiating it.

His daily occupation was that of a gardener, and his life did not afford much scope for variety of any kind. It is true the gardener has abundant opportunity for communing with nature and nature's God; but unless there is some clear knowledge of that God it is very seldom that the children of the soil are raised to a high spiritual or intellectual level by their surroundings. The tendency, as seen in the daily life of such men, is generally in the opposite direction. The tiller of the ground has obviously a more sensitive nature than the plants he tends or the bullocks he drives; but he only makes scant use of this initial advantage. Earth is his mother; his cattle are his companions. He is nourished by the one; and he lives with, talks to, and loves the others until he is assimilated to them, and his mind becomes as impervious to ideas as their backs are to blows. Many of the gardeners possess at least
one pair of bullocks, and at certain seasons of the year they may be seen starting to their little rented plot of ground, driving the bullocks before them and carrying their plough on their own shoulders. During the rest of the year, when hand work only is required in the gardens, they saunter on with lordly leisure, work for some hours with a diligence which involves no fatigue, and then return for their mid-day meal. For the mid-day sleep, also, it should be added. Life was never meant to be an uncomfortable hurry, least of all for gardeners and ryots. Bullock pace—two miles an hour—that is respectable, and may be enforced as reasonable; but to anything faster than that they object in the same fashion as their own jibbing cattle. So the gardener sleeps with a good conscience, and then resumes his labour till the evening when amid droves of cattle and clouds of dust he returns to the village, while the heavens are all aglow with the glories of the setting sun. Then, while supper is being prepared, there follows a long talk with the neighbours perhaps, as they sit in the verandah of some house, and the great events of their little circle are gravely and earnestly discussed.

But for Shuddha something at length occurred to break the monotony of this kind of existence. A school was established, and Timma (for that was his heathen name) went in the evenings to this school, which was conducted by a Christian catechist. The Bible was one of the books taught, and the reading of this book, as it does in every case, brought new ideas to this young gardener's mind; for "the entrance of thy Word giveth light." The light was very dim at first, and it required much private thought and more discussion to make the matter clear. In this Book idolatry was condemned: his daily practices then were not necessarily regarded by all as right. He read that all people were of "one blood," created by the same God who governs all men: then caste was a system not universally accepted. But teaching that overthrew all his traditional learning and practice was not to be accepted at once. So there were discussions with the Catholic priest; there were talks with the Methodist missionary; and there were many anxious questionings in his own mind. Mr. Hutcheon, who was then the missionary in Mysore, evidently made a deep impression on Timma's mind by showing the terrible results of idolatry upon king Nebuchadnezzar, who was driven from his throne and became like the beasts of the field.
This troubled Timma much, and made him greatly afraid. He was now about twenty years of age, and was well able to think for himself.

The Bible class was regularly attended by some twelve or fourteen heathen young men, and clearly the teaching of the Bible brought a new element into their lives, as well as a new topic for discussion into the village. Several of the young men were forbidden to go to this class; for it was rumoured that some of them were on the point of becoming Christians. Such a thing as a Viranagere man becoming a Protestant Christian was not known by the oldest inhabitant: it must not be. So ran the fiat of the elders of Viranagere. But Timma persisted in going, though he was opposed by both father and mother, who told him that the teaching was ruining him. He was convinced by this time of the truth of Christianity; for he had attended the class for more than two years. But the great obstacle was caste. If he became a Christian, he must break his caste, and be driven out of house and home.

Timma's mind was in that state that it wanted some powerful motive to influence his will to take the final step. He was fully convinced, but he was halting, vacillating. The claims of God were strong on the one side; the love of home and his duty to his relatives were powerful on the other. A present, overwhelming motive to action was lacking. Such a motive was shortly supplied in a violent out-break of that terrible scourge of eastern lands, the cholera. It raged in Viranagere; many were attacked and speedily carried off; the people were panic-stricken; and each called upon his god for help and deliverance. The native minister, good Abijah Samuel, who has gone to his reward, was then in Mysore; and he preached with power to the people that gathered in the Viranagere school. The terrors of the cholera had seized upon the minds of the people; their danger stared them in the face; and the faithful preacher of the Cross asked them what account they would render to God, if He were to send His dread messenger to take them away. Several were visibly affected, and Timma was one of them. The all powerful motive of fear had fastened upon him, and he must follow his convictions and receive baptism.

Unknown to his parents he went to the mission-house the next day to tell the missionary about the step he had determined to take. This was on a Saturday evening.
Mr. Hutcheon's heart was greatly cheered, when he, with another young man, came to ask for baptism. They were carefully examined; their answers were of the most satisfactory nature, as they had long been under Christian instruction, and they were told to come the next morning for baptism. Though they had come in the quiet of the evening to the mission-house, it was soon noised abroad in Viranagere that two young men had been to the padre, and that they were going to be baptized.

That was an anxious night for Timma. He spent it in his own house. His parents forbade him to go out in the morning. But in spite of their commands he started off as if to go to his work, and came to the mission-house. Two other young men had joined him; and these three, with hearts trembling with excitement and fear as well as beating with hope, came to be admitted into the number of the sacramental host of God's elect by the divinely appointed rite of baptism. But there was another ordeal to be passed first. They wore on their heads that tuft of hair which is held so dear by all Hindus—the juttu. This is regarded as a mark of heathenism; for many believe it is impossible to enter heaven, if a man die without it. Timma must part with his juttu. His was a fine one, and one in which he evidently took a pride; for even now the remembrance of that long lock of hair seems to awaken feelings of satisfaction and pride. But proud though he was of this tuft of hair, it must go. His convictions were stronger than his pride or his caste feelings; and so he was shorn of his locks. Then in the old chapel, in the presence of about twenty people, these three young men witnessed a good confession, and parted for ever with their heathenism by being baptized in the sacred "Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Now that the decisive step had been taken, what was Shuddha to do? Would he dare to venture back to his heathen home to bear the reproaches of kinsmen and friends? His courage was not strong enough for this bold step at first. So, after the morning service, he quietly found his way to his garden, and spent the morning in reading his Bible and in prayer. There was great consternation at home, for the news had spread with astonishing rapidity; and search was made for the young man who had thus dared to despise the traditions of the village and the authority of his parents in order to be true to his convictions. But he spent the day in
peace, and wended his way to the afternoon service in the same little sanctuary. As the shades of evening drew on, under cover of the darkness, he went to the Viranagere school, and there he sat weary and hungry, for he had eaten nothing the whole day.

The opposition and petty persecution of relatives now began. His mother, hearing that her wayward son had come back, could not resist a mother's yearning, and went to see him. A long conversation ensued, in which Shuddha told his mother that he had been baptized in order to become a child of God. The people who were standing near being wishful to show to the full the disgrace, as they counted it, that had befallen their companion, told him to take the cloth from his head to show that the beautiful lock of hair, of which he had been so proud, had vanished. His mother fully realised now that her son had completely broken with caste, so she wailed out in sorrow and in anger, "You are not my son; you are their (the missionary's) son. Your father is coming with a sword and will kill you." Shuddha did not believe that his father's feelings would be so perverted, and so he calmly reasoned with his mother, telling her that the step he had taken was done in order to become good. He had not done it to bring disgrace upon his family; and for the good work he had done, they must not be ashamed. The mother was not satisfied; she could not think her son was in a right frame of mind; there must have been some secret power that had exerted a baneful influence over him. She asked him what drug the missionaries had given him to destroy his reason. The answer was ready,—"They gave me no drug; they spoke words of wisdom to me." A power had been working on Shuddha's mind, a power of which the poor woman had but a faint idea—the power of truth impressed by God's Holy Spirit; and this power was enabling him to endure patiently the insults and reproaches that were heaped upon him.

The conversation ended in Shuddha's mother consenting to take him home; but he must not enter the house. He might stay in the yard, and have his food there by himself. Such is the power of caste; such is the pride it engenders. If a poor gardener becomes a Christian, he is too despicable a person to enter his father's house, though his conduct is irreproachable.

When he got home, the storm that had been gathering in his father's mind, burst upon his head in the most frantic
abuse. But he bore it all patiently, and tried to pacify him. The next day he was closely watched; he was forbidden to go anywhere, and had quietly to sit and endure the reproaches cast upon him. He was allowed ultimately to go to his work; but he must not go to the chapel or to the school. The missionaries noticed his absence, and visited him. He felt he was not doing right in staying away; so he determined to brave all opposition and in spite of threats and entreaties regularly attended the service of God’s house.

Soon afterwards a wedding took place among his relatives, and the great question arose as to whether Shuddha’s father and mother should be allowed to join in partaking the marriage feast; for did they not keep a son in their house who had forsaken his religion and broken his caste? It was decided that they must not attend; and this brought a fresh storm of abuse upon poor Shuddha’s head. But to the honour of his father and mother be it said that they preferred to be put out of caste rather than give up their only son: parental feeling was stronger than caste prejudice. Though his parents would not give him up, yet his wife forsook him. He had been married in his earlier days according to the Hindu custom; but she had not come to live with him. When he became a Christian, his wife’s relatives refused to let her go to her husband, for the disgrace was more than they could endure.

About a year and a half after his baptism, a sore trial came to Shuddha. A grievous famine fell on the land; dire sickness came in its train, and Shuddha was one of its victims. When stricken down by fever and helpless, his relatives besought him to worship his old idols. They tied a charm about his neck, and tried by every means to induce him to renounce his new faith and return to the faith of his fathers. But though weak in body, he still was true to his God, who safely brought him through all his fiery trials.

Affairs soon after took a happier turn. The storm had spent its fury; the consistent life of the young Christians had disarmed opposition; and the new faith was regarded with more respect. After two or three years Shuddha’s wife was persuaded to become a Christian and join her husband; though father and mother still held aloof. Some six or seven years after his baptism, his father was taken ill. But though he was visited on his death-bed by the missionaries, though he was constantly instructed and warned, he refused to yield, and died as he had lived.
the strong love of Shuddha's mother made her cling to her son. She loved him, she watched over him, and would not part with him. Still it was a long struggle before she could give up the worship of her ancestral gods. For fifteen years or more she continued loving her Christian son and worshipping her false gods. At length she yielded and received baptism; and now it is touching to see the intense love with which she regards her only son—a love heightened and sanctified by the bond of a common faith.

Little need be added. Work was found for Shuddha in connection with the mission; and for many years he has pursued the Christian faith with a steady earnestness which has been most exemplary. He has been a means of great encouragement to the missionaries by his consistent life. One at least has said that his faith in the possibility of the true conversion of the Hindus, has been mainly sustained by the living proof of it in the person of Shuddha.

Shuddha is now chapel-keeper and school peon, and knows the working of the mission as well as any of the missionaries. He knows when the services should be held, and how things ought to be done; and he is always at his post ready to do his part. He is now an integral part of our Mysore mission, and many things would miss Shuddha's watchful care were he to be removed from his post. May he live long to be an ornament to the church and an example to the heathen!

H. GULLIFORD.

THE LATE REV. THOMAS HODSON.

(Concluded from page 269.)

This brief record of Mr. Hodson's career in India would be very incomplete if it contained no reference to his person and character. I was acquainted with him only during the later part of his life, but I had the pleasure of being his colleague at Bangalore and of holding almost daily intercourse with him for nine consecutive years.

As I knew him he was a fine specimen of an old English gentleman. He was stout and well-preserved, was dignified in his bearing, and had a countenance fresh, open, and full of benignity. He was said to bear a striking resemblance to Dr. Jabez Bunting, who was the chief figure in Methodism forty years ago. When Dr. Norman McLeod was in Bangalore he recognized the likeness at once.
The Late Rev. Thomas Hodson.

The impressions received on a first introduction were not altered by further acquaintance. He was a most genial and pleasant companion, with a fund of anecdotes always at command. It made no matter though his stories had been told half a dozen times before; everyone was glad to listen to them again if it were only for the hearty laugh with which they were concluded.

Mr. Hodson's Christian experience was bright and cheerful. His religion was a daily enjoyment. He had learned to trust with unquestioning faith on the atonement of Christ, and he sought no other refuge. The doctrines of the Gospel were to him as clear as sunlight; no film of doubt dimmed his spiritual vision; he lived in an atmosphere where there was neither mist nor gloom. It may be, however, that this serene and joyous day had been preceded by a night of conflict and temptation.

He was a pattern to all in his use of the means of grace, whether private, family, or public. His early devotional exercises were short, but he returned to them again after finishing his morning work. He used to recommend this practice as most advantageous in a country where, whether for business or health, the first and freshest hours should be spent in the open air.

Family worship was celebrated three times a day—twice in English with the family and once in Kanarese with the servants. Although the ordinary custom of having morning prayers in the vernacular for the whole household seems preferable, the other plan has advantages of its own, and certainly makes larger demands on the time. Like the old Puritans he regarded family prayers as an important daily service for instruction and worship, and he was accustomed in the morning to read not only a portion of Scripture but also the expository notes found in the excellent devotional commentary of Joseph Benson.

He had the Psalmist's love for the house of the Lord and was a most attentive hearer of the word. He went to worship and not to criticise. I do not remember him ever finding fault with a sermon, but if it tended to edification he would speak of it with generous and thankful approval.

His pulpit ministrations were held in high and general esteem. His sermons were not distinguished by striking exposition, nor were they specially rousing and stimulating, but they were eminently refreshing. There was no preacher one went to hear with greater pleasure; there was no dread
of anything tedious or dull. His preaching acted on the
spiritual life like the evening breeze after a hot and weary
day. He was at his best when addressing a handful of
people at a week-evening service. His perfect naturalness
of manner, which was the charm of his delivery, was then
seen to full advantage. His sermons were fashioned on the
good old Methodist lines. During his long residence in
England he must have provided ample material, and pro-
probably not many of the later sermons were altogether new,
but they were carefully reviewed before delivery. A young
brother chanced to say one day that Mr. Hodson could preach
without any trouble. What was probably intended as a
compliment was not accepted as such. Our venerable friend
was not willing that people should think he was giving to
God’s service what cost him little. And there was certainly
in his sermons the ripeness and flavour of the old with the
life and freshness of the new. The words might come from
the old sermon-book, but they fell on the congregation
charged with living power direct from the preacher’s heart.

As a Superintendent he was kind and considerate to those
labouring under him. He could indeed be severe enough if
occasion required, and no one liked to incur his serious dis-
pleasure. The discipline, almost military in its thoroughness,
which obtained in the earlier days of Methodism, was alto-
gether after his mind, and he had a very summary mode of
dealing with offenders. I used to think, also, that there were
types of character which he somewhat failed to understand.
He seemed to be unable to appreciate great excellencies when
at all marred by certain failings which he specially disliked.
But as a rule he treated his colleagues with the most generous
confidence, and it was a happiness to be associated with him.

A habit of simple trust in God, combined with a naturally
sanguine temperament, enabled him to look at everything
on its bright side. The prospect before him seemed ever a
cheerful one. He never spoke discouragingly of the progress
of God’s work. I remember how, at a Society Meeting some
years ago in connection with the Cantonment Chapel, I
spoke somewhat gloomily about the apparent want of success
in the English work. At that time things were less promis-
ing than they are now and statistics were assuredly on my
side. Mr. Hodson followed me and spoke in quite a different
strain. He shewed how, with the incessant changes of a
Military Cantonment, it was impossible to reap the full re-
sult of our labours, while the loss to us was a gain elsewhere.
I felt at the time that his was the truer view. I was like one watching the big rain-clouds attracted by our rocky heights and mourning because night after night they were carried over us leaving the land as arid and barren as before: he was consoling himself with the reflection that these clouds were bearing health and fertility to other lands.

He viewed with the same happy hopefulness the progress of the native work. If you could refer to one dispiriting feature he could point to two that were cheering. He did not expect the harvest while it was yet seed-time. During the whole of his career, the direct results, as seen in the number of converts, were comparatively small, but if there had been none he would never have doubted of ultimate success. Once, when giving a missionary address in England, he represented India as saying to the churches at home, ‘Have patience with me and I will pay thee all.’ With this confidence he could work cheerfully himself and encourage his fellow labourers. There is, of course, a danger lest assurance of future success should lead us to relax our efforts after immediate results, but, as a rule, missionaries are in more peril of slackening their pace from discouragement than from hopefulness, and Mr. Hodson did good service in tempering the more ardent but less equable enthusiasm of his younger brethren.

He was also a pattern worthy of imitation in his freedom from undue anxiety. He left the morrow to be anxious for itself. The worries of Indian life are many and various and the climate does not predispose one to bear them with equanimity, while mission work brings with it troubles and perplexities of its own. But it was not very often that Mr. Hodson’s composure was disturbed. He fully realized that there are two sorts of evils about which we should not trouble ourselves—those which we can help and those which we cannot. His future he committed entirely into God’s hands. He used to say that he just went on from year to year and he would give up his work when he could do no more. He had ceased ‘proposing’ and left all to the great Disposer.

He was very happy in his domestic relationships. His first wife, who died in 1866, was a woman of beautiful Christian character, and he recorded of her that during a union of thirty-five years she never grieved him in word or deed. No one was more unfitted for a solitary life than he was, and his friends were very glad to see him again happily married. Of the widow who survives we may say nothing;
except that by her loving and devoted ministry she had the comfort of imparting much brightness and enjoyment to his declining years.

Mr. Hodson arrived in England shortly before I returned, in the spring of 1878, and I met him two or three times in London. There was a sad change visible in his personal appearance, but he was as cheery and genial as ever. There was not a breath of murmuring that he must at length resign his work to others and pass into comparative retirement. He was quite prepared for whatever God might choose.

He attended the Conference of 1878 which was held at Bradford. Ten years previously, when at home for a few months on furlough, he had received the honour of being elected a member of the Legal Conference, and now, when the time had come to have his name placed on the supernumerary list, very kindly reference was made to his long and faithful services. A pleasant surprise also awaited him at the luncheon given by Mr. Jenkins to all the old Indian missionaries present at the Conference. Mr. Sanderson presented him a cheque for fifty guineas, contributed by brethren who had laboured with him in the mission field. He was much touched by this token of esteem and replied with deep feeling.

After the Conference he took a house near Mansfield, calling it Bangalore Cottage, and here he passed the remainder of his days. His work was done. Contrary to our hopes, he never regained his strength. He had a relapse of fever, and when that passed away he remained still feeble. He attended no more Conferences or District Meetings. I do not know whether he was ever able again to minister in public. He was denied the supernumerary's consolation of preaching in the village chapels. But he enjoyed a beautifully calm and peaceful evening. Although feeble he had no sickness and seemed altogether free from pain. The short letters he occasionally wrote told of the old cheerfulness. If brethren went out of their way to pay him a visit, as they not unfrequently did, he was thankful for their considerateness. There was never a word of lament. When, as in his case, old age is cheerful and happy, it has seldom to complain of neglect.

His strength visibly declined from the beginning of last year. Still he looked well and was so bright and happy that it was hoped he might live a few years more. On
September the 8th, he had a feverish attack and was restless during the evening. He was, however, enjoying sweet communion with God, and with great feeling he said many times, ‘my Jesus, my Saviour.’ His trust was in Christ in death as it had been in life. As the evening wore on, he complained of weariness and wanted to go to rest. He slept tranquilly till one o’clock on the morning of the 9th, and then without waking passed home to God. There was not a struggle or a sigh, and he could scarcely have been conscious of death till he awoke to a glorious life. We feel as if we were scarcely using a figure when we say he slept in Jesus.

The Rev. William Arthur, whose wide reputation has not made him forgetful of his early mission life in the Mysore, paid a last tribute of respect to his old friend by preaching his funeral sermon at Mansfield on October 7th. This act of kindness was the more appreciated as for several years Mr. Arthur’s health has permitted him to preach but seldom. He took for his text, “For David, after he had served his generation by the will of God, fell on sleep,” and descanted on the passage in his own inimitable style.

At our District Meeting in January it was resolved that Mr. Hodson’s memory should be perpetuated amongst us by some suitable monument, but his chief memorial will be the mission he founded in the Mysore.

J. HUDSON.

AT WORK AMONG THE MUHAMMADANS.

The thoughts of Europe have been of late so stirred with regard to the Eastern Question in general, and to the rule of Islam in particular, that a few remarks on the aspects of missionary enterprise amongst the followers of the False Prophet cannot but be coincident with the current thought of many of the readers of this Magazine. Every one who is called to labour amongst the Muhammadans must be struck with the peculiarities of the work, on account of their nearness to us in many points, and yet their great distance from the truth. Amongst the points of contact between the two religions may be mentioned the belief in the unity of God, in the inspiration of the Old and New Testaments, the conviction that Christ is a true
At Work among the Muhammadans.

Prophet, that he is now living in heaven, and is coming again to destroy Antichrist and to reign for a certain period. All these points give an interest and a zest to the controversy with Muhammadans, which are wanting when the Christian teacher has to deal with men of any other false religion.

Starting upon such premisses it might be thought that the missionary has an easy and hopeful task before him. But alas! the fancy is soon dispelled. The happy dream fades as we awake to a recognition of the wide differences which part Islam from Christianity. It is true that the points above named can be referred to with advantage, and form the best introduction to a friendly discussion. But when Muhammad, in order to please Jews and Christians, said that the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, "a light and a guidance," he either did not foresee the consequences of such an assertion, or else, which is not an uncharitable hypothesis considering the age in which he lived and his traditionally illiterate condition, was ignorant of the contents of the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms.

We are not surprised that in later times, as learning advanced, the followers of Islam should have been put to the greatest straits to account for the contradictions apparent between the Bible and the Quran. One device has often been resorted to with considerable effect. Their doctors say that when a book descended from heaven upon any prophet, that book abrogated all former books. In this way the Taurait (Law) was abrogated by the Zibur (Psalms), and again the Zibur by the Ingil (Gospel). From this the step is easy to say that the Ingil was, in its turn, abrogated by the Quran. To those who are unacquainted with the Bible such a theory sounds plausible, and this is one of the first difficulties with which the modern evangelist is met wherever he goes. "It is of no use quoting your Gospel to us, for it is no longer in force." Much patience is required to meet this objection. We urge in reply that it is contrary to the attributes of God that He should change His plan of salvation from age to age. If God is one and eternal, such a thought is unworthy of Him. Moreover their prophet nowhere hints in the Quran that the former Books were abrogated, but always speaks of them in terms of the highest reverence. Then we shew that Christ did not come to destroy the Law and the
Prophets, but to fulfil, and that thus the theory that one
book abrogates another falls to the ground.

An antagonist thus pressed, if he does not get angry
declaring all to be lies, frequently starts on another tack,
which has also been sanctioned by Muslim writers. He
asserts that the Law and the Gospel which the Christians
possess have been changed in a former age, and are there­
fore unworthy of credit. An ignorant objector will even
assert that *padres* change the Gospel every year! The
various translations which are current have perhaps given
colour to such objections; but with a little patience it is
not difficult to shew how translations may differ while the
original remains the same, always excepting slight clerical
errors which are liable to creep in from time to time.

Another argument often has to be met. In the Quran
it is asserted that the Ingil contains a prophecy of Muham­
mad. But the Gospels and Epistles make no mention of
the coming of any prophet greater than Christ; and there­
fore Muslims assume that the promise of the Comforter is
the prophecy referred to. This at once opens up the
question as to whether, or not, the Holy Spirit and
Muhammad are identical. It need hardly be said how
easy it is, with the Gospel in our hands, to deal with such
a palpable absurdity.

Though the Muslim admits that Christ is living in the
fourth heaven, he strives to overturn the main doctrine of
the Christian faith—the atonement of our blessed Lord
effected on the Cross—by the Quran's denial of his death.
Here again the Muhammadan is in a difficulty. He must
either accept the overwhelming evidence afforded by
history and revelation and reject the story of the Quran
that another was substituted for Christ on the cross,
or else hold to the religion of his fathers, and assum­
ing the inspiration of his book alone reject all others as
spurious.

These are only some of the questions which arise daily
in this great controversy. In some quarters there is mani­
fested a spirit of enquiry which is truly encouraging.
Sufism, a mystic system which arose in Persia, endeavours
to supply the place of the deeply spiritual character of
Christianity; and many earnest souls seek for rest in the
mortifications and abstractions of that system. Some of
these men are exceedingly interesting to converse with.

It has been computed that about three hundred converts
from Islam are now living. But what are they in comparison of the millions who still cleave to their Arabian prophet? Surely the Church of Christ should put forth more prayer and more effort on behalf of these erring ones.

H. D. Goldsmith.

GLEANINGS.

Our Girls’ Schools throughout this country have suffered a severe loss in the death of Mrs. Everett Green, reported on the 8th instant by telegram. As a historian Mrs. Green was well known to the world, and her eminent abilities and services were recognised and acknowledged by the Queen and Government of England. Her chief work was the *Lives of the Princesses of England*, in 5 vols. She was employed for some years in the Record office where she was entrusted by the Master of the Rolls with the duty of calendaring the State Papers. We met her in connection with the Ladies’ Auxiliary Committee in London. She took an enthusiastic and most intelligent interest in the progress of female education in India, and devoted a great deal of time to the work of the committee, of which she was one of the Honorary Secretaries. Her death will deprive that committee of a most accomplished and energetic member. Miss Pearson’s work in the City of Mysore had her very warm sympathy and support.

In connection with the recent anniversary of the Girls’ School of H. H. the Maharajah of Vizianagram, an important speech was made by the Hon. T. Muthuswami Iyer. Referring to the very short period of school life which, under existing social regulations, is possible for girls, he remarked upon the importance of supplementing early and elementary education by careful and liberal home training. In sketching a suitable curriculum for girls he observed that while morality should be carefully inculcated in school, any dogmatic religious teaching would be regarded as an unwarrantable interference with national religious scruples—a statement, however, which is not quite borne out by actual
experience. He insisted strongly on the necessity of providing a curriculum for girls essentially different from that through which boys must pass. While the common rudiments of education must be the same for all, it was important for girls that serviceable knowledge on the laws of health, on sick-nursing, and on points of domestic economy should be carefully imparted. He suggested, what is very necessary, that there should be a special series of class books for girls, describing some of the world's best women, and inculcating elementary practical science. He advocated the desirability of surrounding the girls at school with objects tending to cultivate the taste. The time had come when, instead of throwing on the women of families in easy circumstances the household drudgery as a matter of conventional duty and a means of checking the vice of idleness, there should be taught to them groups of innocent, useful and agreeable occupations, such as are at once compatible with the dignified position of a lady and the requirements of a Hindu home. He earnestly recommended the training of caste girls as teachers, so that a system of home teaching might speedily spread throughout the country. On the whole, for a long time to come, he seemed to feel, it is to this home teaching that Hindus must look for the quick and rapid extension of the higher education of females. No one is more competent to represent the real needs felt by the natives in reference to female education than Mr. Muthuswami Iyer, and we commend his various suggestions to those who are interested in the success of Mission Girls' Schools. We are foreigners, and, either through inability to see things from the standpoint of Hindus, or through lack of sympathy with their involuntary prejudices, we are in danger perhaps of thrusting our Western methods upon the East more rudely than wisely. Any how it is well that men sufficiently representative and of adequate knowledge should sometimes speak out and let us know what they really require.

EDITOR.

WESLEYAN METHODIST NOTES.

MADRAS DISTRICT.

The Madras Christian College, in the management of which the Wesleyan Mission takes part and in which one of our Missionaries is employed as a professor, has been encouragingly successful in the recent University Examinations.
Arts Examination, forty-four of its students were successful, and in the Bachelor of Arts, forty-two. In both cases this is a greater number than from any other college. The Free Church Mission High School, which at present is held in the same building, has achieved an equal success at the Matriculation Examination, no less than fifty-six boys having passed. The one Institution, the Madras Christian College and Free Church High School, has therefore passed the largest number of candidates at all three of the University Examinations.

MADRAS.—(English).

The annual distribution of prizes to the pupils of the Wesleyan Girls' Day School was held on the 10th March in the Wesleyan Chapel, Popham's Broadway. A very large number of the friends and supporters of the institution were present, and evinced great interest in the proceedings. Mrs. H. B. Grigg presided, and distributed the prizes. A sacred song "Sabbath recreations," sung by the children, commenced the proceedings, and was followed by a prayer by the Rev. G. M. Cobban. The Rev. W. Gowdie then read the report for the past year shewing that the school opened in January 1882, with 62 scholars, and closed in December, with seventy-five names on the rolls. Miss Hart, the head mistress, resigned at the end of the year, and Miss Pedroza, who holds a first grade teacher's certificate, and received a Normal training in England, was appointed in her stead. Mrs. Brander, Inspectress of Schools, examined the school in August last; her report was very favourable. The Director of Public Instruction, in his review of Mrs. Brander's report, was of opinion that in the Upper and Lower Primary School examinations, the percentage of passed pupils to those examined was fairly high; but the results of the middle school examination and the higher examination for women were not satisfactory. All the classes acquitted themselves very satisfactorily at the annual inspection. The map drawing and needle work were very good. The Kindergarten system and object lessons have been introduced, and fair progress seems to have been made. He was also of opinion that the teaching staff should be increased. Previous to the Christmas holidays the Rev. W. Gowdie examined the lower classes in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the whole school in Scripture, and he reported the results as on the whole highly pleasing. Mrs. Robertson and Mrs. Harvey, two ladies of the Committee, inspected the needle work, and their report was fair. The members of the Committee contributed towards the purchase of the prizes. Mrs. Grigg gave a special prize for map drawing, and Mr. T. G. Blake, the good conduct prize. The Benediction brought the proceedings to a close.
MADRAS.—(ROYAPETTAH.)

The annual distribution of prizes to the native girls of the Wesleyan Mission Schools, Madras South, was held on the 2nd March in the Royapettah Anglo-Vernacular School, which was tastefully decorated. The Hon’ble Mrs. Master presided, and gave away the prizes. The proceedings were opened with prayer by the Revd. Dr. Jewett, of the Baptist Mission, after which the Revd. J. Cooling, the manager of the schools, read an elaborate report touching upon the work of female education in connection with these institutions. We take the following from the report:—The Wesleyan Mission Girls’ School consists of four branches, (1) the Royapettah girls’ boarding school; (2) a training department for Christian female teachers in connection with the boarding school; (3) four schools for caste Hindu girls; and (4) the Zenana work. The superintendence of the work is divided amongst the ladies of the Mission; the boarding school and the Zenana work being under Mrs. Cooling’s care; the three Hindu girls’ schools at North Triplicane, Meersultpett and Egmore, under Mrs. Patterson, and the Hindu girls’ school at Royapettah, under Mrs. Evers. The Royapettah Girls’ Boarding School, situated in the Mission compound, although intended principally as a boarding school, also admits day scholars. The number on the roll has been about the same as the previous year, viz., 48 boarders and 30 day scholars. For many years past the school has been aided on the result-grant system; but early in the year a change was made in the method of Government support, and in order to encourage the elder girls to qualify as teachers application was made to the Director of Public Instruction that the school might in future be aided on the salary-grant system. This application, being recommended by the Inspectress, Mrs. Brander, was readily complied with by the Director, the result being that the school was placed on a better basis. In July, Mrs. Franklin, who had efficiently and satisfactorily conducted the duties of matron for nearly nineteen years, felt herself obliged to relinquish her post, and the vacancy thus created was filled by Mrs. Davids, who had some previous practical knowledge of the duties. In addition to the sound Vernacular and English education imparted to the girls, a knowledge of domestic life in the cuisine department has been also taught. During the past year four girls have been in daily attendance at the Government Female Normal School in Black Town, in order to undergo a course of Normal training. One of these girls has been appointed to a post in the Royapettah Hindu Girls’ School. The report in connection with the other schools of the Mission was equally satisfactory. Through the kind assistance of friends in England, scholarships tenable for a year have been offered to those girls who pass the highest in the ordinary Upper Primary Examination of each school, as an
encouragement to qualify themselves as teachers. After the reading of the report, Mrs. Master gave away the prizes, some of them being valuable Japanese work boxes, Chinese works of art, and fancy articles of English manufacture. The Revd. G. Patterson, in suitable words, thanked Mrs. Master for her kindness in presiding on the occasion and the Benediction was pronounced by the Revd. H. D. Goldsmith. The children were next treated to an abundant supply of sweetmeats, to which they did ample justice. There was also a fancy sale of articles, which was extensively patronised, the Superintendents being Mrs. Cooling and Mrs. Patterson.

The following account of the Zenana work was read at the meeting:—At the beginning of the year, Mrs. Coopoosamy Row, the wife of our native pastor, was carrying on this work, but on the removal of her husband to Negapatam she had to give it up. After her departure we experienced such difficulty in meeting with a suitable agent that for some months the work was in abeyance. In the middle of the year Mrs. Namasivoyam, the wife of the Head Master of the Meersaibpettah School, began to visit amongst her husband's old scholars. Shortly afterwards Mrs. Streenevasa Row, the wife of a Brahman convert, took up the work in Poodoopaukum and Royapettah formerly carried on by Mrs. Coopoosamy Row. These two agents have now 30 pupils taught in 21 houses, the greater part of whom are old scholars of one or other of our schools. Their chief duty is to carry on the studies begun by the girls at school, but their visits give them many opportunities of conversing with and giving instruction to the women of the houses to which they go. This department of work is capable of very great development. Our agents have now more invitations to new houses than they can comply with. Had we educated native women able and willing to take it up and had we the necessary funds, we could here in the southern suburbs of Madras, without in the least interfering with the work done by others, extend this work tenfold.

Mr. Cooling concludes his report as follows:—It will be seen that the greatest difficulty we have just now to contend against is the lack of fully qualified female teachers. Both our School work and our Zenana work have suffered from this during the past year. The simple fact is that female education both in Madras and in the Mofussil is developing so rapidly that the supply of female teachers is not equal to the demand. This is not the place to discuss how that demand is to be met, but any one who has thought much on the subject must be of opinion that no satisfactory remedy will be found until Caste Hindu women take up this work.
Our second need is that of funds. So long as the fees in girls' schools bear as small a proportion to the total cost of the schools as they now do we shall have to appeal to our friends both in England and in India to continue their help. We are already greatly indebted to many friends both far and near, both European and Native, for kindly sympathy and generous help. To the Ranee Gujapathi Rao for two prizes which will be given this afternoon, to the Hindu gentlemen and to the European gentlemen and ladies who during the year have subscribed to the funds of the school, we render our heartiest thanks. Without their assistance we could not keep on our work: with it, under God's blessing, we hope not only to keep up what we have begun but to extend it.

NEGAPATAM.

The Rev. A. F. and Mrs. Barley, recently of this circuit, left Madras for London, per s.s. El Dorado on the 8th March. Mr. Barley is announced to speak in connection with the approaching May meetings.

At the last University Matriculation Examination 11 candidates from our High School in this circuit were successful, and not 10 as announced in last month's Harvest Field.

KARUR.

The Rev. G.W. Sawday, who has just returned from a visit to this circuit, writes as follows:—"There had been a long-standing invitation to visit Karur, the town where the Children's Home of the Madras District is situated; but for many reasons I had been prevented from accepting it. However, it was necessary I should see the Exhibition at Madras, and this seemed to offer a good opportunity for visiting Karur at the same time. Leaving Bangalore by the evening train I arrived at Karur the next morning at 9 o'clock and was welcomed by Mr. Gostick. The town itself contains about 10,000 people and does not differ from other Indian towns sufficiently to call for much remark. I believe there are no English people resident there except the Missionaries and their families, and it appears to be a most desirable sphere for Evangelistic Work. The famine which so completely devastated the Mysore country was felt a little less severely in Karur, but nevertheless its effects were very sad. So many poor children were left homeless and friendless, that the Missionaries in several of the stations
gathered in a number of those little outcasts, determined out of the mouths of these Hindu babes and sucklings to perfect the praise of Christ. Some two years ago the children were brought from these various Homes and concentrated in Karur. This Children's Home was the great object of attraction to me. The boys' branch is situated close to one of the Mission Houses and can thus be constantly overlooked by Mr. Gostick who has charge of it. The children looked remarkably healthy and happy, and it needed only a passing remembrance of the fearful scenes of the famine to fill one with gratitude that so many dear little ones have been rescued from want and misery, and in so many cases a life of sin. The great problem of all similar Institutions, viz., what practical training to give our children so as to fit them to earn their own living respectfully and honestly, has been to a great extent solved in Karur. The industrial buildings are close to the orphanage, on the opposite side of the road. The principal industries are rope-making and carpentry, in both of which the boys have done wonderfully well. I was told that one of the boys was able to make a Venetian window without assistance from any one, a most creditable performance and one which speaks volumes for the patience and care of those who have had charge of the Orphanage. Great progress has been made in rope-making. Large quantities of rope have been supplied to the South Indian Railway and at the Exhibition in Madras, the three prizes given for rope-making were all awarded to the Orphanage. The internal arrangements of the home are very similar to ours in the Mysore except that the houses are not so substantial and the clothing of the children is less elaborate; both of which are owing to the difference in climate, the chill breezes of Mysore being altogether unknown in the plains. Whilst much time and attention have been given to the industrial operations, the spiritual interests of the children have not been lost sight of. Indeed the constant prayer of those who have charge of the children is that they may be truly converted to God, and it is a most pleasing fact that eighteen boys and ten girls are now found meeting in class and seem to be truly changed.

I paid two visits to the girls' orphanage which has the benefit of Mrs. Little's experience and kindly supervision. On the first occasion the girls had just returned from work in the fields; for here the girls are trained to be true helpmeets of those whom they will have to marry by and by. They were not quite so tidy as they usually are; but there is a peculiar charm about the disorder which comes from real honest labour, especially when all look as happy as did the inmates of the girls' home. Our second visit was paid under more favourable circumstances. Whilst we sat down under the shadow of the palm trees the children sang most pleasingly some of their Tamil lyrics. I left Karur feeling more than ever the importance of this work and the vast possibilities connected therewith."
CALCUTTA DISTRICT.

DUM-DUM.

At a recent week night service at the Cantonments, Mr. Macdonald publicly examined and then baptized the Kadi Ahammed; and great hopes are entertained in reference to his future.

BANKURA.

The Rev. J. R. Broadhead announces the commencement of a school-chapel in the Lall Bazaar, the cost of which will be about Rs. 2,000. Towards this he has already received about Rs. 1,300, and earnestly pleads for more. In support of his appeal he writes:—"Bankura is a town of 20,000 souls, and the head quarters of a district containing a million. There is not a single Wesleyan chapel we call our own amongst all these people, nor is there a single church or chapel of any other kind dedicated to the worship of the one True and Living God; while temples and shrines to false gods strike the eye in every direction. We want to lay this fact clearly and forcibly before your readers, —a million souls without one temple to the True God;"

BRAHMANICAL WISDOM.

St. Paul says the Roman pagans professed themselves to be wise with respect to God and Divine things. But their pretensions were modest compared with those set forth in the sacred books of the Hindus. As of old the Jews and Greeks and Romans held themselves haughtily aloof from others, and considered themselves the wisest race under the sun, so in his secret heart the uncorrupted Brahman despises the Mlechchas, and regards their religious opinions with disdain. He is in possession of a vast amount of sacred literature. First and foremost are the four venerable Vedas. The oldest is the Rigveda, and this it seems was composed more than a thousand years before the Christian era. Before the days of Samuel the prophet among the Hebrews, the Aryan settlers in the Panjab were chanting the Vedic hymns. To explain these there are six Shastras which are called Vedangas, or limbs of the Vedas. Then follow the two sacred epic poems, the Ramayana and the Maha Bharata. These contain between them one hundred and forty thousand stanzas, and are worthy to take rank with the works of Homer, Virgil, Dante and Shakspeare. And lastly we have the eighteen Puranas or ancient writings, which are of comparatively recent origin. They were composed during the struggle with Buddhism to popularize the forgotten Vedic faith, and formulate the later developments of Hindu mythology.

Amongst all these the Vedas are regarded as pre-eminently sacred, and for them the highest inspiration is claimed. By some it is said that they came complete direct from the mouth of
God; by others that they are eternal. To expound and defend this huge mass of sacred literature, there exists the most powerful, the most exclusive, and, we may add, the most unscrupulous hierarchy that this world has seen. The Brahmins seem like other men, they eat and drink, live and die, sin and suffer as others; yet in theory they declare that they are gods. But, like most of us, they find that such is the obstinacy of circumstances, that it is hard to reduce this theory to practice. Still they do their best to exact divine honours, and quote a short sloka from the Maha Bharata to prove their right to them. In effect the sloka is a short syllogism—

The universe is under the control of God; God is subject to the mantrams: and the mantrams are under the direction of the Brahmins. Therefore by means of these they can coerce God Almighty. Thus like the man in the Roman comedy the Brahman is a wiser Jupiter than Jupiter himself. Here we reach a proper climax, and we find the Brahman seated on the top.

In fairness we must say that these outrageous pretensions are repudiated by many of the Brahmins, and are being pulverised by fair and solid contact with Christianity and common sense. Still the orthodox Brahman clings to his ancient legends, and bitterly regrets parting with his prerogatives. Sprung from the face of God, perpetuated by a long line of illustrious and saintly rishis, pre-eminently endowed with the divine favour and inheriting the divine intelligence, he regards Western learning, Western science, and Western nations with silent contempt. The orthodox Brahman is heard very little of; he does not write to the English papers; he is regular at his daily ceremonies, sighs at the degeneracy of the age, and is a potent factor in his own social circle. But the tide of Western civilization, vitalized by the principles of Christianity, is encroaching on the hoary structure behind which these men have entrenched themselves, and cut themselves asunder from the race. The advancing tide is so ceaseless and irresistible that it is breaking down their defence in many places and the whole fabric threatens to disappear. Their worst enemy must feel some respect and admiration for them. Centuries of culture, abstinence, and self-control have made them, in manners, intellect and physique, the finest race in India. Need we wonder that they fill all positions of trust and authority, and are the real masters of the country?

They adapt themselves with astonishing versatility to the revolution which is taking place around them. And whatever becomes of their sacred books, and their religious pretensions, they have the qualities which will secure for them the highest place in the social system of the future. Would that there were a greater disposition even now to submit their claims to the arbitration of common sense.

C. H. H.