

EDUCATION (INDIA).

S P E E C H

OF THE

DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH

UPON THE

EXCLUSION OF THE BIBLE

FROM

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS.

HOUSE OF LORDS, 2nd July, 1860.

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EDUCATION (INDIA.)

SPEECH OF

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH,

ON MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS PRAYING—

“That the authoritative exclusion of the Word of God from the course of Education afforded in the Government Schools and Colleges ought, under suitable arrangements, to be removed.”

THE Earls of Shaftesbury and Ellenborough rose, and followed by other Peers, urged the postponement of the Motion, upon the grounds that the discussion was inexpedient at the present moment, and fraught with danger to the Indian Empire.

The Order of the Day having been read :—

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH said, that a more painful or a more embarrassing position than that in which he was placed, could hardly be imagined. The notice of his Motion had been on the paper ever since Easter. If the discussion of the subject were so inexpedient, and likely to prove so dangerous, or to embroil matters in India, surely it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to have informed him of their opinion at an earlier period,

when he should have had time to consider the suggestion, and to give their reasons their due weight and influence. He had presented more than 400 petitions that night; he believed that altogether 1,500 petitions had been presented on the subject; and the expectations of great numbers had been raised with regard to the Motion of which he had given notice. And now, at the last moment, he was asked to postpone it. He could only respectfully assure their Lordships that it gave him annoyance—great annoyance—not to be able to comply with the request which had been made to him from so many quarters. He had heard no reasons given why the Motion should not be brought forward. The noble Earl (the Earl of Shaftesbury) indeed said he thought the time was not expedient, and requested him to delay its consideration; and he had received a letter from the noble Earl to that effect ten days ago; but beyond this he had received no intimation on the subject from either side of the House as to what views were entertained with regard to it, or what the considerations were on which the opinion was founded, that a discussion of his Motion would be prejudicial. He felt, therefore, reluctantly compelled to proceed. He would endeavour to deal with it in the most temperate manner; he would endeavour to avoid giving offence, even to the most scrupulous; and he

could scarcely think that the removal of the restrictions on the use of the Word of God could be otherwise than blessed by Him whose written will was thus recognised.

One reason why a Motion, such as he had put on the paper, should be submitted to their Lordships was, that the late mutiny in India had given to the consideration of every question connected with our administration of that great Empire a deeper interest for the people of this country. If there was one thing more than another to which the people of this country were devotedly attached, it was the most perfect, full, and ample toleration; but there was another principle to which they were equally attached, and that was a devotion to the Word of God, and a determination that it should not remain a closed Book to those who had just become our fellow-subjects, but that an opportunity should be afforded to them of being made acquainted with it. So far back as 1793 the British Parliament laid down the principle upon which the Government of India should be conducted. In 1793 the House of Commons laid down this principle:—

Exclusion of the Bible at variance with the principles laid down by Parliament for the government of India.

“That it is the opinion of this House, that it is the peculiar and bounden duty of the Legislature to promote, by all just and prudent means, the interest and happiness of the inhabitants of the British dominions in the East; and that for these ends such measures ought to be adopted as may gradually tend

to their advancement in useful knowledge, and to their religious and moral improvement."

That principle was confirmed by another Resolution of the House of Commons, passed in 1813. Since then, however, we had gone backwards rather than forwards. He was prepared to show that the policy which we had professed of establishing religious toleration, and at the same time of adopting measures for the moral and religious improvement of the Natives, had not been carried out.

The fact that the Bible is now excluded from the course of Government education established.

He was aware that an endeavour was made in some quarters to raise an argument to the effect that the Bible was not really excluded from the Government schools of India; but he could prove that such was actually the case at this moment. The despatch which chiefly bore on this subject was that which Sir Charles Wood wrote in 1854. The instructions which Sir Charles forwarded to the Government of India were as follows:—

"Those institutions were founded for the benefit of the whole population of India; and, in order to effect their object, it was, and is, indispensable that the education conveyed in them should be exclusively secular. The Bible is, we understand, placed in the libraries of the colleges and schools, and the pupils are able freely to consult it. This is as it should be; and, moreover, we have no desire to prevent or to discourage any explanations which the pupils may, of their own free will, ask from their masters upon the subject of the Christian religion, provided that such information be given out of school hours."

In 1858, Lord Stanley, the then Secretary of State for India, in his Despatch on education, pursued the same strain.* In that paper, Lord Stanley expressed his conviction that the proposal to depart from the system which had been established, would be dangerous in a political point of view, and that the past policy ought to be adhered to. In order to illustrate the nature of what went by the name of the "past" policy, he must refer their Lordships to one of Lord Tweeddale's Minutes in 1846. In that year a proposal was made to Lord Tweeddale by the Madras Council of Education, to promote the establishment of voluntary classes for giving Scripture instruction in the colleges and schools of that Presidency. Lord Tweeddale, in his reply, said :—

"To avoid all difficulties on this head, I would propose that there should be invariably two classes for English reading; the one without and the other with the Bible; the latter class to precede the former in their hour of instruction; and those inclined should have the advantage of attending both classes, and in a very short time I have no doubt all would belong to the Bible class."

The Court of Directors at home refused to affirm

* The terms of Lord Stanley's despatch of the 7th April, 1858, when referring especially to a Voluntary Bible Class, were that "he was unable to sanction any modification of the rule of strict religious neutrality as it has been hitherto enforced;" and he directs that "the course of study in all the Government Institutions be, as heretofore, confined to secular subjects."

that Minute when it was transmitted to them, and declared that they could not regard it as expedient or prudent to introduce any branches of study into the schools of India, which could in any way interfere with the religious feelings or opinions of the Native population. They further said that the past policy—whatever that was, and that was an example of it—must be adhered to. Now, it could not be gainsaid that under both the past and the present system, the Bible was excluded from the schools of India. That, then, was a sample of the “past policy” of the Government; and he contended that the exclusion of the Scriptures from the Government schools was a real and substantial fact, and one which could not with any show of truth, be denied. The education conveyed in the Government schools of India was exclusively secular; and the teachers did not feel themselves at liberty to form classes for the religious instruction of the Natives.

“Neutrality”
in the sense of
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people, impos-
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Christian Go-
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full and just
toleration, an
unquestion-
able duty.

It was said, however, that we had professed “neutrality” as the basis of our Government, and that such a course was indispensable. He wished, however, to impress on their Lordships the impossibility of maintaining neutrality in the sense on which that course of action was founded. The British colonists settled in India had been constantly increasing in numbers; they carried

with them to India British habits and feelings, all which habits and feelings had relation to Christian doctrines and European sentiments. The very existence of a European and Christian Government such as ours in a country like India—of a Christian nation being brought into contact with an idolatrous nation—carried with it correlatives and consequences which rendered that neutrality impossible in practice*; however desirable it might appear in theory. He asserted that it was impossi-

* If we look, for instance, at the administration of justice—no distinction is made between the Brahmin and the Pariah. Murder committed by the Brahmin on the low outcast, is treated on the Christian principle that both are equal in the sight of God, and of the law. Utterly subverting Hindoo law, and violating the strongest prejudices and feelings of the people from one end of India to the other.

In like manner the law of the Koran is wholly set aside, and Mahommedan feelings disregarded—for under British law the oath of the unbeliever is counted of just as much weight as that of the true believer, and Mahommedans are daily executed upon evidence utterly untenable in the light of their religion.

So also Slavery, recognised alike by Mahommedan and Hindoo law as a domestic institution, has been abolished by express directions of the British Parliament¹, and the usages and feelings of the people, and their property too, injured throughout the length and breadth of India. To these other instances might be added. As the law promulgated by Lord Wellesley, so far back as 1802, prohibiting under penalties the sacrifice of infants at the mouth of the Ganges, and the recent Act, sanctioning, in direct opposition to Hindoo law and usage, the re-marriage of the child-widow. In like manner the Government has recently put down by an armed force the Meriah, or human sacrifices to the Earth goddess in the hill districts of Cuttack and Goomsur.

¹ See Act of the Government of India v. 1843, and William IV. 3rd and 4th, Ch. lxxxv., Sec. 88:

Practical results of the Government secular education.

ble to maintain that neutrality, even in the case of a purely secular education. For many years back the system of education supported by the Government of India had been approaching nearer and nearer to the European model. Between 1813 and 1835 Oriental teaching had been the order of the day. The result of that system had been a marked failure. In spite of every effort of the Government, including the payment of stipends to the pupils who attended school, the Natives would not avail themselves of the education offered them ; in 1835 Lord William Bentinck published a Minute, declaring that education in schools was no longer to be of an Oriental character, but that English and an English system should henceforth be substituted for it. That was a step in advance, the effect of which, as well as of subsequent measures, he would advert to later ; but even before this, what had been the effect of the old system, bad as it had been ? It was described by the managers of the Delhi College in 1829, in the following terms :—

“ It having come to the knowledge of the managers that a belief prevails very generally that the students of the Hindoo College are liable to lose all religious principles whatever, it was resolved that Mr. D’Anselme be requested, in communication with the teachers, to check as far as possible all discussions tending to unsettle the belief of the boys in the great principles of natural religion.”

Proceeding onwards, in 1848 Mr. Thomason’s plan

for the promotion of vernacular education was adopted in eight districts of the North-Western Provinces with a large measure of success. The schools increased in these districts from 2,014 schools in 1850 to 3,459 in 1852-3, while the scholars increased from 17,159 to 36,864. In 1854 a still greater change took place in the Government system of education. In that year a Minute was issued by Sir Charles Wood, from which he would quote the following passage :—

“ Before proceeding further, we must emphatically declare that the education which we desire to see extended in India, is that which has for its object the diffusion of the improved arts, science, philosophy, and literature of Europe—in short, European knowledge. To attain this end it is necessary, for the reasons we have given above, that they (the Natives of India) should be made familiar with the works of European authors, and with the results of the thought and labour of Europeans on the subjects of every description upon which knowledge is to be imparted to them; and to extend the means of imparting this knowledge must be the object of any general system of education.”

It thus appeared that the system of education which we were now endeavouring to apply to India was based essentially upon a European model, and was calculated to ensure that the Natives should become acquainted with every branch of European science, philosophy, and arts.

But in order to judge of the effect of such a system, their Lordships must remember the nature of the religions which prevailed in India. Their

“ Neutrality ”
directly vio-
lated by the
Government
secular educa-
tion.

Lordships must understand that those systems were founded not only on false doctrine, but also on false science,—before they could appreciate the results of such a mode of education. If their Lordships would refer to the description of the Brahmin religion given in the recent able work of Sir Emerson Tennent, they would find that it was not only a false religion, but was so mixed up with errors in science, that as soon as European knowledge, intellect, and true science were brought to bear upon it, the foundation upon which it rested was utterly destroyed. Unless the religion of the student educated in the secular schools, and thus constantly and systematically undermined, was replaced by something nobler and purer, he was left a man without a creed, and without a faith; it was true there might be left to him some abstract notion of a Divine Being, but for every purpose of religion he would not be a whit better than he had been before, he would rather become worse—a shallow, hollow Deist*. And yet this system of

* The following testimony as to the effects of the Government system of education is from one himself at one time a teacher in the Bombay Government Institution. “Now,” he asks, “what is to be the result of all this?—a very great movement in one direction or another, at no remote period, is manifestly inevitable. * But will it be for good or for evil? You know I never cordially approved the Government plan of education, but of late, and I may say, exactly in proportion as I myself thought more solemnly on the truths of Christianity, and made them the subject of conversation with educated natives, have I become convinced of the evil tendency of

education was adopted by the Government of the present day on the professed basis of its neutrality. Now with regard to the effect produced under the present system, he might refer to a Committee of their Lordships' House which sat in 1852, and took a variety of evidence on this subject, much of which was deserving of attention. But he would add a few recent testimonies. A Hindoo father writing to a newspaper expresses himself as follows :—

“ I sent my son to the Hindoo College to study English, and when he had risen to the fourth class I thought he had made some progress in English knowledge ; I therefore forbade his going to the college, for I have heard that the students in the higher classes of the college become Nastiks (infidels).”

An intelligent writer of “The Calcutta Review,” commenting upon the Government system of education, says :—

“the system. The Government, in fact, does not know what it is doing. No doubt it is breaking down those superstitions, and dispersing those mists, which, by creating weakness and disunion, facilitated the conquest of the country ; but, instead of substituting any useful truth, or salutary principles, for the ignorance and false principles which they remove, they are only facilitating the dissemination of the most pernicious errors, and the most demoralizing and revolutionary principles. I have been appalled by discovering the extent to which atheistical and deistical writings, together with disaffection to the British Government and hatred to the British name, have spread, and are spreading among those who have been educated in Government schools, or are now in the service of Government.”—Memoir on the Education of the Natives of India, addressed to the Earl of Clare, Governor of Bombay. By R. C. Money, with an Introductory Notice by Rev. G. S. Money. London : 1857.

"The educated Native of the present day, with very few exceptions, vegetates without faith or object; he is either a hypocrite or a latitudinarian, and has, for a time at least, subsided into a dull, tame, discouraging mediocrity. Nevertheless it remains a notorious and ominous truth, that the majority of these young men, solidly and thoroughly educated in all secular knowledge, show no patriotism, or public spirit, no hatred of idolatry, no anxiety to rescue their fellow-countrymen from its yoke, no lofty moral bearing, no great aims or aspirations, no seriousness of spirit, or thoughtful, earnest inquiry after religious truth. In the flush and ardour of youth the great majority kill the conscience by outward compliance with the idolatry which they despise, or by making themselves over deliberately to worldliness. There is nothing of healthy life connected with their intellectual activity. . . . The greater body, dissolute and worldly, are but too surely tending to a state morally lower than that from which education rescued them. The Hindoo idolator, from conviction, may have faith, zeal, and honesty; he may be thoroughly conscientious, and ready to lay down life and limb, and to sacrifice all that he holds most dear from a fervent though misguided devotion. But the mongrel class, of whom we now write, too timid to break off from what they despise and believe, will live the subtle, faithless life of the Greek of the lower Empire, without courage or conscience, and hide—but too often—the heart of the atheist under the robe of the idolator."

He would only trouble their Lordships with the testimony of one more witness, a Hindoo gentleman, himself then a master in the Delhi College, who thus described the effect of the Government secular system of education on himself and upon some of his companions. Speaking of the disbelief in idolatry arising from their education, he says:—

"The result of this was, that many of our countrymen, the

Hindoos, condemned us as irreligious, but as we did not advocate Christianity, but only recommended a kind of Deism, and as we never lost our caste publicly by eating and drinking, all our free discussions did not much alarm our Hindoo friends. When in private meetings our friends taunted us by saying, 'We will become Christians as such and such a pundit has become,' then we considered this as an insult, and stated in reply that the person it referred to had not received an English education."

This gentleman, it would be seen, was not at that time converted to Christianity, though he abstained from the idolatrous practices of his country. He afterwards gave, in the preface to a work on mathematics published by the East India Company in recognition of the merits of its author, some passages in the history of his conversion to Christianity—and he begged their Lordships to remember that in this history they had the testimony of one who had gone through all the phases of mind which a convert from Hindooism might be expected to undergo. He said:—

"It was then my conscientious belief that educated Englishmen were too much enlightened to believe in any bookish religion, except that of reason and conscience, or Deism. After I had finished my mathematical work, and before I went down to Calcutta on leave, I had become a believer in the Gospel. Before this belief had taken possession of my heart, there were two erroneous notions in my head (and which I believe must ever be in the heads of nearly all Native youths educated in Government colleges and schools, as long as the system of instruction continues to be pursued as it is till now). The first of these notions was, that the English themselves did not

believe in Christianity, because they did not, as a Government, exert themselves to teach it. The second was that a person who believed in one God stands in need of no other religion."

He had thus endeavoured to show to their Lordships from the best testimony adducible that the Government system of education in India could not be carried on on the ground in which it was professedly conducted—that it did interfere with the religion of the Native population, and shake the foundations of what they had been taught; that it taught them to despise the religion of their fathers, and by a natural transition to despise their fathers themselves; and that, while no other system of religion was communicated to them, they were left in a state of practical infidelity, and tossed up and down as it were on a tempestuous ocean of unbelief.

No pledge or promise at any time given, nor does the recent Proclamation of the Queen provide for such "neutrality" of non-interference.

It was, however, argued that we could adopt no other system than this, because to do so would be contrary to the pledges, the promises, and proclamations, which we had at different times issued to the Native population of India. Now, if the Government had ever issued a proclamation or given a pledge to the effect that the reading of the Bible should never be allowed in the schools of India, such a proclamation or pledge would have been a disgrace to this country. But no such proclamation had ever been issued. What were the pledges and promises actually given to the Natives .

of India? * He would, in the first place, remind their Lordships of the gracious proclamation which proceeded from Her Majesty on assuming the Sovereignty of India. The words of that Proclamation were such as every Native of India might safely rest upon as guaranteeing to him the free exercise of his religion. It said :—

* The existence of any pledge or promise to uphold the Native religions has been on several occasions explicitly and authoritatively denied by the Government of India.—See Letter in reply to a memorial from the inhabitants of Madras, dated 24th May, 1845. In this letter they state, paragraph 5 :—“The principle which guides the Government of India is, “that all the religions professed by any of its subjects,” shall be “equally tolerated and protected.”

Paragraph 6.—“The Government acts upon this principle not on “account of any engagement it has come under, for no such engagement exists, but because it is just and right so to act.”

Paragraph 7.—“If the Government were to deviate ever so “widely from this principle, it could not justly be reproached with “breach of faith, though it might justly be reproached with partiality “and intolerance.”—See Reports of Indian Law Commission, p. 644.

In 1850, in a minute dated 9th April, the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, recorded the same opinion, observing “that the memorialists have altogether failed to show that the Government of India is “barred from the full exercise of this right by any pledge binding it “to maintain the Hindoo law unchanged in all its parts, and it is “abundantly demonstrated that in point of fact it has been and is “repeatedly altered in many of its essential features.”

Whilst so far back as 1818 the following were the terms of the proclamation issued by the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, on annexing the dominions of the Peshwa (Mahratta country) to the British Crown :—“All hereditary lands and annual stipends, and all “religious and charitable establishments will be protected, and all “religious sects will be tolerated, and their customs maintained as “far as is just and reasonable.”—East India Parliamentary Papers, 354, 22nd June, 1858.

“Sincerely relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects; we declare it to be our Royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure.”

And in this sense of the most extended toleration he endorsed every word of the Royal Proclamation. That Proclamation was alike based on justice as well as on the principles of toleration as understood in this country; and he believed that by passing the Resolution which he now proposed, not one word of it would be infringed. In 1801, the people of the Carnatic were informed by a Proclamation of Lord Wellesley that the authority of the Government would be exerted to procure for all the enjoyment of their just civil rights and “the free exercise of the religious institutions and domestic usages of their ancestors.” And a Proclamation had been issued to the same effect by Lord Dalhousie on the annexation of the Punjaub. The Natives of India might well look back upon the past, and ask how we had carried out the terms of those Proclamations. He would show to their Lordships that we had not done so, and that it was impossible we

could do so. Proclamations had thus been issued by successive Governor-Generals promising to the Native inhabitants the fullest toleration and the fullest and freest exercise of their religion; but they had been deceived in this respect: for it was impossible that a Christian state should grant in every particular that full and free exercise of their religious usages. Even in another and in a far more reprehensible point of view, we had not been consistent with our professions of neutrality. Need he remind their Lordships of the disgraceful connexion with the idolatrous rites of the people of India which had been exhibited by the British Government? Need he remind them how often British soldiers had been turned out to salute heathen deities, or that the Brahmin priests had been called upon to offer up prayers for a successful harvest? The British Government had deeply debased itself by following in such instances a servile conformity to the idolatrous practices of the Natives, and had thereby opened a source of future difficulties.

He must, however, refer to other instances of actual interference with Native religious practices which had taken place. We had interfered to prevent the burning of widows. Again, Government had interfered, and perhaps wisely, in respect to the law of inheritance, by saying that no person who

Practically the British Government has interfered with the religions of the people—instances given.

became a Christian should thereby lose his right to any inheritance. It was true that all those interferences had been submitted to by the people of India, because they felt and knew that we had not legislated capriciously, but after calm deliberation with a view to promote the welfare of the Native population: but they were interferences nevertheless. And all this had been done by a Christian Government forming its legislation upon European principles—a system whose faith, laws, and usages, in contact with a heathen population, must permeate their whole society. Although he did not at all agree with those who regarded these interferences with the customs of the people of India as among the causes which led to the late mutiny, yet Sir George Clerk had enumerated them as among those causes, and he could adduce no stronger evidence than this of the fact which he was endeavouring to prove. Sir George Clerk writes thus—

“It seems to be an absolute waste of time to seek for any other causes of the prevailing disaffection in India than any dispassionate observer may readily discover in various measures in which the sympathy of the natives has of late years been abruptly renounced, their feelings outraged on very tender points affecting their religion and their veiled daughters, and the confidence they once felt, that no proprietor would be dispossessed without having offended, utterly destroyed.”

He (the Duke of Marlborough) had brought forward those instances, in order to show that he was

warranted in saying that the professed neutrality of the Government, upon which ground the Bible was excluded from Government schools in India, had been infringed repeatedly and systematically, in cases where the religious feelings of the people of India had been perhaps far more directly touched than they could be in the case which he was considering.

It might, however, be objected to his proposition that if it created dissatisfaction and distrust among the people of India, it would induce them to abstain from sending their children to the Government schools; but how far did previous and present experience warrant us in allowing any weight to such an argument as this? In 1813 Mr. Warren Hastings expressed as his opinion that it would be very hazardous to introduce a Church establishment into India. What danger, or what ill effects had resulted from that step, or from our efforts to propagate Christianity in India—although in the moment of panic, the mutiny at Vellore had been attributed to the missionaries, just as the recent outbreak had been by some persons ascribed to their interference? Then, again, let the House consider how numerous were the missionary schools. The total number of those schools in India and Ceylon in the year 1853 was, for boys, 1,566 schools, attended by 64,482 pupils, and for girls 449, attended by 14,298

Instruction in the Bible in Government schools will not lessen the attendance. Opinions upon such subjects as Bible instruction of no weight till tested by experience.

pupils; and in these schools the Bible was openly and unreservedly taught: and he would ask did not that establish the fact that the children were not deterred from attendance at those schools. Mr. Henry Stewart Reid, Government Inspector of Schools in the North-West Provinces, in his report for 1858-9, says—

“There can be no doubt that we find in our Government colleges and schools a higher class of boys than those who attend missionary schools. But transfer to the latter the more efficient educational staff, and the rich scholarships—hold out to the student of the missionary school the certainty of lucrative Government employ, and the benches of the Government institutions will be deserted.”

If neutrality is to be upheld upon principle, the Government is inconsistent in following one course in India, and another in Ceylon.

But, then, it was still said that the introduction of the Bible into Government schools was opposed to the principles of religious neutrality upon which the Government promised to act in India. He (the Duke of Marlborough) could not understand what those principles were; but, at least, if they were acted upon, the Government should act upon them uniformly and consistently. If it was contrary to principle that the Government should mix itself up with religion, then let it be so understood. He found, however, that in Ceylon it was a recognised principle that the Scriptures should be taught in the Government schools, and they were so taught in the Central Academy at Colombo; while in India the Bible was strictly excluded. What could be

the reason for that difference of practice? Was it because the inhabitants of India were more numerous, and more to be feared than the people of Ceylon? He had shown that there was no indisposition on the part of the Indian people to submit to Government interference when they could believe in its sincerity: it was difficult for them to believe in that sincerity in the present instance, seeing the inconsistent course that was adopted in two different parts of the Empire. We were the only conquerors of India who had interfered by law with the religious customs of the people; and yet whilst we interfered with many things that they thought sacred we kept back our own religion from them; and consequently they were afraid to trust us, for (owing to their ignorance of the religion of those who governed them), they connected underhand motives with these proceedings. They imagined that a man was to be made a Christian by some ceremonial observance. But if they were once made to see that the Christian religion was a thing of the heart, and that its profession depended on no outward ceremonies, there would be an end to the mistrust with which they now often regarded the Government, and to those idle rumours so frequently circulated as to their enforced conversion to Christianity.

He would call their Lordships' attention to a very

remarkable instance, in proof of what he now stated. Mr. Tucker, for many years the Commissioner at Benares, which was the very sanctuary of the Brahmin religion, introduced a system which in itself was sufficient to scatter to the winds every assertion that the Natives were indisposed to receive religious instruction when that instruction was properly conveyed to them. Mr. Tucker did not allow himself to be guided by any of those idle theories of political expediency which seemed to weigh so much with the Government at home, but acted at once as a Christian gentleman ought to do. In the normal college established by him at Benares the whole of the young men regularly studied the Scriptures in the Hindi and Hindostani, and some thirty-four of them ventured to compete with the mission schools at a general Bible examination. A voluntary Bible class had been formed, which at first a few Mahometans objected to join; but it was seen that no one was compelled to attend it, and these soon followed the example of the other pupils, in the study of the Scriptures; the examinations showed a high degree of attainment in Biblical knowledge; and the instruction being openly and honestly given was by them willingly received. Did Mr. Tucker on this account forfeit the confidence of the Natives? Did they urge his removal, burn down the school-house,

or rise in open rebellion against the Government of which he was the representative? On the contrary, the city of Benares continued perfectly quiet during the mutiny, and when he left Benares it was shown that the God of all power was able to turn the hearts of all those for whose benefit His truth had been promulgated. A large subscription, amounting to 6,000 rupees, was raised, with which his portrait was purchased, and hung up in the Government College, while another portion was devoted to provide an annual prize for the best pupil in the Benares Government College, and a memorial was presented to him expressive of the admiration of the Natives at his advocacy of measures having for their object (as the memorial states) "the welfare here and hereafter of those committed to your charge."

Sir John Lawrence had expressed the opinion that "Christian things done in a Christian way would never alienate the heathen," and his testimony, with that of Mr. Kerr, (the author of a work on education) and of many others might be adduced, to show that with proper precautions, the introduction of the Scriptures into the Government schools was possible, without alienating the Natives and without working on their prejudices or their fears. Such evidence was better and more trustworthy than the evidence of those who said it was not possible to adopt the system, a system which they had never tried.

He should be told, perhaps, that this question had been submitted in direct and definite terms to the Governor-General, and other authorities, who had declared that the system was impracticable. Now, it might be all very well to read such letters ; but in what form was the question brought before these persons. He should like to ask those persons whether it would not be practicable to open a voluntary Bible class in the Government schools, on the express understanding that that class should only be attended as they or the parents might desire. He did not think it made much difference whether the Bible was read during or before school hours ; but no prohibition ought to exist against it, and it ought to be read either before or during school hours, as might be found suitable or possible in each particular instance. And he should like to know whether the question as to the establishment of voluntary Bible classes in the Government schools had been put to those governors whose opinions it was known were averse to the course he was advocating. It should be remembered that when the system of grants in aid was first established in India it was as strongly opposed as the one which he was now anxious to see carried out. That system was established principally by the advice of Sir Frederick Halliday, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, who had been desirous that the Mission Schools in India should in some degree

Grants in aid to mission schools as strongly objected to by great authorities as voluntary Bible instruction is now. Why are they to be wholly disregarded in the one case, and not in the other ?

partake in the assistance of the Government, and therefore proposed to institute grants in aid. Mr. Grant, Mr. Ricketts, and other authorities, both Native and European, objected to the proposal on the ground that it would be an appropriation of the taxes raised from the people for the purpose of inducing them to change their religion; but did the Government at home listen to their objections? If opinions were of so much value why were these opinions not followed at that time? and what reason was there to suppose that the opinions against the system which he proposed were of more value than the opinions against the system of grants in aid? The Government did not adopt the objections to grants in aid of missionary schools. And as to the objection on the ground of proselytism, the grants in aid were just as much open to that objection as Bible classes could be. Missionaries went out to India with the avowed purpose of establishing schools, and of converting the Natives, and the education given in those schools was compulsorily religious; for if Natives chose to attend those missionary schools they must read the Bible, and therefore in aiding that system, he did not say that the Government were not doing their duty, but at all events they could no longer shelter themselves behind the plea of neutrality in refusing to admit the introduction of the Bible.

The safety and stability of the British Empire in India depends upon the extension of Christian knowledge through the whole country.

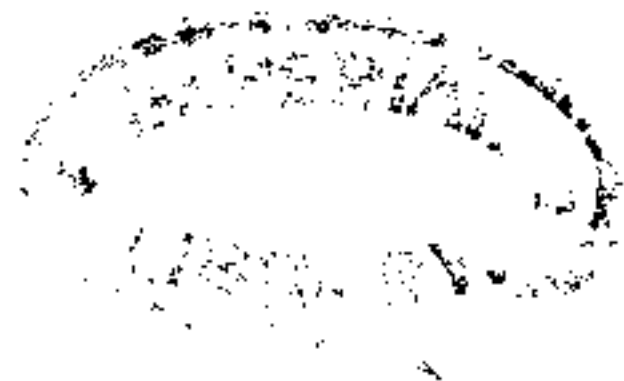
There was abundant evidence that the spread of Christianity in India would conduce to the safety and security of the Government, and the strongest evidence of that proposition was to be found in this, that those places where Christianity prevailed were spared from many of those terrible effects of the mutiny, which, during the rebellion, prevailed in other parts of India.

Conclusions.

He would now, in conclusion, only briefly recapitulate the arguments which he had used. He had shown that the Scriptural education that might be given in Government schools would not be calculated to alarm the Natives, provided it was given openly and on the avowed principle of non-compulsion; that it was not so much from knowledge of the Christian religion as from ignorance of it that danger arose; and that the neutrality upon which the Government based the exclusion of the Bible might exist in name, but was impossible in practice, and had been constantly and systematically violated; and further, that the safety of the Government had been comparatively ensured in those parts of India where Christianity had been in the ascendant. He should deeply regret if any word which had fallen from him could lead to the impression that he wished the Government to depart from the sacred obligation of toleration not to impose their religion on the Natives of India. All he wished

was, that the Natives should not be left to grope helplessly in the dark, while their ancient notions of belief were taken from them ; that they should not be abandoned to the unwillingness of the natural mind to receive the truths of Christianity, but that they should have the opportunity afforded them of learning, if they wished, the truths which might make them enduringly happy ; that the Government of India, being Christian, should not hide its light under a bushel, but should be like a city set on a hill, or as a candle set on a candlestick, that all who enter in might see the light. The system which he wished to introduce was one of true love and of wise government towards the Natives, and was a subject in which the people of this country took a very deep interest. Petitions had been sent up to Parliament from every part of the country, not in consequence of any organized agitation, but from the spontaneous sympathy of the people. Whatever might be the result of the present Motion, he felt convinced that the time was not far distant when public opinion would make itself heard, would repudiate the course now persisted in in the education of the Natives of India by a professing Christian Government, and compel the adoption of that course which he felt sure was the only one which would ultimately, by the blessing of God, secure the lasting prosperity of India.

Sir John Lawrence, in an address at Glasgow, subsequently to the delivery of this speech, has given this matured and decided opinion upon some of the points urged in the foregoing pages. He is reported to have said—"The religion of the great majority of the people of India consists in ceremonial observances, and in a fancied personal freedom from certain contaminating influences. They are extremely ignorant and proportionately superstitious. They have certainly a general impression that we desire their conversion, and that this will be accomplished by physical means. Thus stories of bone dust being mixed with the flour sold in the market, and the like, are constantly floating about the country. We are never secure from panics arising from such causes. Does not this, then, inculcate the policy of instructing the people, where they are willing to receive it as to the real character of our religion? Sound policy surely dictates that we should give them the means of comprehending its principles. We cannot teach them the very elements of our sciences without showing them the folly of their own faith. Shall we, then, sap the foundations of their belief, without giving them facilities for acquiring true knowledge? Can this be wisdom? It is said that the work should be restricted to the missionaries. But what can a few missionaries do among hundreds of millions of people? I do not desire to see the Government undertake the duty of the missionary; but that when the parents of children belonging to our schools do not object, and masters are able and willing to instruct, the Bible should not be prohibited. Government, as regards the extension of our faith, cannot really remain neutral. Its influence will either be for or against its progress. Under the most favourable auspices, that faith will not spread very fast; the probability rather is that its progress will be lamentably slow. I myself believe that sound policy, as well as our duty to God and to man, demand that we should give facilities and encouragement to the spread of Christianity in India, and that the introduction of the Bibles into the Government schools may be effected in many places with the full consent of the children and their parents by teachers who have their heart in the work."—*Times*.



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