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N.B.—A printer's mistake occurs in the December number of this Volume. The first page in that issue should be 161 and not, as at present, 121. The mistake is continued as far as page 177.

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HEATHEN FESTIVALS AND THE GOSPEL.

BY THE REV. GEORGE W. SAWDAY.

A MISSIONARY living in a town surrounded by sparsely-populated villages, seldom finds so good an opportunity for preaching the gospel as that which is presented to him in parishes or heathen festivals. Most of these are held in honour of some local deity, and probably but few of those who assemble could give any very satisfactory account of the god whom they have met to honour. Oftentimes the origin of these deities is involved in great obscurity. Some one long years ago erected a piece of stone and placed an offering near it; others passing by and seeing this made additions. Then a more enterprising man erected a mantapa over it, partly to shield it from the sun and rain, and partly to shelter the worshippers. Afterwards some man or woman in a distant village made a vow in some sad case of trouble or sickness; the trouble was averted or the sickness healed, and of course it was all the work of the swami. So the thing grew; marvellous reports of the power of the god were circulated and believed; people fearing its wrath implored its help, until at last the cry rises, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Hence on many a high hill and under many a green tree, thousands of the thirty-three million gods of India's pantheon are honoured by an annual festival at which vast crowds, in some cases almost innumerable, assemble.

As the time for a parîshê draws near all the homes in the
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neighbourhood are in a state of commotion. Bandies have to be hired and food to be prepared, to say nothing of new clothes for the women and children: for in one respect Christians and heathen very much resemble each other, viz., in that when there is any great festival or day of rejoicing they all like to have new clothes; and so at the time of the parishé most of the people are dressed in their best, either to honour the god or to obtain honour for themselves from their friends. It is a most interesting thing to watch the people wending their way to the scene of gathering, especially if the festival be a large one. Men, women and children all commingled, some in bandies, others on foot; some being carried, others riding on bullocks; all gay in cloths of varied hues, and most of them chattering, each one as though his neighbour was a mile off at the very least;—all this forms a picture never to be forgotten. If the journey be a long one there is the midday meal and the rest under the umbrageous trees, so that the road is lined with highly picturesque groups. It seems to be a most enjoyable time for all, and reckless gaiety reigns every where.

I remember that some time ago an old Brahman lady called on us at the mission house, and after she had piteously informed us how poor she was, starving in fact, I ordered the servant to give her half a seer of rice. The old lady mumbled out her thanks, and it was not until some time after that I found the servant had misunderstood my order and had given her 10 seers instead of half a seer! The old lady probably thought it would be rude to tell me how kind the servant had been, for certain it is she did not come again. However one day as I was riding along a road leading to a certain temple where a parishé was being held, I saw a group of people approaching who were going to join the worshippers there, and heard a loud shrill voice joking and laughing. Something seemed to suggest that the voice was a familiar one, and as the group drew near, what was my surprise to see my venerable friend of the rice business. How she was enjoying herself to be sure! Nothing poverty stricken now in the appearance of the old lady surrounded by her well-to-do friends! Very likely she was delighting her listeners by telling them how kind the servant had been, and how angry the Padre Sahib would be when he found out the mistake. Not only in this case but invariably I have been struck with the happy appearance of the people wending their way to these festivals.
With the exception here and there of a man impatiently urging on a refractory bull, or a weary mother carrying her still more weary child, the whole company seem to have left dull care at home and to have determined for a while to be merry at any cost. It is sadly painful to think of so many thousands assembling for the worship of idols of wood and stone, filled with an unquestioning belief that their prayers will be heard; but still the happy faces remind one of the gladness of the young people in England when a fair is in progress, and serve to show the pessimist that the narrow lives of even the lower classes of India are not, as some would have us suppose, incapable of broadening out into hilarious brightness.

It would be interesting to analyse the feelings of those who attend these festivals; to find out, for instance, how many go from motives of pleasure, and how many go to pray. I believe that Christian influence is making itself felt in this respect at any rate, and that although the festivals are attended almost as largely as ever, yet the number of those who attend for the purpose of worship with an unhesitating belief in the power of the idol has been very much diminished of late. I doubt not that a very large proportion in the festival crowds, if seriously questioned, would avow their utter indifference to the religious purposes of the parish and state that they came only to see what was to be seen and to enjoy as much fun as possible. For it is a fact that there is fun—plenty of it,—besides not a little entertainment of a very questionable character too; and probably the temple priests know full well that if the arrangements were to any considerable extent of a spiritual character, very few would be found to attend. Truly 'the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.'

There is no doubt that many attend these festivals for the purpose of seeing old friends. The chance of seeing brothers, relatives and friends from whom they have been separated for years and years, is quite sufficient to induce many to take a long and wearisome journey, as we who are exiles from our own dear country and friends, know full well. Others again go for the purpose of trade, for on some of these occasions thousands and even lakhs of rupees change hands. Dealers come from all parts of the country, and in some cases from remote parts of India; and long after the religious ceremonies have ceased, trade is vigorously carried on. One can often buy rare things at these places, and so people who
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have not much leisure make the occasion serve two ends; they perform their worship and then spend their superfluous cash. The opportunity for gossip is another distinct attraction. All household matters must be talked over, babies compared, and the latest bazaar news discussed. Any one who has sat in his tent and listened to the eager hum all around, interrupted now and again by peals of laughter, will readily comprehend this.

As I said before, the parishé affords a fine opportunity for missionary effort. I know that some decry it. They think the noise, the bustle, the excitement and such like concomitants of a festival are unfavourable to attempts to preach the gospel. That there are noise and excitement, that but comparatively few out of the vast crowds turn aside from the scene of revelry and excess to gaze upon the peaceful heavens and meditate upon the pure and holy God who dwells there, cannot be denied; but in spite of all this I believe, from my own experience, that much good may be done. The noise nearly always, except perhaps in the middle of the day, is very great; the excitement, especially when the idol is being taken out in procession, is indescribable; but the advantages so far outweigh the disadvantages that I hope never to let a parishé in my own neighbourhood pass without either attending myself or sending some of our native agents. Of course much discretion is needed in choosing the right time and the right subjects for preaching, and it requires much patience to deal successfully with a crowd all more or less excited by their surroundings; but I have never failed to find that patience and good temper win the day. I remember on one occasion being most vilely abused by an old Brahman, whereupon I asked him if he believed in the efficacy of baptism and if he had bathed that day, to both of which questions he replied in the affirmative. I then pointed out to the people that it was evident that bathing had no power to change a man’s nature, or he would have been civil and respectful instead of loading us with abuse which only injured himself. The crowd saw at once and applauded, the old man was pushed to the rear, and we went on quietly with our service, having won most helpful approval from the people by our patience and forbearance.

Again the parishé seems to me an excellent opportunity for preaching the gospel because, as a rule, the people are in an unusually good temper, and therefore the less inclined to
cavil at what they hear. They have left their work and anxieties at home and have come out to be amused. Perhaps they look on the missionary and his preaching as part of the fun; but the fact remains that they are ready to listen, and that they often laugh most heartily when the helplessness of the god of the parish is proclaimed by the preacher. Sad to think that after listening and nodding assent to all that is said, they turn aside into the 'madding crowd' to bow before the idol which, in their heart of hearts, they know has no power to help or save!

Perhaps the greatest value of the parish to us is that it enables us to reach people whom we could never hope to reach in ordinary circumstances. From distant hamlets far removed from the high roads, from tiny villages nestling among the hills, from pōlys almost inaccessible to all but the inmates, they flock to these gatherings; and then, hearing the word and, it may be, receiving some portion of the Scriptures, they wend their way back to their homes, and there tell their friends all they have seen and heard. Often have we come across handbills and portions of Scripture in villages far removed from the places where they were given: in one village I found a man who had never seen any missionary or catechist to talk to, but had his turban full of tracts, and was baptizing himself daily in the name of the Triune God, trying thus to follow the Saviour of whom he had read. To be able thus to reach crowds whom, in ordinary circumstances, we should never see, seems to me to be a very strong argument in favour of preaching at parishes. In the streets and villages we get a floating congregation, there one moment and gone the next; in our lighted services we are able to reach only a limited few, most of them residents of the town; but in the parish we reach thousands who hear the word and then take the seed, scattering it far and wide. Surely this is a most blessed result to be obtained if we believe that "the entrance of Thy word giveth light."

Tumkur is unusually well situated for this kind of work, although for a year or two I seemed to know very little about the parishes. It took some amount of enquiry to find out all particulars and draw up a list. They are nearly all held in the early part of the year; for what particular reason I have never been able to find out, except that the Brahmans, with their usual sagacity, have selected a time when the people are most free to go where they will. The harvest has been ingathered and the work for the coming year not yet com-
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Menced, so that it is easy for people to leave home. Most of the gatherings, too, are about the time of full-moon, so that everything is as favourable as it well could be. Probably the largest festivals in the Mysore country are those at Nanjangud and Nandi. I never had an opportunity of attending the former, at which thousands of pilgrims from all parts of Southern India congregate, but I once attended the latter and shall never forget it. About forty or fifty thousand people attend it, and as it is easily accessible from Bangalore it should be visited at least once by every one interested in mission work.

One of the largest in our neighbourhood is that held at Devaraya Drug. The surroundings lend peculiar charm to the gathering. The hill is about ten miles east of Tumkur and consists of three distinct terraces or elevations. Tradition states that the hill was in the possession of a robber chief and was captured by Deva Raja of Mysore in 1608 A.D. Beyond the old ruined fortifications there are now no signs of the wild struggles that so often took place here. The spot is peaceful beyond description, and is scarcely disturbed by the voice of man except at the annual gathering. There are two temples, one on the summit, 3940 feet above the level of the sea, and another on a lower plateau, where there are a tiny village and several mantapas in which pilgrims find a resting place during the festival. About three or four thousand people gather here every year, living near the lower temple, and climbing the steep face of the rocks to the higher temple once or twice during the mela. As we have a little bungalow on the top of the hill we are unusually well situated for visiting the place and preaching.

Another parishé is held at Sibi, a small village on the Bangalore-Chitaldrug road. About 10,000 people attend. The fabled origin of the temple is well worthy of being noted. In the days when there were no roads and the place was covered with jungle, a certain merchant carrying grain on pack bullocks halted at Sibi. But when his pot of rice was set to boil on a small projecting rock, its contents turned to the colour of blood, and he, with his attendants and bullocks, fell down in a swoon. While in this unconscious state the god Narasimha appeared to him in a vision and, revealing that the stone was his abode, commanded the merchant to build a temple over it in atonement for the desecration committed. The small temple then erected was replaced by the present
large building during this century under the following circumstances. Three brothers living at Tumkur, who had enriched themselves by farming the revenue of the district in the days of Tippu, subsequently sought to atone for their oppressions by works of charity. To Nallapa, the eldest, Narasimha in a vision offered eternal happiness on condition of his building and endowing the temple at Sibi.* This place being on the high road, merchants gather from all parts of the country, and trade to the value of several lakhs of rupees is carried on for 15 days after the religious part of the festival is concluded. One need never be without a congregation there. Would that the thousands who have heard the gospel there had been willing to enter the kingdom. I remember, when on a visit to this parîshe, being one day visited by a fine old gauda (head man of a village) who sat and talked for a long time. He told me his village had been visited long years ago by a missionary from Kunigal (the late Mr. Walker, I think it must have been). He remembered all that had been said and had quite an intelligent knowledge of Christianity. When he left I gave him a book, and at his request wrote his name in it. He took the word of God to his home, and some time after I was permitted in God's providence to go to his village, about 50 miles distant and talk to all his friends. He seemed to be very near the kingdom and there are thousands such, who know the truth, but fear to embrace it. Who can wonder at their indecision when we remember the sacrifice and suffering entailed by an open profession of Christianity!

Another great festival is held at Gubbi, but the honours paid to Gubbi Appa have been so often described by missionaries who have witnessed them, that I need not say anything about them. There are many other parîshës in the neighbourhood, of which Yetenhalli and Shivaganga may be mentioned. The latter is held on a sacred hill which rises to a height of 4559 feet above the sea. On the east its outline is supposed to resemble a bull, on the west Ganesha, on the north a serpent, and on the south a Linga. The number of steps leading to the top is said to equal the number of yojanas† between there and Benares; hence an ascent to the top is vicariously as meritorious as a pilgrimage to the holy city.

† A measure of distance variously reckoned at five, ten, and twelve miles.—Ed.
Native Christians and Higher Education.

It is a great help at these places to have a band of singers, and if these can play native musical instruments so much the better. It may be asked whether we have known any cases of good resulting from these services. Thank God, we have. It was at one of these festivals long years ago that Gnana-sanjiva, the first convert in the Madgiri circuit, first heard of Christ; and it was at the same parish that our first convert from the town of Gubbi (a young Brahman) received his final impulse to become a Christian. Who can tell how many others have received impressions which will by and bye, in God's good time, ripen into a glorious harvest for Christ and the Church? Let us seize every opportunity and be instant in season and out of season until India be won for Christ!

NATIVE CHRISTIANS AND HIGHER EDUCATION.

Young India is eager to be educated. Schools and colleges are crowded, and examinations are impatiently demanded. Alike for advancement in the State, and for success in private life, a knowledge of the English language has become essential, and Hindus are shrewd enough to accept with cheerfulness and fulfil with alacrity the demands of the situation. It is not necessary to credit young India at present with any absorbing desire for deep acquaintance with English literature or science. That will come,—is coming rapidly. But in the meantime Hindus learn because they must, and not only because they will. The ultimate effect of this irresistible inrush of Western ideas cannot exactly be calculated; but it is certain to displace the undisturbed Hindu orthodoxy of centuries, and to compel increasing attention to Christian teaching. In this view of the case it is important that our native Christians should be fully abreast of the national movement towards English learning. Effectually to influence the most highly trained intelligence of the land, they must be in the very forefront of the educational enterprise; and recent statistics prove that Missionary Societies are not unmindful of this.

The twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Syndicate of the Madras University has lately been published, and supplies us with some very interesting and important facts. The
candidates for the different examinations are classified according to their religion and nationality; and from the tables in the Report it is plain that the native Christian community is more than holding its own in the struggle for a first-class education as tested by University examinations. Many of these native Christians come from the lowest and most neglected classes, and Christianity has simply created an intellectual ambition to which their forefathers from the very beginning had been absolute strangers.

It must be borne in mind that the proportion of native Christians to the other classes of the community is as yet small, and that therefore the total number of candidates from among them is much smaller than the number from most other classes. At the same time the percentage of native Christians who seek University honours is much larger than among other classes, not even excepting Brahmans; and their number steadily increases year by year. At the Matriculation examination of 1882, 332 native Christians were examined, Brahmans 2,702, Hindus not Brahmans 1,303, Muhammadans 106. The proportion of passes among the native Christians was higher than among any of the other classes, there being 151 successful candidates, i.e. 45.4 per cent. Among the Brahmans, who have inherited the culture of centuries, only 35.04 per cent of the number examined passed, while among the other classes the percentage was still lower. In the First Examination in Arts the results are still more striking. Of the examinees 52 were native Christians, 532 Brahmans, 174 Hindus not Brahmans, and only 7 Muhammadans. Of the 52 native Christians, 31, or 59.6 per cent, passed—a much higher percentage than from any other class; for of the Brahmans only 34.02 per cent succeeded, and of other Hindus 32.1 per cent. In the B.A. Examination also the native Christians hold their own. Twenty appeared as candidates, and 11, or 55 per cent, passed. Out of 141 Brahmans, 79, or 56.02 per cent passed—a slightly higher success than that gained by the native Christians. Out of 46 Hindus not Brahmans, 19, or 41.3 per cent, passed. Only 5 Muhammadans presented themselves, of whom 4 passed.

These figures give ample scope for reflection. It is very evident that the Brahmans are not willing that the intellectual supremacy of the country should pass out of their hands without a hard struggle. They are well to the front at present and will doubtless keep there for many a long day;
but the other classes of Hindus have evidently been quickened into life by the magic influence of Western learning and civilization, and are earnestly pressing forward in the race. They are determined at all costs that the Brahmans shall not have a monopoly of Western culture, though they have held the key of knowledge in their hand for centuries and refused to allow other castes to explore its mysteries.

The Muhammadans appear to view the spread of modern education with comparative indifference, if not with contempt. Their religion is so inflexible, that it does not readily admit of Western culture and science being amalgamated with it; and the result must be that the power of the Muhammadan will fast pass away, unless the era of physical force shall again return to the land. The Brahman accommodates himself to circumstances, the other castes of Hindus are awaking from their long slumber, while the prouder Moslem clings to his Koran, and views with haughty scorn the intellectual activity of the age. It is most cheering to see that the native Christians are determined to reap to the full the benefit arising from the intellectual progress of the country. Hampered by no prejudices, helped by the kindly hands of missionaries, they have every opportunity of distinguishing themselves in the educational strife. Though many, as we have seen, have come from the lowest classes, though they have been oppressed and degraded, yet it is evident that, if they have fair play, they can stand shoulder to shoulder with the intellectual aristocracy of the land in the most searching tests that are applied to the scholarship of the rising generation in South India by the University of Madras. We may take courage therefore from the thought that amid the intellectual excitement and religious unrest that prevail in the land, there will be a band of cultured Christian men prepared to set a good example to their fellow countrymen, and to help them to solve their intellectual and religious difficulties.

H. Gulliford.

THE LATE REV. H. PRAETORIUS.

BY THE REV. G. RICHTER.

T is with sincere regret and sympathy that we notice the death of the Inspector of the Basel Mission, the Rev. Hermann Praetorius. He was deputed by the Committee of his Society to visit their missionary work in Western Africa,—a task which he had nearly completed, when his
The Late Rev. H. Praetorius

weakened frame succumbed to repeated attacks of fever on the 7th April last at Akra on the Gold Coast. Born on the 25th June 1852 in Stuttgart, the capital of Wurtemberg, in South Germany, he showed early signs of a highly gifted mind and a warm sympathetic heart, and his parents destined their only son to study for the ministry. At the age of 18 the patriotic youth offered his services to nurse his wounded compatriots on the battle fields of France; and as he there displayed his burning zeal to save and comfort suffering humanity, so afterwards, when a student at Tubingen, he evinced a keen interest in the conversion of the heathen world. Having passed a most brilliant examination in 1876, he went on his travels in North Germany, England and Scotland. There he became acquainted with many eminent men, and gained that breadth of view in theological questions, that self-possessed, easy and polished address, which rendered his personal intercourse so attractive and agreeable and served him to such excellent purpose in his missionary career.

As early as 1877 Mr. Praetorius was called to the Secretariat of the Basel Missionary College. With extraordinary zeal and success he mastered the various duties of his office and, wherever an opportunity offered, in pulpit or on platform, he pleaded the cause of missions. When, in 1881, the Rev. O. Schott, the Inspector of the Basel Mission, returned from India, the Committee determined on a similar inspection of their oldest mission field in Western Africa, and Mr. Praetorius, who was nominated additional Inspector, cheerfully accepted the proposed task. In October 1882, in company with Dr. Mähly, a young Swiss physician who, in the service of the Basel Mission, was to investigate the tropical diseases of the Gold Coast, and a young merchant, Mr. W. Preiswerk, who had accompanied Inspector Schott to India, he started on his perilous journey, leaving behind a young wife and two infants, his aged parents and a large circle of sympathetic friends. In London old acquaintances were renewed and new ones made, especially amongst the leading men of the Bible Society and the great missionary Societies of England. There it was that Mr. Praetorius met with the first native representative of the Wesleyan Mission in Western Africa in the person of Mr. Lewis, the negro Secretary of the Government at Sierra Leone; and the lively, intelligent and self-contained negro made a most pleasing impression
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on him. Of still higher interest proved to him the venerable negro-Bishop Crowther, who was a fellow passenger in the S. S. “Lualaba” from Liverpool to Freetown, and whose long and varied experience in African mission work afforded him valuable information.

In Bathurst Inspector Praetorius landed and visited the Wesleyan missionaries. In the negro quarter of the town the handsome Wesleyan Chapel and mission-house agreeably surprised him, and still more so the account the missionaries could give him of their flourishing work, with a congregation of 1500 souls and schools containing 400 children. Also in Sierra Leone he took occasion to visit the Wesleyan brethren, and in one of their schools he was welcomed, to his great astonishment, with Handel’s “Hallelujah,” sung without accompaniment by the fresh and tuneful voices of some 80 negro lads. The Wesleyans, Mr. Praetorius says, have in their West African mission, from Gambia down to Lagos, only 14 European missionaries; and in Sierra Leone no death has occurred among them for the last 20 years, owing to their humane and sensible practice of allowing their missionaries a change every two or three years either to Madeira or England.

The Christian colony of liberated slaves at Sierra Leone has always excited much interest, and the opinion expressed to him by earnest thoughtful men, intimately acquainted with the spiritual condition of the native Christians (18,600 of whom are Anglicans and 17,098 Wesleyans, besides a few thousands of other denominations), Inspector Praetorius summarises in the following way:—“These negro Christians are much attached to their churches and make frequent use of the means of grace; in their support of works of charity they are liberal, openhanded and do much for the maintenance of churches and schools; but in true piety of the heart, and in spiritual life, they leave much to be desired. The old slaves, there liberated and converted, are said to have been more simple and childlike, more pious and devoted; the present generation born in freedom is more civilised, but more superficial; yet there are also sincere Nathanael-souls who ardently long for a resuscitation of spiritual life in the congregations.”

On the 17th November 1882 the party landed at Christiansborg on the Gold Coast, and were heartily welcomed by the assembled Basel Missionaries and the elders of the native churches. The work for the next few months
was overwhelming—conferences, inspections, examinations, addresses, missionary meetings, synods, &c. on the various stations; and the Inspector daily rejoiced at the great work the Lord has there entrusted to the Basel Mission. Advancing into the interior and seeing more of the everyday life of the negroes, the dark side of the picture also revealed itself, and deeply did he lament the ruinous effects of sin amongst the people. The incessant strain on his mind by these labours, and the physical fatigue connected therewith, suggested moderation and rest, but he only found them when laid aside for a time by the first attack of climatic fever. Deeply affected by a rapid succession of deaths among the missionaries and their families, he was unable, in spite of the most assiduous care and attentions of Dr. Mähly, completely to shake off the fever. Apparently recovered, he resumed his labours and nearly carried them to completion, when the sad and final catastrophe on the 7th April called him to his everlasting rest. As the affection and veneration for him were intense, so the sorrow for him will be deep and sincere, wherever Inspector Praetorius was known or his influence felt. We think of the grief of the bereaved parents and of the widow with her three infants: the news of the birth of the third, a son, did not reach the father alive. The Basel Mission has lost in him a great and good man, since he united in his person qualities and accomplishments which are seldom found combined in such harmony. Hand in hand with an unusual fund of theological knowledge, and with rich stores of general information, he was endowed with administrative abilities of a high order, as if designed to be the bearer of a great and complicated organism; and these natural endowments were graced and ennobled by a sincere and warmhearted piety, a scrupulous devotion to duty, a childlike humility and self-sacrificing love. Like his heavenly Lord and Master he closed his earthly career at the early age of 33; but God's arithmetic differs from ours. With Him life is not judged by years, but by the spirit of life's work; and certainly Inspector Praetorius laboured in love as long as it was day. His tomb on Africa's strand, like that of many a youthful Basel missionary there, will be to the negroes a monument of Christian love which is not afraid to lay down its life to bring to Africa's children, according to Christ's command, life and salvation in His name!
Punyadasa, the Converted Gipsy.

One afternoon in the month of March last, after a hot ride of 24 miles in a bullock tonga from Chikmagalur, the Rev. B. Robinson and the writer found themselves at Chikdevanuru in the Kadur Taluq, the dwelling place of a number of Koramas, who by the grace of God have recently been gathered into the Christian church. Our coming was made an occasion of great rejoicing. A pandal, festooned with plantain and mango leaves, was erected in front of the schoolroom; under this were placed the two seats of honour consisting of two wooden boxes, one covered with a cloth, and the other with a deer skin. As soon as we had taken our seats, the musical instruments and tom-toms formerly used in playing in heathen temples were brought forth, and, reinforced by a violin played by the catechist, and cymbals and triangles played by his children, we had such a musical greeting as never fell to our lot before. In the evening we had an excellent preaching service, at which nearly the whole village were present, and that night we shared the hut of one of the Korama Christians. The hut had been lately erected, and formed the joint dwelling place of two large families. It consisted of three rooms, the floor being of hardened earth, the walls of mud and the roof palmyra thatch. Each of the side rooms was the dwelling place of the family, but on this occasion the wives and children were considerately sent to sleep elsewhere, their husbands only occupying the usual rooms; while the centre room, with its two doorless low apertures, which were the only means of ventilation, was given to us as a dining room and bed room. When the day’s work was done and all had taken their evening meal, Punyadasa, accompanied by a few of his Korama Christian friends, crawled in through the aperture, and seating himself on his heels, proceeded to give us some interesting details of his life.

Punyadasa’s name previous to baptism was Mooneswamy. He was born and brought up in Krishnageri in the Salem Zillah of the Madras Presidency. He belonged to the caste called Koramas, who from time immemorial have lived as travelling merchants, dealing in areca nut, spices, salt and
such like articles. They may be met with all over Southern India, travelling in companies, with their goods on bullocks or donkeys, and invariably surrounded by a medley assortment of dogs which are used for guarding the camp and hunting game when opportunity offers. Tied on the top of their loads of merchandise are the bent withs and coverings of their frail huts, which they pitch at any time and place convenient to them. They have a peculiar dialect, which is a mixture of Tamil and the dialects of the people among whom they live. Thus the dialect of those Koramas who live below the Ghauts differs considerably from that of those above the Ghauts. The caste is divided into four gotras named Mepadi, Satpadi, Kawadi, and Menarakuta. The Kawadis cannot intermarry with the Satpadis, nor the Mepadis with the Menarakutas. Mooneswamy's family belonged to the Satpadi gotra. In all religious ceremonies the Satanis act as priests, excepting in the case of the Kawadis, who perform their own ceremonies without any extraneous aid.

While a great portion of the caste follow the paths of honest trade for a livelihood, others resort to anything but respectable pursuits. Thieving is so common amongst them that they are known as Kalla Koramaru (thieving Koramas); and so difficult is it to get anyone of them to tell the truth, that there is a saying "You might as well try to straighten an infant's hand, a monkey's paw or the closed fist of a corpse, as try to get truth out of the mouth of a Korama." Like all gipsy tribes they also impose upon the credulous by fortune-telling and palmistry.

When Mooneswamy was a boy, he spent a great portion of his time in accompanying Brahman gurus as a general servant, journeying through the country and visiting various sacred places. In this way he visited Srirangum, Kumbakonum, Kanchi and other places of religious note. This kind of life was just to his liking, for he not only saw the country, and obtained merit, but he also had opportunities of listening to the reading and explanation of the Ramayana, Mahabharata and other works, by the priests and pandits accompanying the gurus. The lad never had any education. His mother desired to send him to school, but his father objected, and his relatives agreed that it was against the customs of their forefathers for a boy of their caste to learn to read. But though deficient in education, he was not wanting in sharpness, resource and honesty. Once when
travelling from Rayakote to Krishnageri in company with seven other persons, taking eighty rupees' worth of jewels to his master, the party was attacked by robbers. His seven companions lost both their presence of mind and all their property; but Mooneswamy pleaded that as a one-rupee-a-month cooly they could not possibly expect to find anything upon him, and, watching his opportunity, he slipped off into the jungle and delivered his master's property safely.

In due time he was married, and anyone who has seen the plump, good-natured, smiling face of Samadhana will congratulate him, not on his choice (for like all India's youths he had no voice in the matter), but on the provision which an overruling Providence made for him.

In 1861 the village of Krishnageri was visited by emigration agents, who by beat of tom-toms drew the attention of the people and then set forth the benefits to be derived from emigration to Africa. The term of service was ten years. Travelling expenses were to be paid there and back, and during the ten years such excellent pay would be given that, when the stipulated time expired, they could return to their native village with a comfortable store of accumulated rupees. The little village was greatly excited, and, divided into various groups, they discussed the matter long and seriously. At last Mooneswamy, his brother and nine other relatives, all roaming Koramas, determined to brave the dangers of the sea and seek their fortune in a foreign land. Mooneswamy and his party were part of a cargo of between four and five hundred coolies. His destination was Durban where he was appointed overseer over 35 men and worked under the Durban Municipality. The first year his pay was Rs. 5½ a month and rations; but this gradually increased until at last he received Rs. 17½ and rations. When his ten years expired Mooneswamy had no desire to return, but his relatives urged him to do so; and he came bringing with him eighty sovereigns and abundance of good clothes. The following testimonial on parchment is carefully treasured up.

Durban, Natal,
South Africa,
April 11th, 1871.

This is to certify that the bearer Mooneswamy has been in the service of the Durban Corporation for a period of ten years as Sirdar, during which he has given general
satisfaction, and is now leaving of his own accord to return to India.

(Signed) R. H. FISHER,
Town Clerk.

But better far than gold, yea than fine gold, he brought with him the seeds of eternal truth. The Rev. Ralph Stott was in the habit of preaching in Tamil to the Indian emigrants, and many were the conversations he had with the maistry Mooneswamy. Mooneswamy’s parents were worshippers of Venkataramaswami, Munishwara, Mariamma and other deities, and these the children were taught to worship. It was also part of their religion to reverence Dasaias, Jangamas and other religious mendicants, and many a time did Mooneswamy, at his mother’s request, put cash into the garuda hamba dipa, the lamp with an iron stand which mendicants carry about, and many a time did he seize the mendicant’s feet and worship them. Mr. Stott found it very hard work to shake this ancestral faith, and very often he must have felt sadly discouraged. But his labour was not in vain, and to day we are reaping what he sowed. The time will arrive when he that sowed and they that reap will rejoice together over this gathered sheaf.

When Mooneswamy left Africa, in 1871, he promised Mr. Stott he would become a Christian when he reached India. True to his word he came to Bangalore, presented a letter from Mr. Stott to the Rev. Thomas Hodson, and was placed for further Christian instruction under the Rev. Abijah Samuel. Three months later the Rev. S. Dalzell baptized Mooneswamy and his wife and four children in the Bangalore Kanarese chapel. Mooneswamy was named Punyadasa and his wife Samadhana. The eldest of the four children, named Vedamitra, matriculated last year, and is now usefully employed as a teacher in our High School, Bangalore. The others are bright children full of promise.

After his baptism Punyadasa worked at various times as a peon, a gauger, a maistry in the Public Works Department and a petty contractor. The Rev. A. P. Riddett met him at Chikmagalur selling spices, and being in want of a colporteur he offered the post to Punyadasa, who readily accepted it.

In this work he has been engaged ever since with marked success. His early habits fitted him for travelling about; and with his wife, his bullock, and his ready wit he has
succeeded in disposing of Bibles, tracts and books in large numbers to all classes in the Kadur District. When properly dressed up Punyadasa is a noticeable personage among the villagers. He has a grand scarlet soldier's coat and a red striped pair of trousers to match, which he bought in the Bangalore bazaar. On gala days he appears decked out in this grand suit and fills all beholders with admiration. Once, however, this suit got Punyadasa into trouble. Properly fitted up, he one day sallied forth with his books for sale to Banawar market, when some officious police peon, very likely envious of the more attractive get-up of Punyadasa, apprehended him on suspicion of having stolen the clothing, and haled him off ignominiously to the presence of the Assistant Commissioner. But Punyadasa gave such a satisfactory account of how he came into possession of the clothes that he was allowed to go in peace, and the coat still remains to cover his lithe and dusky form in flaming scarlet.

Few colporteurs in the Province have been so successful as Punyadasa. Once when writing to Mr. Eiddett he very characteristically said “I take my Bibles, my bulls and my wife and travel all through the country.” I don’t think he intended to be uncomplimentary to his wife by putting her last, but it is evident that the Bibles occupied the first place in his thought just then. Who knows the amount of good that this man has done by the truth which he has scattered broadcast in the towns and villages that he has visited?

Besides doing his work as a colporteur, he has also done “the work of an evangelist,” and God has richly blessed his labours. Whilst travelling about selling his books, he saw many of his own caste men still groping in the darkness of idolatry and superstition, and he felt that he ought to do something to lead them to the light. He therefore made it a matter of earnest prayer and set to work. Soon he had the joy of leading one to the Saviour. This man was baptized and named Devadasa. Devadasa’s brother was in Arsikere, and Punyadasa thought he must now try to bring him to join his brother. But he met with anything but a pleasant reception from him and his wife. They abused him roundly and it seemed a hopeless case. He had a similar reception at Chikdevanuru. Having spoiled his own caste, and that of another, did he wish to destroy theirs also? Did he think that they were going to leave the customs of their forefathers and become out-
casts? Not so. But undaunted by scornful rebuffs Pu-nyadasa persevered, and now Devadasa's brother is a Scrip-ture Reader amongst the newly formed Christian commu-nity of six men, five women and 17 children of Chikdeva-naru. We have a small school for them and Devadasa, the first convert, is the schoolmaster. Punyadasa pays four annas a month out of his own small earnings to old Abra-ham, to get the children to come regularly and punctually to school, and to break them of the habit of using bad language. In order to strengthen and develope the work which he has been the means under God of commencing, Punyadasa has taken up his abode in the midst of the new community at Chikdevanuru, and watches over them and corrects them with paternal authority and affection. We are praying that the work may not cease but extend far and wide. Punyadasa has visited members of the caste in other places, and many of them agree that the teachings of this new way are excellent, but they hesitate to take the step which severs them for ever from their old associations. May God's Holy Spirit be poured out upon them richly!

Up to the present these converts have gained their livelihood by basket-making and hunting. They are now anxious to lead a more settled and regular life, and accordingly they made application for land near their village which they could cultivate. To enable them to start in this new undertaking the Rev. A. P. Riddett, before he left for England, started a fund called the "Banawar Agricultural Loan Fund." The object is to give the Christians loans, without interest, to obtain each a pair of bullocks, and a plough. It is intended to take full security for the money lent, and to be careful not to pauperize the converts, or make them in any way depend upon aid from the Mission. We have Rs. 75 in hand, but are in need of Rs. 50 more. If any of the readers of the Harvest Field would like to assist by contributions to this amount, we shall be glad to receive their donations.

D. A. Rees.

THE LONDON MISSION IN SOUTH INDIA.

FROM the Report of the South India District Committee of the London Missionary Society we find that, in eleven centres, a Christian community of 12,772 has been gathered, of whom 1,184 are communicants, and 6,585
The work in these centres is done by twenty European missionaries, aided by five lady missionaries, fourteen native ministers, and 103 catechists, evangelists, &c. The contributions of the native churches towards the support of their pastors amount to Rs. 3,552, or an average of Rs. 3 per year for each communicant. Schools, both vernacular and Anglo-vernacular, exist in all the stations, or nearly so; and Girls' Schools have had special attention. In this respect Madras and Bangalore hold a very honourable place; and Madras further distinguishes itself by the amount of fees collected from the girls. To those who know anything of the uphill work of female education it will prove encouraging to know that from 417 girls it is possible to collect in one year, as fees, Rs. 561.

The London Mission has always taken its place by the side of the most influential Societies engaged in the evangelisation of India. Its missionaries have been men, generally, who for long years have held stedfastly to their work, neither discouraged by slow success in an inhospitable clime, nor allured by the attractions of English churches. Some of them have done conspicuous work of permanent value, as, for instance, Dr. Hay of Vizagapatam. The rise and development of Kanarese Christian literature will ever be associated with the name of the Rev. B. Rice; and few men have used their polyglot acquirements more widely or more effectively than the Rev. E. Lewis of Bellary. But that the men generally are apt and active, keen to see opportunities and prompt to embrace them, the Report bears ample evidence.

The experiences detailed in the pages of the Report are common to all engaged in Christian work in India. Slow hard work, upheld by faith, quickened by unfailing hope, and crowned occasionally by some distinctive success,—that is the burden of these pages. Difficulties are clearly stated; not however as excuses for want of success, but hopefully, in the spirit of the Iron Duke's definition of a difficulty,—"something to be overcome, Sir." Many of the writers shew an adequate apprehension of the transition state of Hindu thought, and are energetically seeking to turn it Christwards. As illustrating these remarks we quote the following from the report of the Rev. E. P. Rice, B. A.:

"The Hindus have for so many ages, and so universally, been habituated to sever religion from morality, and knowledge from action, that the task of the Christian missionary is no easy one. The
one thing which we find generally wanting among the Hindus, and which we desiderate most of all, is a deep sense of personal sin, and of its evil. This can of course be only produced by the Holy Spirit of God, but so far as it depends on human agency, it is the great aim of our preaching, and the chief subject of our prayers. This kind of preaching however is by far the most difficult to attain. It is so much easier to demolish Hinduism than to produce faith in Christianity, so much easier to teach an intellectual system of doctrine than to impart the principle of life eternal, to gain the assent of the reason to truths about sin and God, than to awaken godly purposes, and constraining love to the Heavenly Father, that we need to be continually on the watch not to drift away from dependence on the working of the Spirit, or from the simplicity of the gospel, to reliance upon mere human arguments.

"In a certain town a merchant is reading the Bible thoughtfully. He has abandoned belief in the Puranas and popular Hindu doctrines, such as transmigration, and is pondering the duty of joining the disciples of Jesus. Meanwhile he reads the Bible, not as yet with faith in it, but with somewhat critical eyes. Having been robbed of faith in his ancestral religion, he tests the new Veda (as is not surprising) very cautiously, to make sure that he is not embracing a religion which in its turn he will have to unlearn. He frequently labours under the unfortunate impression that the true Veda is to solve all mysteries. The following are some of the questions which he puts from time to time. What salvation was there for those who lived before Christ? Why should the Son of God die? If Christ paid our debt, does it not follow that we have no more debt against us? Why did not God call man into being by a word as he did the light, instead of first forming him of earth? And especially, why should God have placed a hurtful tree in the garden of Eden? Although his questions sometimes exhibit an undue proportion of intellectual curiosity, yet there are not wanting signs of spiritual thirst, and the advance he has made, and is making, give us the courage to hope for things still better."

"There is one expression used abundantly in the New Testament, and in Christian teaching, which proves a great stumbling block to Muhammadans. This is the expression, "Son of God," which to a Muhammadan, the glory of whose creed is the Unity and Spirituality of God, savours of heathen mythology. It suggests to him all the family relationships attributed to Hindu gods and goddesses, and just as Muhammad himself conceived of the Christian Trinity as consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Virgin Mary, so many of his followers regard it as a sort of celestial family of gods, and the application of the terms Father and Son to the Deity is strongly resented by them. These terms therefore are made the subject of their most common objections in street preaching, and not unfrequently some will come even from distant villages to ask for an explanation of this point. By pointing out that God is in His essential nature incomprehensible by the human mind, that therefore all our language concerning Him can be approximate only—that the terms objected to are not intended to convey the meaning Musal-
mans have thought, but that they are the best expressions which stammering human speech can find to describe an ineffable reality, I have always found that they have expressed themselves fully satisfied, and have been ready to listen with calmness to the further teaching of Christian truth."

Many interesting cases of conversion are mentioned, and several instances of secret trust in Christ are given.

"A colporteur passing through the streets of an out-station was startled to hear, from one of the houses, the voice of a boy, saying—"Lord Jesus, make me well! Lord Jesus make me well!" He found it was one of the boys attending the mission school, and who had been laid up by an attack of small-pox. The grandfather and guardian of this boy has long ceased to worship idols, and he distinctly confesses to me in a whisper that he and others with him are disciples of Jesus only."

"The wife of a Brahman writes occasionally to a Christian young woman, who is her friend, and from whom she has learnt much of the Gospel. One of these letters, beautifully embroidered on cloth with red and yellow thread, and adorned round the edges with various designs runs as follows:—"To B.—As our Lord Jesus suffered many things for us, and died upon the cross, and thus obtained salvation for us, let us gain the forgiveness of our sins and try to be his children. Amen. S—'-s salaam." The patience required in order to work this piece of embroidery shews her mind delighted to dwell on the truths it expressed."

GLEANINGS.

The total receipts of the Wesleyan Missionary Society during the past year, including special contributions towards the liquidation of the Society's debt, amount to £169,361. The expenditure, in which is included everything previously owing by the Society, amounts to £169,446, leaving a deficiency on the year of £85. In other words, the income and expenditure just meet each other, but it has been after cruel reduction in every one of our mission Districts. The President put it well when he said, "Retrenchment at home means retreat abroad." As things stand at present expansion seems all but impossible.

In his speech at Exeter Hall, the Rev. Charles Garrett, President of the Wesleyan Conference, referred to the work of Christian Missions in the New Hebrides. He stated that in a church on one of the islands of that group was a tablet containing the following inscription:—"Sacred to the
memory of the Rev. John Geddes, Presbyterian minister, who died ——, aged ——. \textit{When he came to this island in 1848 there was no Christianity; when he died there was no heathenism."

During the recent missionary festival in Exeter Hall, the Rev. J. W. Brewer represented China, and in the course of his speech said:—

"Ten years ago there were about 6,000 or 7,000 members of Protestant Churches in China; now there are more than three times that number, with probably 50,000 adherents in addition ….. Ten years ago it would have been deemed the fond fancy of an enthusiastic dreamer to have predicted that the leading Viceroy and most powerful Chinaman in the Empire would become the open patron of a Christian missionary's hospital, or that the outposts of mission enterprise would be so extended that now almost every one of the eighteen provinces has missionaries residing in it. The missionary is far ahead of both flag and gunboat, of both merchant and consul; and strange to say, the brethren so situated find it not in the least a detriment, but rather a help, to be ahead of such powerful representatives of our Western Christianity."

At the same meeting the Rev. John Milum, from West Africa, described a journey which he made in 1881 into the interior, in the course of which he visited Abomey, the capital of the Dahomey country. His object was to see the king and obtain from him permission to establish a mission in his country. Here is some of his experience:—

"The present king believes, as did all his predecessors, that in the "Ghost Land" to which his forefathers have gone they are kings to-day as they were when they lived upon earth, and that it is necessary to supply them year by year with wives, and male and female slaves, and with all kinds of animals; and hence the sacrifices which are made year after year, that these may go into the "Ghost Land" to supply the needs of those former kings. Now, it so happened, when I was at Abomey, that these horrible sacrifices were going on; but I made up my mind as a Christian missionary that I would not in any way countenance these dreadful murders; and though every day the messenger was sent from the palace to inform me that my presence was required, I sent a message in return to say that if the human sacrifices were going on I would not be present. I took every opportunity to show to this king of Dahomey that we, as Christians, would not countenance such proceedings. The day after my arrival at Abomey I was summoned to the palace, and there, in the midst of great display, the king greeted me and hoped that I should be happy in his country, and so on, and said that as soon as it was possible he would receive me in private and hear my message. I was horrified, as I drew near to the entrance of the palace, to find on heaps of sand, on either side of the palace gates, a number of human heads. The
ground was covered with an ablation of human blood. Inside the palace gates there were more heads, and then as I sat I saw all the property the king displays year after year before his people. All his trinkets and everything of that kind, passed before me and took many hours. Last of all came the human victims, fastened in litters such as the natives use for carrying their palm oil and other produce to the market. These men were fastened and gagged, so that it was impossible for them to speak. As I saw these pass out my soul was filled with indignation, and I could not help manifesting to the king how horrified I was at such a sight. I took the trouble to find out, and learned that this king is sacrificing year by year about 200 victims. These victims are obtained from the neighbouring towns and countries. Every year the king of Dahomey leads forth his troops, spoils the neighbouring towns, and captures a number of victims. He had done so much mischief, especially in these Yoruba towns, that the people have become dreadfully afraid of him; and one of the sights I saw in Abomey was this,—on a silk cotton tree there was just the dried skull of a human being. I made inquiries, and found that about twenty-one years ago the king of Dahomey invaded Yoruba and brought back a large number of victims, among them several catechists. One of these was Moses Oshoko, who began to preach to the people from his Bible in his captivity, and he told them how Jesus was crucified for our sins. The horrible thought struck the king that he would crucify this man, and so he had him clubbed until senseless, and nailed him to this tree with his open Bible in his hands and an open umbrella over his head, and thus poor Moses Oshoko died a martyr for his faith. And as I looked upon that tree and sketched it, I thought "God's time will come," and I am hopeful that by-and-bye, upon that very spot, we shall have a temple consecrated to the living God.

Thakombau, ex-King of Fiji is dead. He was the first chief who was able to put down intertribal wars, and by uniting the various petty governments earn for himself the title of Tui Viti, King of Fiji. He was a strong and earnest man, and as a heathen indulged without restraint in the vices and crimes common to his people. But when he became a Christian he yielded himself heartily to his Saviour, and helped Christian work to the utmost of his power. He had faults, but they were faults arising chiefly from strength and unbalanced zeal. He was a true patriot, loving his country to the last, and he annexed it to Britain because he loved it. "When the end came he met death not only without fear, like the grand old chief he was, but also like a Christian man who knows where to seek that help and guidance of which he feels the need in his latest hour. While he lay dying his voice was often raised in prayer with a fervour and pathos which brought tears into the eyes of those who heard him."
Gleanings.

A veteran missionary has gone in the person of George Pritchard of Tahiti. When he was appointed to the South Seas he became the close friend and colleague of the devoted John Williams. Just before France forced its protectorate upon the Queen of Tahiti, Pritchard was appointed by the British Government as Her Majesty's Consul there. The action of France was strongly resented in England, not only by friends of missions but also by the British Government, who at one time were on the very threshold of war. Pritchard had a perilous course to steer, but he did it steadily and honourably, never yielding to French intrigue, and seeking the distinct authority of his Government for every step he took. "Ultimately, though France had to make a national apology, the Consul was displaced, and this involved a yielding to the French Jesuits, who were at the bottom of the whole mischief, and the attaining by them of a power in Tahiti which they hold to this day." Pritchard was eventually appointed Consul at Samoa. But he never ceased to be a missionary, and he continued to do his Master's work abroad for nearly fifty years. After his return to England he rendered much valuable service in many ways to the London Missionary Society, and died at Hove near Brighton, on the 6th May last.

The Church Missionary Society state that the reports sent in from the Niger Mission by the two African Archdeacons, Henry Johnson and Dandeson Crowther, are among the most remarkable that have reached them from any part of the world. In the Delta, at Bonny and Brass, where, ten years ago, the most degraded heathenism and barbarism reigned almost undisturbed, there are now 4,000 souls under instruction. Onitsha, six years ago, attained most unenviable notoriety through the inhuman cruelty of two native ex-agents, who were only lately brought to justice. Now it has become the field for signal manifestations of the power of the Spirit of God. "Not only were forty-three adult converts baptized there in the year; not only are many hundreds attending the church services; not only has the king, hitherto hostile, suddenly commanded the observance of Sunday, and arranged for a public service at his own court; not only has a leading chief been buried without the offering of human sacrifices at his grave; but the Onitsha Christians have spontaneously visited neighbouring towns to
tell the story of the Gospel, and Archdeacon Johnson, being invited to one of them, found 1,500 people waiting to hear him.”

From the report of the American Marathi Mission, just issued, we cull a bit of interesting evidence of the progress being made in the matter of self-support amongst its members.

“But the most satisfactory gain is seen in the contributions of the churches for the support of their pastors and other benevolent objects. They have contributed during the year Rs. 3708-13-4, against Rs. 2879-7-2 in the previous year. This sum divided by the number of communicants in the churches gives Rs. 2-9-6, as the average for each one. A common laborer can be hired for from 2$\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 annas a day. At 3 annas a day the above sum represents about fourteen days' labor of a common laboring man, for every communicant in the churches.

Until the close of 1881 the mission had been in the habit of making up the salaries of the pastors of such churches as could not themselves raise these salaries in full. The mission or missionaries had sometimes to pay Rs. 1,000 as grants-in-aid to the churches for the support of their pastors. But at the Jubilee meeting in October 1881 the Christians offered to assume this responsibility from the beginning of the next year. The basis on which this was assumed was Rs. 360 which were given in cash as thank-offerings at the meeting, and pledges to give various amounts during the year. Some persons feared that most of these pledges would not be honored. But at the late meeting it was reported that Rs. 831 had been received by the sustentation fund, most of it from the native Christians, and that since the first of January the salaries of all the sixteen pastors of our mission had been provided by the churches themselves, or in the case of poor churches, had been made up from this sustentation fund. About Rs. 150 were received as offerings at the meeting and from the small tin banks which the Christians keep in their houses for small offerings. A good many pledged a month's salary, others half a month's salary, others a quarter of a month's salary, and others other sums. So with a good deal of enthusiasm provisions were made which will, I fully trust, enable the Christians to make up the salaries of the pastors of all our churches for the coming year, without a rupee of mission money, and probably without any private assistance from Europeans.”

We notice with deep regret the death at Madura of the Rev. J. Rendall, Secretary of the American Mission there. He was a good and earnest man, who had done valuable service in an unostentatious fashion for a long time. Physically he was a very powerful man, and when we last saw him his more than thirty years' work in India seemed scarcely to have told on him at all. The loss to his Mission is very great.
"A revival in every circuit,"—such was the President's watchword last Conference. And there has been such praying and working as Wesleyan Methodism has not known for years before. The result is seen in an increase of 13,000 members. There is great joy and thanksgiving throughout the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and one glad doxology rises from the heart of its people. The revival has not been local and spasmodic, but general and continuous.

WESLEYAN METHODIST NOTES.

MYSORE DISTRICT.

MYSORE CITY.

Twelve months ago, very doubtfully, and in the face of frequently recurring discouragements, a Mothers' Meeting was started for the benefit of the Christian women of Virangere. The organization of the meeting fell to Miss Pearson's lot, but before it had been in existence long Miss Evers came to her aid, and has worked indefatigably ever since. What was started doubtfully has gone on successfully; and on the 19th June the first anniversary was held in the Virangere school-room. The native Christians had gaily decorated the place for the occasion, and all entered into the spirit of the occasion very heartily. Small prizes to the most industrious were presented by Mrs. Hocken, and several appropriate addresses were delivered.

HYDERABAD.

The Report of this mission, lately issued, speaks of increase in every department. The year closed with twenty-four more members in the churches, and with ninety more scholars in the schools, than were reported in the previous year. The contributions from purely native sources for the support of the ministry have risen to Rs. 331, an increase of Rs. 105. "It must be remembered" says the Report, "that all the monies raised are simply and purely from members of the native church. Were we to bring in subscriptions from European sources, the church might be made self-supporting even now, but we deprecate such a course. When we speak of a self-supporting native church, we mean what the words imply, and not something bolstered up by the monies of English-speaking residents."

In connection with the Telugu church at Secunderabad there
have been six adult converts from heathenism, the circumstances of one of these being thus described:

"On Sunday, the 22nd of October, at our Telugu service, Mr. Burgess baptized a young man, twenty years of age. For upwards of two years he was an enquirer, but as he was dependent for support on his father, who was a very violent man and a bigoted hater of Christianity, he did not venture to offer himself for baptism. Having at length completed his education he obtained a situation, and our hearts were gladdened by seeing him at last take the decisive step. His friends were not aware of his intention till late in the evening of the day on which he was baptized. When the truth did come to light, he had a sad time of it. Reproaches and bitter curses were heaped upon him. Blows were tried. Exorcists were summoned, and with their charms they sought to rid him of the devil who, they asserted, possessed him. Attacks upon his virtue, too foul for record, completed the circle of the trials to which he was subjected. At length the persecution was greater than could be borne, and the young convert fled for refuge to the mission house. At the entreaties of his mother, he returned home again. Efforts to drag him back into heathenism increased rather than diminished. The mark of heathen bondage was painted on his brow, charmed native medicines were forced down his throat, and again he sought refuge with some Christian friends. On the following Sunday his relatives performed funeral ceremonies for him as though he were dead. Several days after he was again induced to return to his home under promises of kinder treatment and religious freedom. As we feared they would, these promises have all proved false. Violence has, we think, done its worst; but the persecution has not ceased. Subtler forms of attack are now being tried. The power of arrack is requisitioned; drink is being forced upon him. God alone can help the lad. Our prayers are his portion, and the promises of God his heritage. We wait with anxiety, and hope with trembling."

School work is developing, and great courage has been shown in demanding fees in Girls' Schools from the very beginning. To supplement the work in the Girls' School much activity prevails in the Zenanas.

"The ladies in charge of the Zenana work speak with enthusiasm of their toil. By rich and poor their visits are courteously received and cordially welcomed. The record of their successes God reads. Earth sometimes registers them in gladsome smiles at greeting, and sad tears at parting. The busy bustling world sees neither, and generations may pass away before it will become conscious of good done or change effected, but the workers wait not for their reward. Consciousness of labouring for the good of others under the constraining influence of Christ's love is often-times God's own voice in the soul whispering 'Well done.'"

LUCKNOW AND BENARES DISTRICT.
LUCKNOW (Hindustani).

I have recently spent three days in company with Mr. Carmichael at the Ram Nawmi mela (religious fair) held in the
ancient city of Ajudhya near Fyzabad. The Rev. A. McCumby was there too, an old mela and bazaar preacher of forty years standing, well known in the North of India, and thoroughly acquainted with the vernaculars. For the last few years he has been connected with the Benares Baptist mission. He spent nine or ten days at Ajudhya, preaching with his usual fluency and attractiveness, but on the last day of the mela he was taken ill, and after returning to Benares died of cholera.

There were with us, besides, four native preachers of our own mission and four belonging to the church mission. Being so many we were able to divide our forces, and carry on, daily, three separate services at the same time. We found no difficulty at all in attracting a crowd of listeners at each preaching place, and in this way during the mela thousands must have heard the Gospel. The services were most interesting, and so were many of the discussions and conversations which ensued. One of our catechists has a shrewd practical way of dealing with objectors, and it was very entertaining to see him handling men of that class. One day there came a Brahman of the Vedantist school who regarded himself, according to the theory of that school, as a part of God, and asserted that he never either had sinned or could sin. Two or three in the crowd attempted to shew him that he was wrong, but he held immovably to his assertion. Then the catechist stepped forward and said, "Were you ever angry?" "No," he replied, "never." "Very well," said the catechist, "come here." Wonderingly the Brahman stepped forward, whereupon the catechist, seizing him, began to shake him. At first surprised, the man speedily lost his temper; and the catechist amid general laughter cried: "See, this is the man who never lost his temper, and never committed sin." He soon slunk off and we had no further trouble with him. Such objectors were comparatively few. The greater part heard with attention, and one woman eventually came out as an enquirer.

This mela being the celebration of Rama's birthday, and being held in the former capital of Rama's kingdom, large numbers flocked to his temples which abound there, and also to the great temple of Hanuman, the monkey-god, and Rama's general. But the chief attraction was the bathing in the Gogra. We went one morning to see this, and found crowds of men and women trying to wash their sins away. Other means of getting rid of sin were adopted besides bathing. Along the edge of the water from one end of the bathing ghat to the other, was tied a row of heifers. Those who could pay one rupee or more to the Brah­mans were allowed the great privilege of touching the tail of one of these as they passed in to their ablutions. Other provision was made for those who could only pay coppers. A little further in the water than where the heifers were tied, and running
in a row from one end of the bathing ghat to the other, were erected platforms just large enough for a man to sit on and receive money. These were occupied by Brahmans who had small bundles of grass in front of them. For a small coin a man might receive a bit of grass from a Brahman’s hand, bathe with it and then return it to the Brahman. The benefit to be obtained from the grass was, of course, much less than the benefit obtained from the tail of the heifer.

Hideous-looking faqirs and abnormal specimens of humanity lined the sides of the road leading to the bathing place. Among the latter was a dwarf, who seemed to have no bones, for his legs and arms could be twisted around and around, like a piece of cord. There was also a child with a double head. Many of the people regarded both of these as incarnations of the gods, and were accordingly making offerings to them. It was reported among the people while we were there that the ceremonies of Jaganath are to be transferred to Ajudhya. If such should be the case the Ajudhya melas will become even more important in point of numbers than they are at present.

J. PABSON.

Lucknow (English).

On the 17th of May, a highly successful entertainment, consisting of a Service of Song entitled Eva, with connective readings from Uncle Tom’s Cabin, was given in the Wesleyan Church, Lucknow, in aid of the Mission. The choral part of the Service was performed by the Church choir assisted by a few outside friends, among whom, as worthy of special notice for their invaluable aid, are mentioned Mr. and Mrs. Benford, Mrs. McClay and Miss McGlone. Messrs. Burgess, Jones, Wills and Morgan also gave efficient help. The Chairman of the District, the Rev. A. Fentiman, presided and gave the readings, the rendering of which, as well as the singing, was much appreciated by a large audience.

The proceeds amounted to nearly Rs. 125, and were equal to the highest anticipations. Mrs. Russel ably presided at the harmonium.

B. PEELE.

CURIOUS CUSTOMS.

Marriage.

There are eight forms of marriage amongst the Hindus, which are known as the ceremony of Brahma, of the Devas, of the Rishis, of the Prajapatis, of the Asuras, of the Gandharvas,
Curious Customs.

of the Rakshasas, and the eighth and basest, of the Pisachas.*

The nuptial rite of Brahma consists of the gift of a daughter clothed only with a single robe, to a man learned in the Vedas, whom her father voluntarily invites, and respectfully receives. The rite called Deva is the gift of a daughter, decked in gay attire, to the priest who performs the sacrifice. When a daughter is given in exchange for one or two pairs of kine to be used as prescribed by law, the marriage is termed Asura. Prajapatya is when the father gives away his daughter with due honour, saying distinctly, "May both of you perform together your civil and religious duties!" When the bridegroom, having given as much wealth as he can afford to the father and relatives, as well as to the girl herself, accepts her as his bride, the marriage is termed Asura. The reciprocal devotion of a youth and damsel is called Gandharva. The seizure of a maiden by force in battle is the marriage of Rakshasa; while the Pisacha form of marriage is indescribably base and revolting. The only two forms at all resembling English marriages are the Gandharva, which is remotely allied to a love match, and the Asura, somewhat akin to a marriage for wealth.

These different forms of marriage point to different stages of society, and varying periods of antiquity. The Pisacha is more the gratification of sudden lust than aught else, and the first dawning of the conjugal idea could scarce have arisen when the name of marriage could be given to such a connection. The Rakshasa form is simply the marriage by capture which was practised in very remote and barbarous ages and regions; it is still practised by the robber tribes of India, such as the Meenas and Gonds. The other forms of marriage recognize the authority of the parent over the damsel, and the essence of the marriage consisted in the transfer of dominion to the husband. The Asura form was probably the next in order of antiquity; for when it became impossible or inconvenient to obtain wives by robbery or stealth, the only other mode would be to purchase them. As delicacy increased, marriage by sale fell into disrepute, and the Asura form apparently came into vogue, a gift of small or nominal value taking the place of the purchase money; and this again developed into the dowry, which was a gift received by the parents for the benefit of the bride.

The distinctive mark of the three remaining forms, viz., the Brahma, Deva and Prajapatya, consists in the voluntary handing over of the girl by her parents, who do not receive any equivalent in exchange. It is probable that these forms first arose in the case of Brahmans, and when they came to be generally adopted, they would be followed by the inferior classes as a bid

* Mayne's Hindu Law.
for respectability—just as a marriage in a highly fashionable church is desired by persons living far from a fashionable locality.

All but two, viz., the Brahma and Asura form of marriage, are now obsolete. The Brahma is the legal form, and the Asura the common form amongst Sudras.

With regard to the disposal of a girl in marriage, the father, brother, grandfather, uncle, kinsmen, or relatives, are the proper parties to arrange such matters. In default of these, the mother, or the remotest relatives should give a girl in marriage.

The selection of persons to be married is limited by two rules; first, they must be chosen outside the family, and secondly, they must be chosen inside the caste. The first of these rules is a special instance of the almost universal prohibition against marriage between persons of the same family or tribe, which has been called exogamy. The prohibition against marriages between persons of different castes is comparatively modern. Originally marriages between men of one class, and women of a lower, even of a Sudra class, were recognized; but the sons of these unequal unions stood on a very dubious footing, some authorities ranking them with their fathers, whose estates they were allowed to inherit, others giving them a right to only a fraction of the estate, and some denying them any inheritance. Mixed marriages are now obsolete, but it is impossible to say when, how, or why, they became extinct.

A Hindu marriage is not a contract, but the performance of a religious duty; hence a consenting mind is not essential, and its absence—whether from infancy or incapacity—is immaterial.

A Hindu is absolutely without restriction as to the number of wives he may have, but a peculiar sanctity seems to be attributed to the first marriage, as being that which is contracted from a sense of duty. The first married wife has precedence over the others; and it is highly probable that originally the second and later wives stood in the same position as the handmaids of the Jewish patriarch.

The prohibition against second marriages of women, either after divorce, or upon widowhood, has no foundation either in early Hindu law or custom. Passages of the Vedas sanction the re-marriage of widows; and the second marriage of women who have left their husbands for justifiable causes, or who have been deserted by them, is expressly sanctioned by the early writers.

Marriage is not to be confounded with betrothal; one is a completed transaction, the other only a contract. Although there are many formalities and recitals of holy texts connected with Hindu marriage, yet the only operative part of the transaction consists in the seven steps taken by the bridal pair: on the completion of the last step the actual marriage has taken place; till then it is imperfect and revocable.

C. C.