

ONCE HINDU:

NOW CHRISTIAN.

THE EARLY LIFE OF BABA PADMANJI.

An Autobiography.

EDITED BY

J. MURRAY MITCHELL, M.A., LL.D.

LONDON:

MES. NISBET & CO., 21 FERNERS STREET.

MDCCCX.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE WORK of which this is a translation was published in the Marathi language at Bombay about two years ago. It has been warmly welcomed wherever that language is spoken.

But Marathi is only one of many Indian tongues, and it is probable that translations of the work will soon appear in other dialects. It seems also desirable to supply an English rendering, and this both for the sake of Indian students of English—who are ready a large and influential class of men—and so on behalf of the numerous friends of Missions in Europe and America.

I may, of course, be biassed in my opinion of the merits of a book containing the autobiography of one who has, for many years, been connected with me by very endearing ties; but it certainly does not appear to me that the work is full of most valuable information, conveyed in a truly excellent spirit. The descriptions of Hindu life and religion are particularly graphic, and they are such as only a born

Hindu could have supplied. The narrative of the transition made by the writer from heathenism to Christianity, of the "fightings without and fear within" which accompanied that great change, and of the "joy and peace in believing" which, in the goodness of God, he finally attained—these things cannot fail to awaken profound interest and sympathy in every man who has a heart to feel, whether he be Hindu or Christian.

There is at this moment a terrible unrest in the mind of educated India. Will this honest and earnest narrative not serve to lead some souls that are tempest-tossed and like to suffer shipwreck, to seek the one sure haven of refuge—Jesus Christ?

Then as for Christians. They hear much about converts from heathenism. What is a convert? Well, here, at all events, is one who, in simplicity and godly sincerity, opens up to us his whole mind and heart. And if we cannot exactly say, *Ex udisce omnes*, we may truly affirm that there are multitudes in India and other heathen lands that he had a like experience, and, after "a great fight of afflictions," have reached the same golden calm "the peace of God that passeth all understanding."

In the original, the work ends with the account of the author's reception into the Church. In India his subsequent career is well known; but in other places, unless something were added, the c

on would unavoidably press itself on the reader—
What became of the convert after baptism? In the
work as now submitted that question is answered—
sufficiently, if briefly. Mr. Padmanji, it will be
seen, has been diligent in doing good. In particular,
his pen has never been idle.

There have recently been discussions on various
questions of Mission policy, and, in particular, the
relative merits of teaching and preaching have been
freely canvassed. But very little has been said
of the immense importance of the press—of the
translation and circulation of the Holy Scriptures,
and the composition, translation, and circulation of
Christian tracts and books. Yet really one of the
most pressing wants of India and the East generally
is pure and *Christian literature*. We by no means
forget the valuable work already done by the various
Bible and Book Societies in India and elsewhere, or
of the Christian Vernacular Education Society
founded in the year of the Mutiny, and as a con-
fession of our sore neglect of duty towards India—
it has accomplished much good; but the societies
in India, and we presume the corresponding ones for
China and Japan, require an immediate and tenfold
increase of revenue. Education is steadily extend-
ing over the East; but what are the people to read?
They have only their own religious books, the
acquired power of reading, and the multiplica-

tion of books by means of the press, will only serve to rivet the chains of heathenism upon them more firmly than ever; and when they cannot continue to trust their own religious books, the writings of Western unbelievers are pressing in to fill the void. It is high time that the friends of Missions should lay these things to heart.

Now, while foreign Missionaries can aid to some extent in providing a Christian literature, yet every language books which posterity "will willingly let die" must, we apprehend, be composed by men who speak and write it as their mother tongue.

In the revision of the Scriptures in Marathi, in the preparation of books and tracts in that language, Mr. Padmanji has done admirable service. Will the reader just run his eye over the list of publications given in Appendix F.? We apprehend it will take him by surprise. And those are ephemeral productions; we believe that many of them will live and help in moulding the character of Christians in Western India for generations to come. For Mr. Padmanji puts his heart in his books. Then he is a master of Marathi style; vivacity, and grace mark everything he writes in his mother tongue. We are full of hope that his exertions will not be lost, and that Mr. Padmanji's diligence of his pen will stimulate Christian authorship.

the vernacular dialects of India, and help to supply the lamentable deficiency of which we have been speaking.

The present work is a translation, made by a Native friend of the author, but revised by Mr. Padmanji and accepted by him as a sufficiently fair representation of the original. Of course, the translator, using what is to him a foreign language, could not possibly attain the freshness and beauty of the Marathi. But the style has the merit of being plain and unpretending; it avoids that decorated English, with its

swelling epithets, laid thick
Like varnish,

which captivates too many of the youth of India. I comply with the request of Mr. Padmanji in bringing and carrying the work through the press; I hasten to explain what my duty as editor has demanded to. I have most scrupulously abstained from interfering with the sentiments expressed. The work contains native sentiment from beginning to end; nothing is seen through European spectacles; notes that have been added here and there are only explanations of Indian words and things. Even in regard to the language, I have, as much as possible, avoided making changes. Expressions which offend the genius of the English tongue have been removed, though probably

a tinge of native idiom will be traceable, and will hardly be deemed a serious blemish ; but I have not to the best of my remembrance, re-written one entire sentence.

On various questions that have lately been earnestly discussed in Britain, it will be found that Mr. Padmanji has by anticipation—for he had not heard the disputes when he wrote—pronounced a decided judgment. The opinion of one so well qualified to decide as this Native Christian gentleman certainly is, will be listened to with deep respect by all who desire to know the truth on the matters in dispute.

It is Mr. Padmanji's earnest prayer—it is the earnest prayer of all who have had to do with the preparation of this work—that it may be the honor of God to advance the great cause of Missions. Men are saying that we have entered on a new era of Missionary zeal. Yes, we believe so. The fire is kindled ;—but the flame as yet burns faint and low. Happy they who can in any way help to fan it, that it shall ascend in full and ruddy blaze to heaven.

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ONCE HINDU: NOW CHRISTIAN.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES.

My parents belonged to the caste of the Kâsârs or braziers. They were rich and respectable. Some of our ancestors were the recognised heads of the Kâsâr community. My paternal grandfather was a jeweller. He had a large establishment in Bombay, and had commercial dealings principally with the city of Surat. And her of my paternal ancestors was reckoned among the wealthiest men of Bombay, and commanded much respect both from the Government and the general public. I remember seeing, when I was a boy, a relative of mine, who must then have been upwards of eighty years of age, of whom I was told that he had held the important office of interpreter at the Court of the Peshwas (Maratha sovereigns) at Poona. He knew English, besides several Indian languages. He took the fall of the Maratha Government so much to heart that his

reason was affected. He then spent all his time in sending letters to the British authorities, in which he demanded a full account of the treasures that had belonged to his former masters. The benevolent English Government dealt kindly with the faithful man, and offered him a pension. This he refused; neither would he allow his wife to accept it.

My father's name was Padmanjî Mânakjî. He was a graduate of the Engineering School of Colonel Jervis, and held an appointment in the Public Works Department of Government. He spent most of his time at Belgaum, a town 200 miles to the south of Poona. It was the headquarters of the Collector, and also an important military station.

I was born in the town of Belgaum in the year 1831, and spent in it the first sixteen years of my life. We lived in a very comfortable style. My father, who was in the receipt of a large salary, surrounded himself with many of the comforts and some of the luxuries of life. We occupied a large house, which had been improved by the artistic skill of my father, and had a pretty garden in front. The front verandah was used for receiving male visitors. It was furnished with comfortable seats and lights; and a large lamp of Chinese manufacture was lit every night at the top of the gate. Our garden was invaded at night, or early in the morning, by people in the neighbourhood, who stripped it of

the pretty flowers which formed its glory. They did this in order to adorn the heads of their idols. Of course, they committed these thefts when we were asleep; but they had no notion of the criminality of their conduct. The Hindu believes that a religious motive justifies an immoral action.

We lived in a street which was inhabited chiefly by Brahmans. Socially we had little in common with them. They were exclusive and superstitious, and would not allow us to enter their houses or touch any household article. We sometimes drew water from their wells; but we had to use our own bucket and rope, for fear of defiling theirs by our touch. If a Brahman woman came to our house, she sat on a separate wooden stool, and not on the same mat or carpet with our women; and the *halad-kunku*,* which is offered to female visitors, was presented to them from a distance. It was never moist, but always quite dry; for the presence of water in any article unfits it for general use. We were sometimes invited to dinner by the Brahmans; but we were not allowed to sit in the same row with them, nor were our plates removed by their women. The Brahmans assert their sanctity in everything, and their loftiest pretensions are meekly submitted to by the castes beneath them.

We were put to much inconvenience in various

* Powder rubbed on their foreheads by married women.—*Edit.*

respects by our proximity to the Brahmans. We could not freely follow our own tastes in regard to food and drink. The rules of our caste allowed us the use of mutton, fowls, and fish; but these articles were extremely obnoxious to our neighbours. We did not like to offend them, and had therefore recourse to various expedients. In referring to such things, we employed a peculiar phraseology, and used either English words, or others which had been coined on purpose. Fish were called "water-beans," and mutton "red vegetable;" prawns were honoured with the religious name of "Shiva biscuits." We burned flour in the fireplace when mutton was cooking, that its flavour might not be perceived by people outside. Such articles as these were brought from the market with the utmost secrecy. I well remember how, at a much later time, I was pursued by a crowd of Brahmans, who took me for one of their own caste, for having gone to the meat-market, until their minds were disabused by the loud expostulations of my companions, uttered in a non-Brahmanical dialect.

We were lavish in our charity to the Brahmans. Every morning my grandfather gave them rice; also flour to the ascetics, and handfuls of grain to inferior beggars. Religious mendicants of a higher class used to get a plateful of rice and some money. There were always large presents in cash—still larger ones on

festive occasions; and subscription lists often came to us for the assistance of those who were considered respectable mendicants. Some of these last practised most disreputable tricks in order to extract money, and this without the least sense of shame. They would go about with some borrowed costly garment on, and pretending that it had been presented to them, would induce not a few wealthy people to bestow similar gifts. My dear mother was often deceived in this way.

We worshipped not only the Brahmans, but also numerous idols, both at home and in the temples. There was a room kept apart for our household gods, and every grown-up member of the family worshipped them every morning, after he had performed his ablutions. One of us performed the principal *pūjā* (ceremony), which was of an elaborate kind. He washed the gods, which were mostly images of brass and stone, only a few being of gold and silver. He then carefully wiped them dry, and daubed each image separately with sandal-wood pigment, rice, and scent. They were then replaced in the shrine and adorned with flowers. If the worshipper had an æsthetic turn of mind, he arranged the flowers with no small care and skill. After the gods had been put back in their places, they were offered either cooked or uncooked food, chiefly the former. No Hindu takes his morning meal without first offering some portion of it to

the images. During worship lights were lit, camphor and incense burnt, and the family bell was rung.

Our family deity was the goddess Kâlikâ. She was honoured with Shâkta rites.* My grandfather himself performed them, as he had been formally initiated into the Shâkta mysteries; and every evening he offered liquor to the goddess. On special occasions the worship continued long, and was attended by people from the town. The rules of caste were then entirely set aside; Brahmans and Shudras feasted side by side on flesh and liquor. I once went to such a feast at the house of a Brahman who laid claim to great sanctity, but had a Kunbi or Shudra woman in his keeping. She was worshipped that evening as a goddess. Whenever any learned Brahman scholar or a person holding the Shâkta tenets came to Belgaum, he was invited by my grandfather to our house, and entertained in the fashion aforesaid. Even Shankarâchârya, a sort of pope,† was presented with English liquor and dainty dishes of flesh, if he was understood to be a Shâkta.

The people of our caste observe certain rules of

* See note at the end.

† Shankarâchârya was a great religious teacher, who flourished more than a thousand years ago; but the name is still claimed by several persons who profess to be his successors. The personage referred to in the text lives at Shankeshwar, in the Belgaum district. He exercises very great authority among most of the Maratha

ceremonial purity, and they adhere to them as tenaciously as the Brahmans do to their more complicated system. They will not eat in the morning until they have bathed and worshipped the gods; and they wear either woollen or silken garments when taking their meals. They employ servants of a lower caste than their own, such as the Kunbi, to work in the house or to fetch water for their use; but they do not allow them to enter their kitchen or the room in which the gods are worshipped. They do not touch a barber after they have bathed; nor do they use fresh clothes brought by the washerman, nor a new pair of shoes purchased from a shoemaker, until they have subjected the articles to purification. A little sprinkling of water purifies the clothes, and a blade of grass cast on them from a distance removes the defilement of the shoes. *Makars* and other low castes are never touched, and their very shadow is avoided as polluting.

I may mention that my mother was very devout, strictly observing the fasts and feasts enjoined by the Hindu religion. She regularly worshipped the family god, and circumambulated the *tulasî** and *pipal* trees the prescribed number of times. She also visited the temples. I was often present at her

* *Tulasî* is *Ocimum sanctum*, or *holy basil*. The shrub is much venerated by Hindus. *Pipal* is a species of fig-tree—the *Ficus religiosa*.—Edit.—

devotions in the house as well as in the temples, and her piety made a deep impression on my mind. My early notions of Hindu rites and ceremonies were obtained from her. My father's devotions were not so ardent, but he was not indifferent to religion. He carefully read the Gîtâ in its Marathi version,* and usually took it with him to the country. He not only read it there, but worshipped it in the place of the gods he had left at home; and he put it under his pillow at night that he might dream of gods and saints, and not be disturbed by evil spirits and bad dreams.

* The Bhagavad-Gîtâ (i.e., the Lord's Song) is a philosophico-religious poem in Sanskrit, which has very powerfully affected the more modern developments of Hindu thought. There is an elaborate commentary on the Gîtâ, written in Marathi verse, by the learned Brahman poet Dnyânobâ about 600 years ago. It has long been, and still is, very popular among the Maratha people. This is the work referred to.—*Edit.*

CHAPTER II.

EARLY TRAINING.

I WAS sent at an early age to the Government Vernacular School at Belgaum, which had been established in 1830. It met in a long building without any separate compartments for holding the different classes. There was but one door, so that the arrangements both for light and ventilation were very defective. It had scanty school furniture, and, in the absence of a clock, the time of the lessons was determined by the shadow of the sun. The pupils did not bring their own slates; these were supplied by the school. Thin plates of tin generally served for this purpose. They were written upon with ink. Square wooden boards were also used, on which fine sand was spread, and fingers were employed as pens. The instruction imparted was of the most elementary kind, and the manner of communicating it was extremely imperfect. Something of geography, grammar, and arithmetic was taught in the highest class, besides the multiplication table. Some time was devoted to the reading of manuscripts. Yet it must be acknowledged that the school-books then in use were very attractive.

Even the treatise on geography was not dry or dull, rich only in abstract rules and formidable names. It was composed in the form of a dialogue, and the first book of the kind that I got as a prize made quite an era in my life. When I first obtained it, I read it several times over, and showed it to every one I came across. The arguments in it for the spherical form of the earth, and the explanation of the theory of eclipses, disclosed new truths to me, and completely banished from my mind the notion that the earth was flat and of the shape of a *pipal* leaf. The book had beautiful maps, which were painted in different colours; and I remember how I used to repeat the famous saying of Ranjit Singh ("the Lion of the Panjâb"), "*Sab lâl ho jâegâ*"—"All will become red." He used to say this as he pointed to the red borders of the British territory on the map of India. An old gentleman reading the name of Austria on the map of Europe, solemnly declared that it was a country wholly inhabited by women (*Striya*, Austria), and told many frightful stories about them.* My poor grandfather was quite ill with fright when some one assured him that Aden, to which my father had been transferred, was in the vicinity of this dreadful Austria. Unfortunately, Aden, which had not then assumed the importance it did afterwards, was not marked on the map. Besides the book

* *Striyâ* in Sanskrit and Marathi means women.—*Edib.*

of geography, there was another one which proved most profitable to me. It was a popular treatise on morals, and its brief sententious precepts deeply impressed themselves upon my mind. We had simply to commit them to memory, for we received no explanation or exhortation on the subject. I learnt the whole of it by heart, and some of its teachings are still quite fresh in my memory—such as, “Fear God and honour the King;” “God is merciful;” “It is He to whom we are indebted for what we possess;” “God is the judge of the world, and He punishes transgressors,” &c.

The modes of punishment practised in the school were sometimes cruel; and the authority of the teacher was always upheld by severe discipline. The juvenile delinquents were hung up by the hands tied together; or they were made to stoop, and a number of wooden boards were piled up on their backs. Sometimes the infliction was different; the boys were made to hold their ears with both hands, and then rise and sit down several times in rapid succession. If this was considered too light a punishment, the culprit had to press his thumb on the ground and lift up one leg, and then bow down, throwing the whole weight of the body forward upon the poor thumb alone.

My teacher was an indolent, pleasure-loving man, who spent the afternoon in chewing betel and playing. He sometimes

came to our house to drink tea, though it was against the rules of his caste to do so. One day the Collector happened to visit the school, and the teacher was fined for absence, as he was engaged at the time in a game of chess at his usual place of resort. He was, however, indulgent to me, and put me in the highest class to please my father, although I was deficient in everything except reading. To be sure, I was the best reader in the school, and knew all my reading-books by heart.

In those days the annual visit of the Educational Inspector was a great event in the life of the student. The inspector was regarded as a very great man. He received a large salary, wore fine clothes, rode in a palanquin carried by four bearers; and his palanquin often corresponded with the magnitude of his salary and reputation. The well-known Bâl Gangâdhar Shâstrî twice visited our school in my time. He commanded much respect for his scholarship. He was the first native professor in the Government College at Bombay, the editor of an influential newspaper and magazine, and the author of numerous school-books. He was a good English scholar, and his abilities and acquisitions had won for him a great name. He was considered an authority in Sanskrit and Marâthî. He was also an earnest thinker, and in his views on social and moral questions he was far in advance of his con-

temporaries. Such a person could not but be an object of dread and aversion to the orthodox, illiterate masses; and when he came to Belgaum, he was openly condemned by the Brahmans, and an enthusiast belonging to the strict sect of the Vaishnavas (worshippers of Vishnu) challenged him to engage in a public discussion with him. The Shâstrî was on friendly terms with the missionaries, and during his stay at Belgaum he found congenial society at the Mission-house. He made a great impression on my mind; and I carefully preserved two books which he awarded me as prizes, and in which he had inserted his name in English.

There was a heathen practice observed in our school; and indeed it prevailed in all non-Christian schools. Those boys who used slates, and had not learnt to write on paper, were required to worship pictures of the god Ganesha and his wife Saraswati, drawn on the slates, every Saturday, as well as once a year, on the day dedicated to the special worship of these deities. On the latter occasion an image made of mud was substituted for the picture on the slates. The same ceremony was performed once a year in the courts of the native magistrate and native judge, the expense being defrayed out of the Government treasury.*

* It is quite possible that English officials were not aware of this application of Government money. An allowance was made for the cleaning of the school and other necessary expenses; and the native

I had private tutors employed to instruct me at home. One taught me Canarese, the language of the district; another, a professional preacher, got me to read Marathi poems in the customary devotional tone, and a learned Shâstrî gave me lessons in Sanskrit. I sometimes conversed with my Sanskrit teacher on the subject of religion. One day, when I asked him what people did in heaven, he replied that they quaffed nectar⁶ and sat perfectly still—he himself assuming, at the same time, an attitude indicating profound repose.

I was very fond of reading the legendary tales of the deities, and hearing expositions of them in the temples. When a good preacher came to our town, my father would ask him to give a recitation at our house. I then listened with deep attention, and showed my approbation by zealously joining with my elders in offering him worship. I would put a garland of flowers round his neck, rub perfumery on his forehead, and prostrate myself at his feet. I may say that my love of Marathi literature and composition may be traced to this early habit of reading the legendary books, and hearing expositions of them from the lips of eloquent Marathi scholars.

officials would readily divert part of it to such purposes as the one here mentioned.—*Edit.* c

* *Amrita*, which corresponds etymologically with *ambrosia*, but is the *drink* of the gods.—*Edit.*

CHAPTER III.

MY FIRST ENGLISH SCHOOL.

IN 1843 I was sent to an English school. There was only one such at Belgaum, and it belonged to the London Missionary Society. The Rev. Messrs. Taylor and Beynon were at the head of it. I was first introduced to the latter of these gentlemen by my uncle, who had been educated under him; and my reception was very kind. The missionary drew me close to him, and laying his hand upon my head, solemnly spoke something in English. I was not asked to pay any fees; indeed, no fees were charged, but, on the contrary, small sums were given to the poorer students. The school was largely attended by children from the town and the neighbouring villages, and the missionaries were most popular with all. Mr. Taylor came daily to school, and was frank in his intercourse with the boys. Sometimes he would bring fruit from his garden and distribute it to us. He was always most kind and affectionate—often almost playful with us. Our life in the English Mission school was different from what it had been in the Government vernacular one, where

the teachers had always been severe, and used to assert their authority by a frequent use of the rod.

Our head-master, though not a Brahman, was of respectable caste, and much respected both for his character and scholarship. He knew several languages, and his linguistic acquisitions were most useful in a school attended by children of various races and speaking various languages. He had no faith in the Hindu religion, and had given up the use of the idolatrous mark on the forehead. One of his assistants was a Pârsî, who also held advanced views on religion. He was a diligent student of the Bible, and was especially interested in the prophecies, a subject on which he had read a great many works.

The instruction imparted in the school was of a thorough nature. The missionaries personally taught the upper department. The Bible was daily read in the classes, and the whole school was addressed by the missionaries on Saturdays. In some of the lower classes a catechism was taught. The Rev. W. Beynon used to close the school with prayer on Friday, and the Rev. Joseph Taylor did the same on Saturday afternoon.

The devotional exercises in the school seem to have made considerable impression on my mind, for I often imitated them at home. I would place a book on a table, and then, standing before it, bend

forward in the attitude in which the missionaries did, and repeat some prayer which I had learnt by heart at school.

The library was not much used by the students, though it contained books both in English and the native languages. The vernacular books were in charge of a Parsi youth, and I used to borrow Marathi books for perusal. In this way I became acquainted with a good many religious works, such as "The Pilgrim's Progress," "The Indian Pilgrim," the New Testament, &c., &c. I read "The Pilgrim's Progress" through, and some portion of the New Testament, especially the Acts of the Apostles and the Book of Revelation. I also read the English Bible at home; and the story of Abraham, the Psalms, and the Proverbs had a great attraction for me. I was not much inclined to read the New Testament, on account of the secret antipathy I bore to the name of Christ. I was still, indeed, a zealous idolater; and on one occasion I tore a Marathi tract in pieces because it made some strictures on the Hindu deities.

CHAPTER IV.

MY ATTACHMENT TO HINDUISM.

WHEN I was in the Belgaum Mission School, my faith in the Hindu religion was not shaken. On the contrary, my fondness for its rites and ceremonies increased, for there was much in them to gratify my vanity and love of pleasure. I did not seriously attend to the religious instruction given by the missionaries.

In the street in which I lived there was a famous temple of Mâruti (or Hanumân), who was regarded as the tutelary god of the town. The temple had an annual grant of money from the Government. When this temple was to be repaired, my father gave not only a large donation, but his professional services gratis. Not only was the principal temple improved, but also many other houses that were in its courtyard. So English civil engineering skill was of great service to the Hindu god! The management of the temple was in the hands of a family of priests, who often quarrelled among themselves for the gains of the temple. A son of one of these managers came to

Masana (Masan means a burying or burning ground for the dead). He was so called because the previously born children of his parents had all died; for it is imagined that, when children are called by contemptuous names, they will survive. Often children in like manner are called Kondya (chaff), Dagdya (stone), &c. I used frequently to go with this boy to the temple of Mâruti. As soon as I got on the steps of the hall in front of the temple, I would ring the bells which were hung at the entrance, and jump to reach them several times. There was a large bell among them which had been presented by my father. (Bells are rung on entering a temple, to waken the god and apprise him of the arrival of a worshipper.) I would next go up to the door of the temple, and throw myself down most devoutly before the image, and then rising up, stand before it with folded hands, loudly chanting hymns of praise which I had learnt by heart. On leaving the temple, I would take some of the sacred ashes and rub them on my forehead, as well as eat them. When it was the turn of the father of my school-fellow to officiate at the temple, I used to get some of the fruits that had been offered to the god. The concluding part of the worship was going round the temple several times, sometimes as often as 108 times, (this being a sacred number). These circuits were very fatiguing, for the area of the temple was very large. Every day I used to

a few rounds. Afterwards I would spend a good deal of time in loitering about in the temple-yard, or engaging in games with my school-fellows. We also went on Mondays to the temple of Shiva, and killed as many beetles as we could find, it being considered meritorious to do so.

Sometimes I would sit watching the monkeys and other curious animals which the wandering mendicants at the temple often had with them. These mendicants had some peculiar ways about them. They were very fond of blowing the conch-shells at the time of the worship of their gods, and it made a weird sound. They were very great smokers of intoxicating hemp. The walls of the temple had painted on them pictures of Râma and Krishna and their exploits, with inscriptions giving an account of these deities. Besides such amusements, I had opportunities of witnessing theatrical performances in the temple. These gave me a good deal of knowledge about the legends of the gods. The dramatists were Karnatic Brahmans, and were not considered to be of high social position, because on the stage they sometimes personated women.

In our street there were some other religious establishments besides the temple described above. There was a Brahman ascetic from the south living there, who was in the habit of going about the street roaring out *Râdhâ Krishna* (praise to Krishna and

his mistress, Radha), as early in the morning as four o'clock, and this very much disturbed the sleep of the people. Sometimes attempts were made by the native authorities to put a stop to the nuisance, but they were unsuccessful. The people in our house, however, rather enjoyed the noise, as early in the morning the praises of their gods fell on their ears. There was another Brahman, a Government clerk, who made a great display of devotion. Every Friday crowds went to his house to witness him worshipping. He had a large shrine for his idols, and the vessels used on the occasion were of silver. He used to tie small bells round his feet and dance, singing the praises of the principal deity, who was a goddess,—playing at the same time on a violin. But he was a very wicked man, and stole Government money. When he was about to be prosecuted for embezzlement*, he absconded, went away to a solitary mountain, and lived there as a hermit.

Whenever Shankarâchârya came to our town, he lodged at the temple of Mâruti. If he happened to come in the month of Shrâvan (July–August), which is considered the most sacred month of the year, a crore* of mud *lingams* were required to be made in honour of Shiva. They were made of the size of a betel-nut, and were spread on a sheet of cloth. A contract was given to make them. There

* A crore is ten millions. The *lingam* is a symbol of Shiva.

was a great deal of deceit practised in connection with these images. The contractor bribed the officers of Shankarâchârya, and the full number bargained for was never given. The Brahmans of the rival sect of the worshippers of Vishnu did not approve of these evil commercial transactions.

The Shankarâchârya who visited Belgaum was from the village of Shankeshwar. He always came with great pomp. He had a grant of thirty villages from Government, the revenue of which amounted to 30,000 rupees a year. He also got large sums of money from the people. He usually fed every year 10,000 Brahmans. He rode in a palanquin, which was carried sideways; and he was accompanied by lighted torches even during the day.

It was very expensive to invite this "world-teacher" to one's house for worship; at least 100 or 200 rupees must be spent on the occasion. Poor people generally went to his lodgings to pay him their respects. I remember I went with my relatives to a feast given by this great man. The sweet cakes were thick and coarse like *bâjarâ* cakes, and as large as the cakes sold at the Mohammadan shops in Bômbay. Instead of people grinding the coarse sugar and *dâl* (split pulse) used for the cakes with a grinding stone, the articles were smashed with the feet. For fireplaces they dug long trenches, and kindled a fire in them, over which they placed long plates of iron for break-

ing the cakes. When I came home, I criticised the food; but I was reprimanded for this, and was told it was wrong to find fault with consecrated food. Each of us paid a rupee for the dish we got, besides the money we offered personally to the holy man.

I have mentioned above that a professional teacher was engaged for me, to teach me to read the sacred books. I made a practical use of my powers. I used to read the books to the ladies of our house. Many other non-Brahmanical women in the neighbourhood also came to hear me. I soon became quite a little *pauranik* (expositor) to the neighbourhood. I used to place a high stool before me, and lay the sacred book upon it; then, holding each long leaf in my hand, I read it, sitting on a low stool in the fashion of professional expositors. At the commencement I chanted a Sanskrit verse, and another at the conclusion. The usual ceremony of waving the lamp was performed at the close. Some women used to place sugar, plantains, &c., before the sacred book as an offering to it, and also put a garland of flowers round my neck. I generally read the sacred books at night during the rainy season, as well as on the great holidays throughout the year. The books were all in Marathi verse, and described the principal gods and heroes of the Hindu pantheon. In those days these works had not been printed; they could be had only in manu-

script, and were hard to obtain. Whatever books we did not possess of our own were borrowed from others, who lent them to us in small portions. We had a copy of a book called "The Glory of Hari," which contained the story of Krishna (the eighth incarnation of Vishnu). It cost fifteen rupees; whereas a similar book, neatly printed, could now be had for one rupee. So great has been the fall in the price of books.

I had been taught certain forms of prayer called the *sandhyâ*, when I had the *munj* or initiatory rite performed. This did not contain the most sacred of all the hymns, called the *Gâyatrî*,* because I belonged to the caste of Kâsârs, who are supposed to have no right to the privilege of using it. But still I used to cover my hand, holding the sacred thread between my thumb and forefinger, and repeat some kind of verse instead of the holy Gâyatrî.

At the time of my initiation, I had been given some lessons in Marathi, of which I remember a few. I was told, for example, that I should not ride on a dog; that I should not pass between two asses; that I should not look into water; that I should not climb a tree; and that I should not look at night into a mirror, &c. I used to read every morning a little book called *Vyankatesh Stotra* ("The

* This celebrated text contains really an invocation to the sun.—*Edit.*

praise of Vyankatesh ") at the time that I performed my morning devotions, and I would not take my breakfast till I had read it. I knew it all by heart. I had also committed to memory some things connected with the Shâkta worship, and used to repeat these for several years, though I was not formally initiated into the Shâkta mysteries till a much later time. I learnt also by heart a Sânskrit book which contained the praises of Shiva, but I did not understand one word of it. I knew besides a great deal more that is usually repeated by devout Hindus.

After I was invested with the sacred thread, I was supposed to be raised to a higher religious position, and to be entitled to greater privileges. I was now allowed to worship the family gods. The worship consisted in cleaning and washing the images, anointing them with sandal-wood pigment, adorning them with flowers and rice, burning incense and lights before them, and making them offerings of food. This was the principal worship, and it was not performed twice on the same day. Other members of the family had other ways of performing the *pûjâ* (ceremonies).

There were some forms of worship which little boys were not allowed to perform. Such was especially the case with the worship of Shiva in the month of Shrâvan and on some special holidays. I could only be present at it and join in the concluding part, when I was allowed to put *bel*-leaves on the god. My

mother burned a lakh (100,000) of wicks in ghee (clarified butter) in the temple of Shiva on the day when I accompanied her. The Brahmans were constantly worshipped, for they were regarded as *bhudeva* (earthly gods). After they had been worshipped, all in the house drank the water in which they had dipped one of their great toes. When the Brahman gave his blessing, the person who received it sat before him, spreading his skirt, in which the "earthly god" cast a few grains of rice which conveyed his benediction,—which rested also on the heads of all the parties present. A Brahman was employed to invoke the god Mâruti for us. He was of the *Karhâdâ* sect; and when he brought us any blessed food, we partook only after we had carefully examined it; for the *Karhâdâ* Brahmans are believed to commit murder to propitiate their goddess, Bhawânî. The way in which we examined it was by putting some salt upon the food and then waiting to see if any peculiar change was perceptible either in the salt or the food, or else by giving some of the food to a dog or cat and carefully noticing the effect.

In those days even Parsis used to employ Brahmans to invoke the gods. A wealthy Parsi gentleman asked my father to employ Brahmans to pray to them for his benefit on the neighbouring hill of Vaijanâth, and some twenty or thirty Brahmans were accordingly engaged. The Brahmans were feasted for several days,

and got half a rupee (less than a shilling) each day. The Parsi had got into some scrape, and hence his appeal to the Hindu gods!

Astrologers used to come to our house for the purpose of informing us of the special sacred days of the week or month. The almanacs which are now generally used had just been introduced, and not even the astrologers could obtain a copy of them. They used to mark the chief dates on a scrap of paper, which they folded up in a cylindrical form and carried about in their turbans. These men made the horoscope for each child that was born, and determined the most propitious day for special undertakings. I fully believed in the astrologers, and dreaded the malignant planets. My mother often waved oil over me, and then gave it away to female Mângs.* This was in order to save me from the malignant influence of the planet Saturn. I had learnt a little of astrology, and committed to memory the Sanskrit versified rules. I was not disposed, however, to complete my astrological studies. My faith in the science was soon shaken by the perusal of a book written by a gentleman of Sihor, in Mâlhwâ (Subhajî Bâpû), who sought to harmonise the Indian astronomical system of Bhâskarâchârya with that of Copernicus, and to disprove, with the aid of Hindu writings, the claims of astrology. I remember even

* These are among the lowest tribes of casteless Hindus.—*Edt.*

now a few words of a Sanskrit verse quoted in this book, in which it is beautifully said that if God is our protector the planets cannot harm us.

The people in our house consulted also wizards and those who dealt with demons. Their aid was sought when any one was ill or some calamity had befallen us. These men were chiefly from the Konkan,* and demons† from that province used to manifest themselves as entering into them. They attributed illness and all calamities to the influence of evil powers, and the spirits had to be propitiated in the way these men prescribed. At one time we found at the door of our house a large quantity of leaves, needles, and red powder, which had been left there at night by some enemy, to do us mischief through the agency of evil beings. We were all very much frightened at the sight of these dangerous articles. Malignant powers were regularly propitiated by us once or twice every month. We used to make offerings to them of coconuts, and scatter bits of dry dates, parched grain, and sugar-biscuits in our yard on every new moon.

These practices not only caused a loss of money; they fomented quarrels and jealousies, not only between ourselves and strangers, but between the

* The district lying between the Western Ghâts and the sea.—*Edit.*

† The word in the Marathi is not *demons*, but *gods*. In truth, the distinction between *god* and *devil* has almost vanished in Hinduism; and this is one of the worst characteristics of the religion.—*Edit.*

members of our own family. The wizards would go about sowing seeds of discord in order that their services might be engaged to provide charms and counter-charms.

I remember an old woman who had come from Bombay, that was influenced by sixty demons, each of whom had a distinct name. These beings had a special predilection for the flesh of goats and fowls, for liquor and eggs. When we wanted any information which we had no means of obtaining in the usual way, we used to consult her, and we believed all she told us, although her declarations were by no means always verified. The questions we put were like the following:—When will my father return from the country? How shall we ruin our enemy, who is so troublesome? Who has stolen such a thing? Why does not our relative away from home write to us? &c.

When this woman consulted the spirits in order to procure from them information on any subject, she would unloose her hair, and placing her hands upon her forehead, sit in a meditative mood upon her heels. She closed her eyes, and remained still for a good while, suppressing her breath. Then she would begin to move backwards and forwards, breathe with difficulty, and then respiring violently and changing her posture, sit on her bended knees. Her hands would be placed on the knees, with the thumbs extended, while the fingers were closed.

She did not talk or scream; she only answered questions put to her; but all the time she would be panting heavily. Before she became possessed we had to burn before her a good deal of incense or camphor, but afterwards she burned it herself. When the camphor was burnt and water put into a cup, we had to put into the water, at short intervals, a little rice and ashes. The woman read the answers to our inquiries in the curious figures which the ashes and rice used to form on the surface of the water in the cup, or she would find the answers on a leaf of betel held over the burning camphor. The soot gathered on it would show itself in various shapes, and these forms supplied the needful materials for her. She would give the answers in such laconic forms as these:—"Oh, the letter is being forwarded." "The sick child was attacked by the demon under the tamarind tree." "Enemies have excited the deities against you." "Such and such a god is offended." When she got free of the influence, she threw herself violently on the ground. If she was not going to be again possessed immediately, we used to sprinkle water over her as she lay flat on the ground, and she would then shake off the controlling spirit. If she was going to be possessed again, she would resume her seat and her former attitude. She did not always act in this quiet way. Sometimes she would roll on the ground

perhaps leap and dance, holding a sword or rod in her hand. When she was under the supernatural influence, she would rub red powder on her forehead and adorn her head with flowers, though she was a widow; but she would throw these away after the possession had ceased.

On special occasions the preparations made for the demons were on a grand scale. Goats, fowls, eggs, liquor, sweetmeats, &c., were required to be plentifully supplied, and the spirits came in companies to feast on the articles presented. They were supposed actually to partake of a portion of the offerings, and to leave the banquet with a blessing upon their entertainer. Music was employed on such occasions. Seeing these wonderful things, I often wished to be possessed myself, but this earnest desire was not gratified in my father's house at Belgaum.

There was a snake that lived in the rooms in the roof of our house. It never came down into the house where we lived. It used to feed on rats, and at night we used to hear it chasing them. My grandmother would often pray to it with folded hands, entreating it to pity us all and take us under its protection. She offered it milk and boiled rice on the annual day of *Nāgpanchamî*—a festival in honour of snakes.

Some witches used to visit us when the male

members of the family had left the house for their outdoor duties. They pretended to be professional beggars, and they practised their demoniacal tricks in secret. They sometimes passed themselves off for dealers in products of the jungle. They told us about incantations, the efficacy of which we sometimes tried.

In this way I was quite entangled in the meshes of Hinduism. The religious instruction I received at school had not as yet freed me from this sad condition. Indeed, on one or two occasions I was greatly offended by the conduct of my missionary teachers. I wrote a short essay in favour of one of the Hindu fast days as a school exercise, which met with the strong disapproval of the missionary who examined it. This greatly pained me. The same gentleman, on another occasion, reprimanded a boy for coming to school dressed in the filthy garments worn on the occasion of the Holi festival;* and this, too, I felt very deeply. Once I saw a tract on Logic, published by the American Missionaries of Bombay, in which every syllogism given by way of illustration contained something opposed to the principles of Hinduism; and I was so angry at the condemnation of my religion that I wrote on one of the pages some severe strictures on the Christian religion, which I had

* The Holi was originally, in all probability, a spring festival—a season of rejoicing at the revived life of nature. The observances have degenerated into extreme license.—*Edit.*

found in an infidel publication that was issued by educated Hindus. But on the whole, I believe that all these things were gradually preparing me for the reception of the truth.

My mind by this time had become dissatisfied. The numerous religious practices which I followed did not satisfy me. I longed for something higher, and aspired after miraculous power. I obtained *mantras* or incantations, which were supposed to give superhuman power, and by the repetition of these I hoped especially to increase the supply of food. I used to repeat such incantations secretly at night, when the people in our house had gone to bed. I repeated them before the image of the goddess *Annâ Purnâ* * (the supplier of food). I had to bathe immediately before commencing the ceremonies. Some of the incantations were to be used on the day of an eclipse. I did not attain my object; but I never saw that the incantations themselves were inefficacious, and I attributed the want of success to my defective observance of the rites. Some of these incantations I recently found among the papers of my late uncle. They are ~~are~~ very curious in their phraseology. They ~~are~~ ~~nothing~~ but the attempts of vulgar cheats to delude simple-minded people. They are a hodge-podge of Marathi, Sans-

* Like the Roman Anna Perenna in name and function.—
Edit.

krit, and newly-coined words strung together in a certain jingling form, without a shadow of meaning.

There was a native doctor of the name of Raman Sheti, of the Kamâthî caste, who attended our family. He not only prescribed drugs, but used charms. He supplied all the members of the household with amulets for wearing round the neck or arms. These were bits of thin gold plates, with something engraved on them. The pieces were rolled up and enclosed in small boxes of silver. We thought highly of these charms; yet I remember that once, when we were in need of money, we melted down the whole of them.

I was seriously thinking of studying alchemy, but in God's mercy I was saved from the delusion. I came across an English book which exposed this pretended science, and I was convinced of its falsehood. At one time I was so mad in the search of the philosopher's stone, that I went frequently to the jungle and applied a bit of iron I carried with me to every rock I saw.

Our family practised also Mohammadan religious rites and ceremonies. My uncle regularly visited the tomb of a Mohammadan saint (*pîr*) once a week, in company with the children of the family. He there offered sugar, various leaves, flowers, and *malidâ*—a kind of sweetmeat believed to be very acceptable to the Mohammadan saints. The offerings

were all left at the tomb; only a little sugar was brought back to be distributed to the people at home. We made vows to the *pîr*. A brother of mine, who had lost his sight by small-pox, was taken to a neighbouring village, where a new *pîr* was proving his superiority to others; but no benefit was got. When any one was ill at home, Moham-madan *fakîrs* were consulted. They gave charms in the shape of rolls of paper with writing on them, which were tied round the neck or dipped in a little water, and the water so used was drunk as medicine. I have still some of these papers in my possession, which have figures, often four-sided, drawn on them, with some letters marked in them. I find the scraps thus marked:—"This is for curing bad eyes;" "This is for giving relief to an anxious mind;" "This for conciliating people;" "This for curing a child given to crying," &c.

There were peculiar ways of consulting the deities. My mother went to the temple to the god Mâruti in family troubles; and I used to accompany her. She generally went when it was dark. The *pujari* (attendant at the temple) put betel-nuts or bits of betel-leaf on the image of the god Mâruti, or sometimes he would use grains of rice. Then the god would be asked to indicate his will by making the things put upon him to drop either on his left or on his right side—the distinction being important. We waited anxiously

for the falling of these things. The *pujari* got two rupees every time when we sought his aid.

One moonlight night we went to a shepherd who lived in the jungle at some distance. His sheep lay in the enclosure round his hut, and he sat inside beside a shrine which contained an image with a brass face. He had a cane in his hand. After hearing our story, he held this over a fire on which incense was burning. Then waving it round and round, with his eyes steadily fixed upon it, he answered our inquiries. I have sometimes thought, when recalling this visit, that the scene at Endor may have been somewhat similar.

I was fond of observing the festivals. I visited the houses of people to witness the Ganpati* celebrations, and did not mind going even to disreputable houses for the purpose. The annual worship of Ganpati is characterised by much pomp, and the worshippers vie with each other in display. I was zealous in distributing "gold" (as the leaves of a certain tree are called) on the occasion of the Dasahrâ holiday which followed the Ganpati festivities. Friends pay visits of civility to one another on this day, and distribute the leaves as a mark of good-will. I distributed sugar-plums on *Makar sankranti* (winter

* More generally called Ganesha. The god with an elephant's head. This is the deity who, in the "Pleasures of Hope," receives the singular designation of "Ganesa sublime."—*Edit.*

solstice), and sometimes forwarded them to distant friends by post. I did not, however, much like the Holî festival; but I remember having been dragged out to it by my friends, and I then indulged freely, I am ashamed to say, in all the wretched revelry attendant on the occasion. I spent much time in witnessing the wild pranks of the Moham-madans at their Moharram festival. Every year my mother had some vow to pay to the Taboots (the figures of tombs—which are worshipped). I and my brothers used to wear the gaudy clothes of *fakirs*, which are used during these Moham-madan holidays, and go about begging, as a formal duty, with a plate and a scrip in our hands. My Brahman friends used to ridicule me for this; for the Brahmans at Belgaum do not countenance these Moham-madan superstitions, though Brahmans in various other places fully do so.

My attention was not directed to the Jain religion, although there was a temple of that sect at Belgaum, for I had been strictly warned against it by the Brahman who had been employed to teach me religion. He said the image was indecent, and therefore unworthy of worship. We used sometimes to see in those days nude Jain ascetics going about the streets in silent stateliness, with a brush of peacock feathers and a wooden vessel in their hands, and a long scrip hung across their shoulders. We heard strange stories about the practices of these men, and

we always regarded them with contempt. Sometimes the Hindus of the town offered open opposition to them, and at one time they refused to allow the Jain image to be carried in procession past their temples. The procession was thus detained a whole night in the street.

I was taught by my Brahman teacher, who was a worshipper of Shiva, to consider the worship of Vishnu quite abominable, and he declared it would come to an end in 500 years. The Vaishnavas were very superstitious and sanctimonious; indeed, they were more so than the followers of Shiva. They did not allow those who were not Brahmans to go into their temples; consequently I could not visit the two Vaishnava temples in my native town.

CHAPTER V.

VISIT TO BOMBAY.

IN the year 1839, at the age of nine, I had gone to Bombay with my parents for the marriage of my paternal uncle and aunt. Before starting we had consulted the astrologers, and on the propitious day suggested by them we had commenced our journey; but we met with many discomforts on the way. We were quite a large party of relatives and friends as well as servants, and the means of locomotion were of a suitable character. But we had not the God of Jacob as our sun and shield, and we had not, like Moses, said to Him, "If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence;" so we had not the blessing which the ancient people of God enjoyed in their wanderings. Before we had gone far from Belgaum, the axle of one of the carriages broke, and we had to seek the assistance of the blacksmith in a neighbouring village; and while he was busy at his work, a spark from the forge fell upon a thatched hut and burnt it with a number of others. The people ran in terror and distress to the temple, where we had alighted for shelter; and the sight that I then witnessed I can

never forget. Another calamity was that one of my brothers had an attack of small-pox and lost his eyesight. It took us two months to reach Bombay, and on the day we arrived there the term of leave allowed my father expired. We had suffered a great deal on the way from rain, and all the money brought for the wedding had been spent.

I felt at Bombay that I had come into a new world, one quite different from Belgaum and the country round it. The large crowds of people everywhere, the countless carriages of all sizes and shapes that ran incessantly along the streets, the wealth and luxury of the traders and brokers, the pomp and splendour of the religious rites, whether performed at the temples or in private dwellings,—these things quite bewildered me. As we had taken lodgings close to the famous Bhuleshwar temple, to which all classes of people were going the whole day, I had excellent means of noticing the peculiarities of the worship performed. The crowds of votaries were large, and priests were always ready with vessels containing the various articles of worship to aid the worshippers. Every one was free to enter the temple and place his offering before the gods. The temples were full of splendid ornaments, and the images were decked with costly jewels. In one of the temples there were living tortoises, which were worshipped; whereas at Belgaum I had seen only representations of these creatures in stone.

The spectacle at the Mumbadevi temple in a neighbouring street was also most striking. There crowds of people performed their ablutions in the tank, under the direction of the priests, who musically repeated prayers; naked dirty creatures clamoured and struggled for the money lavishly distributed among them by some devout Banyan; parties of mourners, both male and female, wailed aloud for their dead relatives, as they came from the place of burning and sat by the side of the tank, to perform their last rites of purification; pigeons in countless numbers were feeding on the grain which was scattered for them plentifully by the charitable Banyan women; sacred cows and bulls roamed freely among the crowd of men, women and children, eating food or tender grass, or quietly submitting to the rudeness of eager worshippers seeking for the elements of purification which the animals supplied; in one corner ardent devotees chanted the praises of the gods with the aid of a pair of cymbals or drum; in some quiet spot the learned Brahmans expounded the Shastras, or loudly recited the legends of the gods and goddesses. Not far from these places of enthusiastic devotion was a hospital for beasts. In this not only diseased and deformed cattle were cared for, but the meanest vermin were (as they still are) luxuriously fed with the fresh blood of a vigorous young man stupefied with intoxicating drugs. He is paid for spending

a night in an unconscious state in a room which is full of these disgusting creatures, and he is removed early in the morning before regaining consciousness.

In Bombay we had to suffer from a peculiar inconvenience. We had a large circle of relations, and we had often to go into mourning for them. At Belgaum we seldom heard of the death of our connections; moreover, the postage was high, and the men who were able to write were very few. A person in mourning cannot wear his ordinary clothes or use his ordinary bedding; he does not put the caste mark on his forehead or perform his daily devotions. He must not read the religious books. He cannot touch persons that are not mourners like himself; therefore he does not visit his friends. At school or office the mourner cannot sit on the same bench with others, far less touch them. These restrictions are most irksome, and they are felt to be oppressive, especially when they have to be endured frequently, and for the sake of persons whom one does not know or care for. There were some 500 families who shared with us the surname of *Mulé*, and had therefore the honour of imposing on us the duty of going into mourning for any of their members who died.

My fame as a good reader of Marathi soon spread in Bombay among the people of our caste, as in those days they were wholly illiterate. I was often asked to go to the houses of our friends to read the sacred books for their benefit.

It was long after this, when I went back to Belgaum, that I joined the English Mission School there, an account of which I have given in the preceding chapters.

In 1847, when I was sixteen years of age, I went back to Bombay. We proceeded this time by sea in a country vessel, by way of Vingurla. The wind was against us, and it took us fourteen days to make the voyage. We could not cook food on board, it being against caste rules to do so. My mother boiled some rice for the younger members of the family, which she slightly roasted before boiling, by way of preserving it from ceremonial pollution. When we came to the Bombay pier, we had to pay heavy duties on our luggage. I complained against this in the columns of a Marathi paper, the *Prabhdkar*. This was my first contribution to a newspaper. A copy of it I have still in my possession. It is dated 3rd April 1847.

It pains me to state that at this time, though I was so eager to practise the manifold rites of Hinduism, I was not equally anxious to maintain a high moral standard. This, indeed, it is foreign to the genius of popular Hinduism to do. Paganism, even in its best form, does not insist on moral purity with the emphasis of Christianity. My enlightenment on this point was to come, in the good providence of God, on a future day.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ELPHINSTONE INSTITUTION.

THIS time we made a long stay in Bombay. Mahadeva Shastri Koladkar, a teacher in the Elphinstone Institution, lived near us. It was through him that I made up my mind to join that seminary. The principal of the Institution was Dr. Harkness, to whom the Shastri introduced me. He asked me about my caste; and when I told him that I was a Kâsâr, he would hardly believe it. He declared that I must be a Brahman. On my showing him the certificate which I had from the Mission School at Belgaum, he sent me to Professor Dadabhai Nauroji,* who put me in the third class. The teacher of this class was a Brahman. He was of a gentle disposition, much respected and loved by the boys. His system of teaching was very good. I always accompanied him to school. When he approached a temple, he stood still for some time, and made obeisance to the deity; and I followed his example. I was in the habit of doing so as long as I attended this school. I was very much struck at what I saw in it. I greatly wondered

* Mr. Dadabhai Nauroji has for many years past resided in London, and is deservedly held in much esteem.—*Edit.*

at the building, the number of the pupils, their fashionable dress, the mischievous pranks and quarrels of the Parsi boys, and the spacious rooms in which the classes met. A boy had come to Belgaum from this school, who gave out that the teachers beat the pupils cruelly, and that a person was specially employed for caning boys; but I found no such severe discipline. Yet there were some modes of punishment which were objectionable. Sometimes a professor made use of his English boots to enforce his orders. The Parsi boys during the recess used to bring cooked food for their afternoon meal, which was quite a novel sight to me. These boys had always boiled rice mixed with pulse. They ate with their fingers, but without putting the fingers to their lips. They made up the rice into balls, and then pitched it into the mouth. They also drank water without touching the drinking-vessel with their lips, pouring it down into the mouth. These boys used to waste much food by throwing it at one another.

Mahadeva Shastri taught me Marathi, and it was a pleasure to hear his pure, refined speech. I was often disgusted with the language of my class-fellows, who spoke the rude dialect of the non-Brahmanical classes of Bombay. Professor Dadabhai sometimes came to examine our class, and I much admired the way in which he spoke English. No native in those days had such a pure English accent as he.

My faith in the Hindu religion was not in any

way shaken by attending the Government school—and it was no wonder; for the teachers never spoke of anything else than the secular subjects treated in the text-books. I cannot say what was the state of things in the upper or College department, which I never joined.

There was a Hindu temple close to the Institution, to which I used to go for worship. I there prayed to Mâruti, the monkey-god, for success in my studies. When returning home, I generally visited some other temples, and listened to the expositions of religious books given there. I also went to the different fairs and feasts held in honour of the gods both in the city and the neighbourhood.

I was fond of books, and read many on the Hindu religion. These were chiefly in Marathi. I read most of Tukârâm, the most popular poet of Mahârâshtra, Râmdâs, Moropant—the learned Brahman poet—and the works of Shridhar and Mahipati. I had quite a large collection of Marathi works.

I was married in the year 1849. The wedding was performed in the usual Hindu fashion, with great pomp and expense, amidst the clang and clatter of uncouth music. A pair of dancing-girls were hired to entertain the wedding-party. I do not know how far I was responsible for the employment of such immoral women on this solemn occasion; but in Bombay it is quite common to engage such persons at weddings; it is only the poorest that do not hire them. I have still in my possession a

THE ELPHINSTONE INSTITUTION.

memorandum of my wedding expenses, and under the sum paid to the dancing-girls there appears in my hand the remark, "*vyarth kharch*" (vain expense).

Even in those days of comparative ignorance, my father consulted me about my marriage. The girl who had been chosen for me was ten years of age. She could neither read nor write, but her parents were rich and of good position. The choice, however, could not be confirmed without the sanction of the astrologers. These, though they pretended to commune with the stars and claimed infallibility, did not foresee the complete separation that was to take place in life between me and my bride. A meeting of the people of our caste was held to prevent the marriage, as it was alleged that my father had lost his caste by living in Aden, where water was supplied by Arabs; but he showed by documentary evidence that there was no need to engage the services of Arabs, as he had under him hundreds of Indian workmen, and they and himself had made their own arrangements for providing water. Such was the feeling then. But now, even Brahmans go to England, and eat beefsteaks and bacon, and meet with little or no opposition when they come back to their friends in India.*

* Instances, however, still occur in which Brahmans who have visited foreign lands have to perform nauseous penances and provide a sumptuous feast for the people of their caste.—*Edit.*

CHAPTER VII.

RESIDENCE AT ADEN.

AFTER my marriage, my father, who had come on leave to Bombay from Aden, got permission from Government to take us all to the latter place; but we missed the steamer, and had to wait a couple of months for the next. My father, during the interval, was appointed to superintend the building of the General Assembly's Institution.

At the time we went to Aden, the fortification of the town was going on, and thousands of men were employed under the superintendence of various military officers. We lived close to the house of the political agent. Near our house were some of the Bene-Israel. It astonished me to hear these people sing in Marathi and repeat the name Ishwar (God). I did not know who the Israelites were. I supposed they were a peculiar caste of Hindus. They used to sing the Psalms of David* in Marathi at night. As there was no school, I had no means of pro-

* A metrical version in Marathi was composed under the direction of the Rev. C. P. Farrar, missionary of the C. M. S. at Nasik, and the father of Archdeacon Farrar.

RESIDENCE AT ADEN.

secuting my studies, and had to accept an appointment in my father's office; but I did not at all relish the work assigned me.

I did not make any progress in my official duties; and indeed I should not have been able to remain in the office had not a Parsi clerk given me help. I found some solace in reading English newspapers, which I got from the officers; and I still remember reading about the political difficulties of Pope Pius IX. and the Sikh war.

I was not at all anxious about religion, though the Hindus that had come to Aden as Government servants in various capacities had managed to convert a cave in a mountain into a temple. Here they worshipped an idol which they had set up. A professional ascetic was intrusted with the care of the deity. In some of the remoter hills there was a crag which the Hindu Banyans fancied to be a goddess, calling it "Mother Hinglâj." They used to take cooked food to it, which was carried on the heads of the Mohammadan Somalis. This, when once placed on the ground near the goddess, was supposed to become free from pollution, and then the impure Somalis were no longer allowed to touch it. These Somalis used to work at the houses of Banyans, and though they helped them in fetching water, still, after the culinary operations commenced, they were not allowed to touch any of the articles of food.

ONCE HINDU: NOW CHRISTIAN.

The igneous rocks amidst which the town of Aden is built have suggested many legends to the inhabitants. The hardened lava is supposed to be the perspiration of the rocks. One of the rocks has a cave in it, from which the Jews * there believe the Messiah will come forth. There is a long crevice in another rock, which is supposed by the Jews to have been made by a blow from Samson's club.

I saw there only two crows, which I was told had been brought by the Hindus from Bombay, in order to represent the *pitris*, or spirits of the dead, which they have to feast periodically. The poor creatures had no trees on which to perch, and they wandered about from rock to rock, cawing piteously.

I have mentioned in a previous chapter that, when I was at Belgaum, I wished very much to be the subject of supernatural possession. This desire was gratified at Aden. A Mohammadan spirit took possession of me. When under the influence, I would cry out, "I am from Belgaum, and I must go back to my own town." At first I was very violent, but afterwards I became quiet. When possessed, I was most reverently treated by the people in the house, and consulted on points of difficulty. My parents made up their mind to send

* This doubtless refers to Arabian Jews, and perhaps the Bene-Israel. The latter had come from Bombay and the adjacent districts.—*Edit.*

me back to Belgaum. Accordingly I arrived in 1849 in Bombay, and thence went to Belgaum, where I lived with my uncle. The influence did not cease to enter me even there. One night it bade me go and stop under a tree in a neighbouring village, and I had immediately to start for the place, with two or three companions. But since my conversion I have never been troubled in this way. The Lord Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and those who seek refuge in Him are completely delivered from the power of the evil one.*

* Cases of *possession*, real or supposed, are very frequent among the Hindus. Doubtless, in some cases, the spiritual influence is feigned. But in many instances, there is, at all events, no conscious deception. Persons often believe themselves to be possessed, and when asked their names, will give only the name of the spirit which they believe has taken the control of them.—*Edit.*

CHAPTER VIII.

FREE CHURCH INSTITUTION, BOMBAY.

IN March 1849 I came to Bombay from Belgaum, with a view to take my grandmother to Aden, on account of my mother's illness; but I was detained in the city very much against my will. I applied to Government for a free passage; but as the authorities had not received an application direct from my father, my request was not granted. I look upon this as a providential arrangement.

I did not care to go back to the Government school, as some of the methods of inflicting punishment in vogue there were distasteful to me. But a young lad belonging to our caste persuaded me to join the Free Church Institution, which he himself attended. It was in August 1849 that I was admitted into it. My friend who took me to the school was in the first class, and he urged me to join it; but this I did with much hesitation, because the teacher was a converted Brahman (Mr. Narayan Sheshadri). Mr. Narayan was then, as always, a very kind teacher. He then wore the dress of a Brahman, though modified in some points. Every part of his dress, from the turban down to the stockings, was pure white. He did

not then wear pantaloons, and the circumstance that he retained his national costume, and still more, his great amiability, removed the dislike I had to him on account of his adoption of a foreign religion.

Mr. Narayan was a born educationist, and his mode of teaching as well as his class arrangements were most admirable. When a pupil was reported for any misdemeanour, he used to get him tried by a court of boys which he had established. He was the judge, and his students were the jurors, who communicated their opinion in writing.

Mr. Narayan earnestly sought in every way the moral improvement of his students. For example, when he came to know that some of us used snuff, he asked us all to write an essay on the uses of tobacco. I did not write anything. When my turn came to read my essay, I got up and said I had made up my mind to abstain from the use of snuff, and that this was my essay. Whereupon those who were against the use of tobacco applauded, and Mr. Narayan himself showed his appreciation by a beaming countenance. This was the beginning of my reformation in this matter.

I wrote to Aden to inform my father of my admission into the Free Church Institution, and the wonderful master I had found in Mr. Sheshadri; and in reply he bade me give him his hearty respects.

Nevertheless, my faith in the Hindu religion had not yet been in any way shaken; indeed, it had become more firmly established than ever.

CHAPTER IX.

MY VIEW OF HINDUISM.

BEFORE giving an account of the change which came over my mind from the study of Christianity, I will state briefly the view of the Hindu religion, which I held at this time.

1. My knowledge of Hinduism was chiefly confined to the Puranas, which present the popular form of the religion. I did not care much for the philosophical aspect of it as delineated in the Vedanta and other books, their teachings being too abstract and transcendental for me. The Haridases, or popular preachers, always introduced their legendary expositions by a brief inculcation of the high philosophic doctrine; but I felt that that was hardly intended for the edification of the hearers, being only a prelude to the lengthy discourse that was to follow; for neither the preacher nor the hearers had abandoned idolatry, or adopted the more spiritual system of the Vedanta.* They

* The Vedânta philosophy is pantheistic. It denies the reality of matter, and affirms that there is but one existence in the universe—pure spirit.—*Edit.*

clung to idolatry and died in the practice of it. Even the higher forms of popular Hinduism, which I devoutly followed, did not benefit me spiritually. I did not feel any desire for something purer and higher; on the contrary, my mind became more and more degraded. The sensualistic worship of the Puranas, the adoration of Râma, Krishna, and Shiva, with all the dazzling ceremonies that accompanied it, did not save me from sinking downwards. I fell lower and lower, till I reached the lowest level of superstition—that is, demon-worship. My life was marked by the grossest inconsistencies; I believed in the most contradictory doctrines, and practised rites that could not possibly be reconciled with each other. In all this I was quite sincere. My earnest faith in popular Hinduism left me a fetish-worshipper of the lowest kind. Such was the necessary result of my earnest faith in its teachings; for it enforced not only the worship of spiritual deities and virtuous men and women, but that of the most despicable vermin (such as the serpent), and this often by indecent material representations of natural objects.

2. I had learnt hardly anything about moral purity. I rigidly followed the rules of mere ceremonial purity, and my attention was directed only to them. I had no fear of God in my heart. I abstained from forbidden fruits and drinks, but not

from lying, stealing, swearing, &c. I did not think that the gods I worshipped took any notice of moral offences. I had, on the contrary, grounds for believing that immorality had the sanction of religion. I stole during the Holî holidays, and gambled freely when the Divâlî festival was observed. I made vows to Mâruti, asking that he might save me from exposure and punishment after I had stolen money from home for my pleasures, and I fully believed that the gods would, as a matter of course, deliver me. The stories of the gods, which I devoutly read, contributed not a little to this moral darkness.

3. I was never taught to inquire into religious truth. I was expected simply to assent to what had been told me by my parents and the people of our caste. These followed not only their own religion, but that of the Mohammadans too; and I practised foolish Mohammadan religious rites on the occasion of the Moharram. Indeed, I often heard it affirmed that all religions were good and true.

4. Some imagine that the idolater is led to the worship of the spiritual being that is said to be represented by an idol; but, in fact, such is never the case. The material form fills the mind and unfits it for any spiritual apprehension of the Deity. I used to sit for hours before idols, make offerings to them, walk round them several times, gaze upon them, stand before them, chant their praises, and offer

prayers for material blessings; but these things never raised my mind upwards to the regions where the spiritual Lord of the universe manifests His eternal glory.

5. I venerated the Brahmans and ascetics, but I never inquired into their moral character. The idea of sanctity which I had was exclusively of an outward and ritualistic character. The benefits I sought from them did not conduce to my spiritual enlightenment and salvation. All that I used to receive from them was some fruits or sweetmeats which were supposed to be hallowed by their touch. Sometimes they taught me to repeat mystical words, but they never gave me exhortations to temperance, purity, or devotion. Those who devoutly followed the directions of these teachers were very strict observers of fasts and feasts, regular in the repetition of the mystical verses and the worship of the gods, but often they led lives that were stained by the most detestable vices.

6. Yet in spite of my ignorance and sin, God was dealing graciously with me, even in my darkness. This will be evident from the sequel.

(1.) God, in His holy providence, did not allow me to remain in one place. When I was in the Mission School at Belgaum, I had got into the society of bad boys. Had I remained in their company, I should have been utterly ruined; but I was obliged

to go to Bombay, and so I was saved from the influence of these bad companions. In Bombay, no doubt, I had other temptations, equally baneful; but then I had soon to go to Aden. Of course my wicked heart was not changed, but still these alterations of residence had some effect in retarding the progress of evil. At Aden matters were going wrong, but then I had to go back to Bombay.

(2.) My early education at the Belgaum Mission-School was most helpful to me, though the good effects of the seed sown there in my heart were not at once apparent. The holy lives of Messrs. Taylor and Beynon influenced me much when I commenced to inquire seriously into religion, and even so did the scriptural lessons which they had given and the prayers they had offered.

(3.) A native Christian, who was the father of a teacher in the Mission School, impressed me most favourably; so also did a Hindu student, who openly condemned Hinduism, and had given up Hindu worship. I remember his school companions used to drag him by force to the temple of Mâruti, where, however, he would stand before the image with his eyes firmly shut. He joined the Christian Church after I had left Belgaum. He was a talented youth, and of an excellent spirit, and was ordained as a preacher and pastor at Belgaum. I met him afterwards, and we spent much time in happy Christian

fellowship. In the Belgaum Mission School there was a Christian teacher, a native of Travancore, and a relative of the Maharâjâ of that state, who also made a deep impression on my mind. I never had any conversation with him, but his serious deportment and his devout attitude at the time of prayer were very impressive. The recollection of all these things were most helpful to me, not only at the time, but afterwards.

(4). Any religious or moral sentiments I met with in books, whether religious or secular, were very pleasing to me. I would constantly revolve them in my mind, or read them aloud over and over again. The Marathi Dictionary of Molesworth, which is a storehouse of proverbs and phrases, furnished me with many a jewel of great price. So the poems of Tukârâm, Nâmdeva, Râmdâs, &c., were read with the deepest interest.

My Brahman teacher often used to exclaim with peculiar fervour, "I perish in the sea of life; save me, O divine Vithobâ!" Certainly I did not understand the full force of the term salvation. But my love of devout and moral sentiments, and a constant study of them, had this good effect upon me, that I was saved from atheism. I never could put out of my mind the thought of God and religion.

(5.) The impotence of Hinduism to effect a moral change was forced on my notice by the state of our

own family. The people of our house were strict observers of the rites and ceremonies of the Hindu religion, but they did not live in the amity and peace that so much devotion should have induced. Family contentions were both frequent and violent, and the rigid observance of their religion did not save my dear relatives from engaging in them. I mention these things with very great regret; but I must mention them, as they formed one of the principal factors in my religious experience. It was not so much the fault of the people themselves as that of the religion they followed, and of the teachers whom they venerated. They were never expected to observe the rules of moral duty, or to practise any godliness which did not consist in eating and drinking.

CHAPTER X.

GRADUAL CHANGE OF MIND.

THE time when I joined the Free Church Institution was a most stirring one. Everywhere throughout India a spirit of religious inquiry had been awakened. In Bombay such inquiries had led to the formation of a society for religious and social reform, called the *Paramhans* Mandalî* or *Sabhd*. Young men less religiously disposed, but intent on social and intellectual improvement, had started several others, of which the *Dnyânprasârak Mandalî*,† which worked both among the Marathi and Gujarati people, was the most influential. It still continues to exist, public lectures in connection with it being occasionally delivered. Its services in relation to female education have been important, and the girls' schools which it established have deservedly a high place in Bombay. There were also societies started at Poona, the object of one of which was thus explained:—
“This society shall aim at enlightening the people on the subject of the different religions existing in

* *Paramhans* is a designation of the Supreme Deity. We may render *Paramhans Mandalî* “divine society.”—*Edit.*

† Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge.

this country in an impartial and temperate manner, and shall warn against any errors that may be ignorantly or perversely held." Essays of a practical character were published at Bombay and Calcutta, especially the latter city, and these proved most useful at this juncture. An Act of the Indian Legislature was passed about this time, of which the *Calcutta Review* spoke in the following emphatic terms:—"The year 1850 has been distinguished above all others in the annals of British India, by the establishment of the principle of religious liberty throughout the whole country." The following extract from the judgment of a Judge of the Supreme Court of Madras shows the importance of this measure. "This Act," said Sir William Burton, "has been passed, not to encourage a change from one religion to another, but to secure liberty of conscience and equal rights to all. Some of the people of this country may be insensible of the benefit now conferred upon them; some of them may be furious against it; but let me tell them, and tell them solemnly, that this Act of 1850 is the Great Charter of religious freedom, which declares that the rights of all classes shall be equally respected, and which says, 'Do as your conscience bids you; you will not forfeit any of your rights by following the dictates of your conscience, whether you turn to the right hand or to the left.' This is an Act for which all should render

thanks to the great Disposer of events; and it is a wonder that any should be found to find fault with so merciful a provision, for according to it no man's rights can be hurt by a change of religion."

Public discussions were held by all classes of people, the most prominent part in them being taken by the missionaries. Among others, the Rev. N. Sheshadri and the Rev. George Bowen were almost every day seen visiting the principal thoroughfares, chiefly Back-Bay, for open-air preaching, which often assumed the form of a formal discussion. These good men were not seldom roughly handled by the lower classes of Hindus, and still more by Parsis, whose proceedings in those days were characterised by extreme violence. Poor Mr. Sheshadri's turban was often knocked off, and his coat was stained with mud and dung. But the patience and meekness which he exhibited, and his readiness to befriend his persecutors when they called on him, perhaps for a note of recommendation for employment, or any other kindness, made his name quite a household word among the people of Bombay. *Narayan Sheshadri, Bombay Padri*—this playful jingling couplet was continually in the mouths of the common people.

Soon after I joined the Free Church Institution, I became seriously impressed by the instruction I received. I find recorded among my papers a vow that I made, not to worship "stock and stones," but the

Supreme Creator of the Universe. I solemnly declared, in the name of the Supreme Spirit who is the great Creator of the world and its enlightener, that I should never, even to save my life, commit certain sins. I wrote, "May God help me to keep this vow! If I should do any of these things, I shall incur the guilt of the slaughter of a hundred cows, and shall deserve to be doomed to hell by its ruler, King Yama." The evils abjured were the following:—lying, theft, uncleanness, *lāvanya*, i.e. impure love-songs, dances, indecent theatricals, impure talk, &c. I added, "If I ever commit any of these sins, I shall repent and ask Thee, O God, to pardon me; for man cannot succeed in his endeavours without Thy grace." I believe this is the first written statement I ever made about my moral conduct. I do not remember on what special occasion I wrote it, but there is a remark which I wrote across it in English some eight years afterwards, the drift of which is as follows:—"I made this resolution after I joined the Institution. I found it necessary to make it when I began to understand the pure morality of the Christian Scriptures."

After I had joined the class taught by Mr. Narayan Sheshadri, the dislike I felt to him on account of his religion began to diminish gradually. After the closing of the school, I used to accompany him, as we had to go to our homes by the same road. When

the people saw me walking with him, they used to declare that I was certain one day to become a Christian like him; but I did not mind this. Mr. Narayan had opened a private class at his house, which I attended. He would often inquire after the health of my relatives; and this used to please me much, so that I began to love him greatly. Sometimes he would ask me in jest if I would drink coffee or tea with him, but I never consented to do so. At that time he was not married, and lived with Mr. William Peyton* at a boarding-school for European and Eurasian boys which they had started together. There were some pious boys in that school, who were my friends as well as school-fellows, as the young men went to the Free Church Institution. Among them was a European lad of the name of Jackson, who was very amiable and devout. He loved me much, and used to speak with great concern about my salvation. He afterwards became a missionary at Lucknow.

The spiritual instruction which was communicated in the Institution was of a very decided kind. Except in the mathematical and purely scientific classes, there was continually some reference to religion, and the remarks made were always very impressive. Besides the morning and evening addresses, the Bible or some other religious book

* Now the Rev. W. W. Peyton, of Broughty Ferry.

was daily taught for a full hour. I myself was permitted to teach a Bible-class,* and it proved of great service to me. The old instructions which I received came back to me very vividly. I was not a careless teacher. I used to study the lesson that was to be taught in the class very earnestly at home. I got the boys to learn Scripture verses by heart, to draw up questions on the lessons taught, and sometimes to write short essays. Of course, all the pupils did not show the same interest in their religious lessons. Sometimes I would teach with such earnestness that they would ask me, "If you believe these things, why do you not make an open profession of them?" Sometimes God would give me such light when expounding the Divine Word that I was almost in an ecstasy, and my eyes would fill with tears. Such was the case one day when I was enlarging on the words of Jesus Christ, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." The boys sat very still, and with great seriousness again asked me why I did not become a Christian. This thing happened in 1851. The religious element that pervaded the whole school was very powerful; and very naturally the minds

* This arrangement, so far as I remember, was wholly exceptional, and granted only at Mr. Padmanji's very earnest request. We knew he would explain and inculcate only what he fully believed and deeply felt.—*Edit.*

of the students were soon imbued with Christian sentiments.

It was in this very year that I wrote to the *Dnyān Prakāsh*, an old and influential paper of Poona, under the signature of "A Religious Inquirer." The concluding part of the letter will show the point to which I had now attained:—

"Some fancy that they can arrive at the temple of truth by the light of natural religion, but I ask how it is possible to reach its precincts by its dim light. What authority has Nature, what credentials does she possess from the Lord of truth? How can Nature inform us of the state of man after death? How can sinful man approach the feet of a sinless God? How can His mercy be reconciled with His justice? If He forgave sin without a due regard to the attribute of justice, would not man be encouraged to sin? Offences against God are infinite in demerit; they are against the infinite majesty of Heaven. Meritorious works removing guilt must be of infinite efficacy. Nature is mute on one and all of these questions, and yet man cannot be at rest without a satisfactory solution of them. I would therefore beseech the intelligent followers of natural religion to inform the world in what way they hope to be saved."

When I was transferred to the upper division of the Institution I received instruction from the Rev.

Dr. Wilson, the Rev. Mr. Nesbit, and the Rev. Dr. Murray Mitchell. I was very much benefited by their religious lessons. Mr. Narayan also took part in this department, and usually taught Church History. His lessons in the history of the Reformation were most stimulating. The noble heroism of Luther fired the young hearts of my class-fellows and myself. Our sympathy with the Reformer was intense. We fancied we ourselves were exposed to the same persecution as he, and we rejoiced at his triumphs, in his heroic contest with the Pope, as if we had personally achieved them. Some of the Roman Catholics who were in our class were stimulated to serious inquiry. One of them, who is now the Assistant Secretary of the Bible Society, was led to renounce the errors of Romanism. The labours of the other missionaries were equally useful. While the superstructure of my faith in Hinduism was tottering to its foundations, a preparation was going on for the erection of the glorious temple of Christian faith upon its ruins.

I may mention some other agencies that were at work in the same direction. A good many Mohamadan hawkers used to go from door to door for the sale of books. They sold religious publications very cheap. I had no taste for novels; and I regard this as a great mercy of God. The booksellers knew my tastes, and therefore never offered me such

books. I bought a large number of publications from these men, and read them very carefully. I cannot give the names of the books now, for I had to dispose of my library when I went to Belgaum. But I remember that I found Boston's "Fourfold State" most helpful to me as an inquirer; so also Bishop Sherlock's "Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ," Lord Lyttelton on "The Conversion of St. Paul," and Bishop Gibson's "Pastoral Letters." These precious books are still in my possession. I need not say how very valuable were such books as Bunyan's "Holy War," Dodridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," the same writer's "Life of Colonel Gardiner," Angell James's "Anxious Inquirer," and Dr. Duff's "India and Indian Missions." Henry Martyn's Sermons also I read carefully; and his discourse on the text "without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22) impressed me very deeply.

Some religious newspapers also contributed greatly to my enlightenment. The *Dnyānodaya*, an Anglo-vernacular paper, published by the American Mission, I read regularly for years. I read also the *Prabhākar*, a Marathi weekly newspaper, which was most ably conducted by a Brahman scholar. When at Belgaum, a Brahman surveyor used to bring it to our house, and made me read it to

him and to a large company of our neighbours. There I found in it an account of the conversion of Mr. Narayan Sheshadri. The *Dnyānprakash* of Poona was also a great favourite with me. It was ably conducted by a famous Marathi author. The *Dnyānodaya* was edited by the Rev. R. W. Hume, who was a sincere friend and well-wisher of the natives of this country. He was the founder of the "Bombay Temperance Union," and the manager of a quarterly paper published in the interest of the Society. A great many native gentleman of position and education had joined the Union, among whom was the late learned and philanthropic Dr. Bhāu Dājī. In 1854 I was put on the committee of the Society, and addressed one of the public meetings. Mr. Hume and his colleagues, the Rev. Drs. Allen and Fairbank, were very kind to me. I came to be acquainted with them through my contributions to the *Dnyānodaya*. They always presented me with beautifully bound copies of the works published at their admirable mission press. Mr. Hume used to translate into English the Marathi articles sent to his paper. I was a reader also of anti-Christian publications. There was a very scurrilous magazine published in Poona, which made for some time a great sensation in Bombay. An idea of its character can be formed from the following extract:—

“Any one who is a beggar and is starving, or who is ignorant, or who is an outcast, or who is ambitious of notoriety, is the person that becomes entangled in the meshes of the missionaries.”

This paper did not continue long. The editor having died, and none of the atheistic clique of Poona ventured to take his place. I used to answer this paper through other newspapers.

I was variously benefited by the perusal of these prominent newspapers. The *Dnyānodaya* convinced me of the truth of Christianity and the futility of the claims of the Shastras to divine inspiration; the *Prabhākar* destroyed my religious reverence for the Brahmans; and the *Dnyānpīṭh* had preserved me from falling into the quagmire of atheism. I used to send contributions to all these papers, and they were very kindly inserted.

There were religious lectures delivered in those days both by Hindus and Christians, and they proved most useful in my religious inquiries. I was in the habit of hearing from an early age discourses in the temples and at private dwellings addressed to Hindus, but it was in Bombay that I heard for the first time controversial lectures delivered by learned Hindus. They discussed the claims of Christianity, and defended Hinduism from the attacks of the missionaries. It may be interesting to note the following reference to these lectures,

which appeared in the *Prabhakar* of the 19th September 1852:—"From next Sunday Krishna Shastri Sathe proposes delivering a series of lectures on the evidences of Christianity, and all Hindus (except converts) are invited to have their difficulties solved." I regularly attended these lectures, and reported them in the *Dnyanodaya*, with a criticism on the principal points. The lecturer and his friends knew that I was the writer of the articles in the *Dnyanodaya*, but they did not in any way show resentment. The lectures continued to be delivered for a full year, and my contributions to the *Dnyanodaya* regarding them were in all twenty-five. These appeared both in English and Marathi. The English translations were executed by the learned editor, Mr. Hume. The discussions opened the eyes of many. How futile are the reasonings of learned Hindus against Christianity, was shown even by the answers I made in the columns of the *Dnyanodaya*.*

Before the commencement of the Hindu lectures the missionaries had started a course of lectures at

* The lecturer, Krishna Shastri Sathe, was a very acute and learned man. Hinduism could not have had a more able champion. But even he found it hard to defend the indefensible, or to make any effective attack on the Gospel. At the lectures given by Krishna Shastri Sathe the chief Christian champion was Mr. Nesbit. Mr. Nesbit was admirably qualified for the work both of attacking Heathenism and defending Christianity. No man had studied Hinduism more carefully, and no man—no native even—could speak Marathi with more precision than Mr. Nesbit.—*Edit.*

the American Mission Chapel, which also lasted for a year or so, and I attended them. These were all delivered in Marathi, and the Rev. Dr. Murray Mitchell and the Rev. Robert Nesbit, as well as most of the other Bombay missionaries, took part in them.*

There were other lectures delivered in English, which were attended by natives of education and position and influential Europeans, and these proved of great service to me and my friends. One lecturer was the accomplished missionary Dr. Wilson, and he gave a fund of valuable information on natural and revealed religion. After the conclusion of the lecture he used to invite a few of his auditors to his apartments upstairs, where there was tea for all who would partake of it. The conversation was on matters of social and religious improvement, and the doctor was zealously seconded by his colleagues and European friends. Mrs. Wilson, too, was most amiable and indefatigable in entertaining her guests, whether European or native. Such gatherings contributed not only to deepen the impression wrought by the lectures, but to bridge over the gulf which separated Natives from Europeans. The students were in no way afraid to visit the missionaries. We walked into their houses without the least hesitation or fear.

* The lectures at the American Chapel were arranged and maintained chiefly by the excellent American missionaries Messrs. Allen, Hume, and Fairbank.--*Edit.*

I first met Dr. Wilson at a Marathi lecture of his on his travels in Palestine. He must have then been about forty, but looked much younger, and his amiability and simple dignity were most impressive. At that time it was not chiefly the rich and the learned that listened to the lectures, but the poorest and the humblest of Hindu society, whom even I refused to come into close contact with, for dread of pollution. I did not sit on the same bench with them, but stood at a distance like a proud Pharisee!

Thus the missionaries of the Free Church Mission devoted themselves by no means exclusively to their duties in the Institution. In addition to frequent public lectures, they held private classes, on Sundays and week-days, for the benefit both of their own students and of others. I attended on Sundays the Bible-class of Dr. Murray Mitchell, and I greatly enjoyed the instruction given in it. Ever since then it has been my experience that the Word of God is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.

My chief friends at this time were earnest men. Some of them went to the same school with me, but many others were studying in the Government and Mission schools, while others were clerks in offices. We discussed social and religious matters, the Bible frequently engaging our earnest attention.

These friends did not all embrace Christianity, yet they were secret believers. One of them used to put off his sacred thread which he wore across his shoulders, every time when he prayed privately at home. A young Parsi gentleman read the Bible regularly at home with his family. He has since been secretly baptized in the Roman Catholic Church.* One gentleman came regularly to the Sunday Marathi service in the Free Church with his young son.

My earnest-minded Christian friends greatly helped me to arrive at a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. There were, however, a few amongst my non-Christian friends who tried hard to turn me away from Christianity altogether.

* We were intimately acquainted with this inquirer. He was most amiable, very sincere, but timid. Like Nicodemus, he came to us for instruction chiefly at night. Our conviction is that he was baptized by a Roman Catholic priest simply because no Protestant missionary was willing to perform the rite secretly.—*Edit.*

CHAPTER XI.

THE PARAMHANS MANDALI (SOCIETY).

ALTHOUGH I belonged to the party of the reformers, I did not like to be called a reformer, as that word had become a term of reproach both in Bombay and Poona; and it was natural for people to entertain strange views of the reformers, as not a few of these indulged in evil practices. This was chiefly in Poona. In Bombay things were not so bad; atheism had not made so much progress in it as at Poona, and the reformers were usually serious men, who professed to believe in God. They were active workers and sought converts. Some of them once got round me, and argued hard against caste; and when they had succeeded in convincing me, they asked me there and then to give a practical demonstration of my sincerity. I did not know what they meant, but one of them produced a biscuit and challenged me to eat it. I had not expected such an ordeal. I said I would eat it if they did so; for I did not think respectable Brahmans would do anything of the kind; when, lo! and behold, they actually put a bit of the "unclean food" into

their mouths, and it went down their throats! I and other novices had to follow the bold example. But I was in the greatest perturbation of mind in consequence. I feared to go home, for I expected the severe vengeance of my orthodox relatives. I thought my mother would expel me from the house, and that I should be shunned by my people as a poor Christian outcast. Indeed, I feared I should be execrated by all Hindus, and saluted on the roads and in places of public resort with the reproachful term of "pervert,"* which was then vociferously bestowed in all the streets and lanes of Bombay on the Christian converts. The companion who was, like me, only then initiated, found it hard to swallow the unholy food, and he sought the aid of a glass of water to help it down his throat. Thus I broke my caste first of all in the company of my Hindu friends. My Christian teachers and acquaintances did not insist on such trivial matters as food and drink. I may mention what Dr. Wilson once stated on the subject of caste. A Hindu, he said, should not violate the rules of caste simply with the view of indulging his appetite; let it be done from a sense of duty. Caste is sinful; God does not approve of social arrangements that sow discord among His children;

* The word in the original is *bātyā*, which may be rendered *polluted wretch*.—Edit.

and if with this conviction a man throws off its yoke, he does right, and God will help him to bear the persecution that follows such conduct. This was excellent advice; and hence, although he offered tea to all that came to the social gatherings at the Mission-house, Dr. Wilson did not insist on Hindus partaking of it. At special meetings, when men of high standing came, refreshments were placed in a separate room such as no orthodox Hindu would object to partake of.

After I had been initiated, I was introduced by my reformed friends to the members of the *Paramhans Mandali* Society. I had to declare my assent to the principles and objects of the society. The chief objects were the abolition of caste, the introduction of the custom of widow marriage, and the renunciation of idolatry. The members hoped to make a public profession when their number rose to one thousand; till which time they swore to maintain absolute secrecy regarding the operations of the Society. The rule of initiation at the meetings was as follows:—The candidate had to declare his assent to the principles of the Society, holding a little water in the palm of his hand, which he poured on the ground at the conclusion of the declaration. Then he had to drink a cup of milk, of which the president and others had already drunk, and to eat a piece of

European bread. His name was then enrolled in the list of members. Every meeting was commenced and closed with prayer. The prayers were composed by the-late Rão Bahâdur Dâdobâ Pândurang, the well-known Marathi grammarian.

A young man had been admitted into the Society who broke his solemn promise and divulged its secrets; he published the names of its members, and declared that they would soon all turn Christians. This greatly alarmed the people. Grown-up lads from the Mission schools were at once removed, and some of them were sent up country. The newspapers were filled with most alarming statements. Satirical poems were published and widely circulated. An orthodox learned Brahman wrote a book in defence of the Hindu religion, but the reformers boldly encountered him in argument. There was immense excitement, and much sorrow and wailing in many a Hindu home. A class-fellow of mine, who was an earnest inquirer and not far from the kingdom of heaven, was removed from the school,—when he wrote to me the following letter:—

“I am very much grieved to inform you that I am constrained to keep away from school and deny myself the pleasure of your society. I do not know when I shall be free from this restraint. Not only am I forbidden to go to the dear school, but to

attend any meeting or lecture. There is no help for it. Those who, like me, are seekers for truth must often suffer such persecution. May God help you in your secular and religious studies, and may He save you from the bondage which I am enduring!"

CHAPTER XII.

COMPELLED TO LEAVE BOMBAY.

My father-in-law, who was in Bombay, having heard of my connection with the Paramhans Society, sent to my father, who was at Satara, the alarming message that the day of my baptism had been fixed, and that he must make no delay in removing me from school. My father at once dispatched a servant for me, with a note stating that my dear mother was dangerously ill, and that I must start at once for Satara. On the receipt of the letter I immediately obtained leave from my teachers and set out for Satara. I learnt on the way, however, from the servant, that my mother was not ill, and that I had been sent for because I was suspected of intending to embrace Christianity. At that time I had ceased to believe in idolatry, but my faith in Christianity was not firm. I had taken with me a copy of the Bible and Sturm's "Meditations." I took great delight in the Psalms of David, and often went out alone into the jungle to read them there without interruption.

My parents were very much pleased when I came home. They took me to the temple of Mahadeva and

sang vociferously his praises, going several-times round his temple and making a noise like the cry of a goat. I did not join them in any of these things, and refused to offer a cocoanut to the god. My father particularly marked my conduct, but did not say a word. When we returned home, sweetmeats were distributed to friends as a mark of joy at my return. After the friends had dined and left us, my mother began to weep, and my father reproached me for my proceedings in Bombay. He said he would never send me back to school there. I was rather excited, and defended Christianity with warmth. My father knew nothing of Christianity, but he declared vehemently that to be a Christian was as disgraceful as to be a scavenger.

I was for two months with my father. I then saw how corrupt the Engineering Department was; how the poor workmen were oppressed and defrauded by their native officers, who were mostly Brahmans; and I sent an expostulatory letter to the superintending European engineer, with some quotations from the Scriptures.

My stay at home was becoming very painful. There were heathen rites and ceremonies frequently performed with great pomp and noise, and now I could not endure such things. What grieved me most was this—that the very Brahman who cheated the poor workmen of their hard-earned money offici-

ated at these rites. I therefore earnestly entreated my father to let me go back to school. He said he would consent if I declared on oath that I would not become a Christian during his lifetime. In a weak moment I yielded. But I got him to concede that I should not be compelled to worship idols or practise idolatrous rites. I also made him promise that he would not keep idols in his own house. He called my uncle from Belgaum, and got him to be a witness to this mutual engagement, and then handed over to him all the gods which he had in his possession. They did not soon leave me alone; they used to take me into a quiet place out of the city and there expostulate with me. But their efforts were all in vain. I prepared to start for Bombay, but, before doing so, I sent a long communication to the *Dnyanprakash* newspaper, which was extracted into the *Dnyanodaya*, with an English translation. I give below the concluding portion of this letter.

“The iron age has passed, and the golden has dawned. It will soon be glorious day; of which only those who love the works of darkness will be afraid. They will run to the caves in the rocks for shelter. Such men may call the golden age an iron age, but we shall be proud of it. To us what they condemn as hurtful shall be fraught with good. We long for a general fusion of the castes, which they dread, for then hatred and jealousy shall cease,

and all tribes and nations shall be bound by the cords of love. The Brahman shall not contemn the Mahar, nor the Mahar hate the Brahman. The Hindus will go all over the world for commerce, contract friendship with the inhabitants of other lands, and learn their arts and sciences. They will give up their barbarous superstitions, and peace and good-will will cover the land. Such a glorious consummation is devoutly wished for by all who are truly wise."

I rejoined the Free Church Institution on my return to Bombay (December 1851). I informed my Christian teachers of what had happened at Satara, and they rightly told me that I had done wrong in giving the promise to my father. After some time I wrote to him that I had made a grievous mistake and sinned like Herod, and that I begged him to release me. The Rev. Dr. Murray Mitchell took much pains to show me my duty in this very solemn matter. He also spoke often earnestly to me in private about my spiritual state.

I continued to attend the meetings of the Paramahans Society, which were now held with greater secrecy than ever. According to a new practice introduced into the meetings, it was my turn to read a paper, and I gave one on the religious instruction said to have been imparted by Akrûr to the Gopis.*

* The Gopis were the female cowherds of whom so much is said in the legendary story of Krishna.—*Edit.*

Some atheistical friends from Poona made some observations which pained me and my Bombay friends very much. What aggravated the evil was that our president joined the atheists in assailing my views. At the next meeting we questioned him about this strange conduct, when he declared he was no atheist, but that he had taken the atheistical side simply for argument's sake. This circumstance convinced me that there was no good in associating with these so-called reformers. They were but time-servers, without depth of conviction or feeling. They offered nothing for the hungry and thirsty soul; they afforded a mere temporary resting-place for one who was wearied of the old idolatry and superstition. The members of the Paramhans Society never seriously thought of the forgiveness of sin, peace of conscience, or freedom from the power of evil. There was a book in manuscript which the Society claimed as their Institute of theology; but it contained nothing positive. It was full of negations. A feeble attempt was made in it to disprove the necessity and importance of a revealed religion; whereas I thought it most preposterous to entertain a single doubt on that point. I always believed that man stood in need of divine light and guidance on the momentous subject of religion.

After I left the Paramhans Society, I, along with a few friends, started a new one on quite dif-

ferent lines. We called ourselves *Satyashodhak*, i.e., "seekers after truth." We met every Sunday for prayer and conversation, and read chiefly the Bible. I had still a hazy notion that the Vedas might have claims upon serious consideration, but happily about this time I read Professor H. H. Wilson's translation of the first division of the Rigveda, and this at once changed my opinion. I found that the Veda was wholly unsuitable for me, and that its worship of nature was gross idolatry. I found its hymns sink into insignificance before the majesty of the Psalms of David. If any little regard for these ancient records was still left in my mind, it was swept away by the perusal of an article on the supposed eternity of the Vedas, extracted in the *Dnyanodaya* from the *Calcutta Review*.

On its publication I also read the second volume of Professor H. H. Wilson's translation of the Rigveda, and the learned dissertation prefixed to it. I continued to inquire into the claims of the Vedas even after I ceased to venerate them, and I conversed with learned Shastris about them; but they could give me no satisfaction whatever. I thank God that my disappointment about the Vedas did not lead me to absolute scepticism.

CHAPTER XIII.

GRADUAL INCREASE OF LIGHT.

WHEN I joined the upper division of the Institution, I was very much helped in my religious studies by the instructions of my esteemed teachers, the Rev. Robert Nesbit, the Rev. Dr. Wilson, the Rev. Dr. Murray Mitchell, and the Rev. Dr. Sheshadri. As a gardener weeds a garden, sows it with good seed, and plants fruit-trees within it, so the Spirit of God was working in my heart. The soil was not only cleared of thorns and thistles; the seed of God's Word was sown in it, and had begun to germinate. I loved the Word of God more and more, and also the books which threw light upon it. The contributions I sent to the newspapers were filled with quotations from Scripture, and my conversation with my friends was pervaded by Bible phraseology. This was noticed both by my Christian and Hindu friends. I used to copy into the blank pages of my Bible striking Scripture passages. Dr. Wilson happened to see these extracts, and was greatly pleased, taking occasion to give a beautiful address to the students on the subject. The passages copied

were about the excellency of the Scriptures (Ps. xix. 7-10; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17). I also began to commit Bible texts to memory. When I was in such a happy state of mind, I received a copy of the English Bible as a class-prize. In it I found a paper with the following touching inscription:—"A boy five years of age, who loves Jesus, has sent this Holy Bible for a Hindu boy." *

My conduct at home was now very much changed, and the difference was noticed by my friends. I had given up all heathen practices, though I still clung to the custom of wearing ceremonially clean garments before taking food. One proof of my having undergone a real change of heart by the power of the Holy Spirit was this, that I had begun to feel a hatred of sin and a desire to be holy. Mere intellectual enlightenment has no saving power in it; repentance and faith are essential to salvation. As the Spirit of God awakens a sinner before bestowing upon him these two cardinal graces, so He was dealing with me. I now became very much alarmed at my sinfulness. I found no satisfaction in worldly happiness. I trembled at the thought of the justice of God. I felt as if the very food I ate would rise in judgment against me at

* We believe this Bible had been sent from Scotland. The child's gift, and the sweet words accompanying it, evidently made a deep impression on the "Hindu boy."—*Edit.*

the last day ; or as if it would turn into poison and slay me at once. When I used to see dead bodies burned in the Hindu burning-ground, I anxiously asked myself what would be my condition after death. I felt awed by the sight of a bier as it was carried along the road.

I may say a few words about the little band of truth-seekers who were at this time in the Institution. It was composed of young students of all castes. One of them, a Brahman youth, had been employed along with a most talented student of the Institution, Mr. M. Moroji, as tutor to the Chief of Jâmkhandi. Mr. Moroji was killed by a fall from his horse. This youth told me that Mr. Moroji had a secret faith in Christianity ; that he used to pray and read the *Psalms of David* with him before going to bed. He also used to teach him the Christian doctrines. The effects of the instruction thus received by the young man were evident in his conduct. Mr. Moroji, I may mention, had been a favourite pupil of the missionaries, and great was the sorrow felt by them when the intelligence of his death was received in Bombay. It was first to him that Dr. Mitchell addressed his "*Letters to Indian Youth*," which is a treatise on the evidences of Christianity.

Another member of the band was a Brahman youth, the brother of a man in the Bombay police. One day he came to my house pale and sad, and I

found he had not taken any breakfast, as he did not like to eat at his brother's house, because he took bribes. He had remonstrated, but his brother was utterly heedless. I advised him to live separate, and we made a small monthly subscription to supply his wants. There were two other lads attending the school, who during the recess used to go to some quiet place and pray. When asked by their school-fellows where they had been, they used to answer they had gone to eat bread, meaning spiritual food. Another youth who was my pupil, and who, a long time after my baptism, died as a postmaster in the Satara district, got himself baptized by his wife, publicly declaring his faith in Christ when on his death-bed.* Another youth, who was my pupil, and who constantly came to my house for instruction, was baptized by the Rev. R. Nesbit in 1855. One Ramachandra Narayan, who practised as a medical man, died believing in Christ, though he had long put off the duty of publicly professing his faith. He was a favourite pupil of Mr. Nesbit's, and Mrs. Nesbit visited him during his illness.

I regularly went to the Free Church services, especially to the English service on the Esplanade, and I was often accompanied by several young students. On one occasion the Rev. Mr. Munger of

* There was no missionary, and probably no chaplain, in the station at the time.—*Edit.*

the American Mission preached on the text, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3). The sermon was most impressive, and very much stirred me up. I also greatly valued Mr. Nesbit's Marathi sermons at the Native Church, and if possible never missed them. Though I had not been baptized, I had joined a society of Christians which had been established by the Rev. Narayan Sheshadri, called the "Native Missionary Association." Several educated Hindus attended the meetings of the Association, and they expressed their surprise that the Christian members, most of whom were Marathis, Mahars, and Mangs, could offer up such devout and suitable prayers. A native gentleman said he would challenge any Brahman Pandit to offer such supplications.

I constantly wrote to my father about the state of my mind, and he attempted again to remove me from the Institution. This time he managed the matter in a very clever way. He pressed me to join the Grant Medical College, as he said that I could be most useful to my countrymen by studying medicine. I did not oppose his wishes, and joined the College in 1852. On my leaving the Mission Institution, I gave a short address to my pupils, which was published in the *Dnyānodaya*, and from which I may quote a few sentences:—

"My dear friends, religious knowledge is the

most important kind of knowledge ; it is more precious than rubies. You may not now appreciate it, but you will do so when you grow older. Therefore, dear friends, do not be heedless about the truths you are taught here regarding God. You may not now be able to distinguish truth from error ; but do not despair. You will soon be able to do it. You are sorry at our separation, as is but natural ; but God wills it so. I may be absent from you, but I shall ever think of you with affection, and I beg you not to forget me. May God bless you ! May He help you to acquire knowledge and to make a profitable use of it."

Two or three young men, holding the same views of religion with me, passed the entrance examination, but did not join the Medical College. I was the only Christian student in it. I felt this deeply, but I did not conceal my opinions. The Parsi students were very troublesome, and one especially did something every day to hurt my religious feelings. Yet he was kind at heart, and when he knew that I had no scruples to eat with him, he shared his lunch with me. I was not, however, happy in mind. The words, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," would always come into my mind, and I felt very uneasy. It pained me that I had preferred any earthly object to my spiritual welfare. I felt that I had not

"sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." The books taught in the College were devoid of any pious sentiment or allusion to the great Author of nature, and the Maker of the mysterious mechanism of man's body; and once, when I came across a passage in Quain's Anatomy, in which the name of God occurred in a description of man as the chief part of His creation on earth, I was transported with joy. I felt like the deer that, panting in a sandy desert, delights to find a pure stream of water. In my College exercises I sometimes made serious observations, of which the Professor did not take any notice. On holidays I used to attend Mr. Nesbit's Bible-class, and on Sundays I went to the Marathi service at the Free Church. But, in spite of a real desire to attend to spiritual matters and avail myself of the opportunities I had of attending on the means of grace, I felt most anxious in mind, and constantly got ill. At last I sent in my resignation. Dr. Morehead, the Principal, showed the utmost unwillingness to accept it; and I had to have recourse to Dr. Wilson's kind offices in the matter, and then resumed my studies in the Free Church Institution.

At this time a brother-in-law of mine died. He was an earnest seeker after God, and constantly read and conversed with me. The parents of the

when the remedies of the physicians failed, they had recourse to the priests and astrologers. His poor young wife had to suffer greatly. She was forbidden to attend to her toilet. She was forced to sleep on the bare ground and eat scanty food on the floor. I greatly pitied the poor young woman, and got a European doctor to see her husband, paying him liberally that he might stop for some time with him. I conversed with this gentleman, and found that he was an earnest Christian. He told me distinctly that he believed in the exclusive saving power of Jesus Christ. I wished to declare the important truth to the dying man, but it was too late then. He died soon after.

About this time a neighbour of mine, who was a *Lingâyt* by sect, had a *Marathi* nurse employed for his motherless children, and she got ill. I and a young pupil of mine visited her and spoke to her of the Saviour. We also prayed with her. We believed that she died believing in the Lord Jesus.

I often corresponded with my Christian friends at this time. I may give an extract from a letter I wrote to Dr. M. Mitchell, in order to show what my religious state now was.

“You ask me to reply to your letter, and I doubt not you expect to hear about my religious senti-

“In the first place, I acknowledge my great fault in still remaining in heathenism after being convinced of the truth of Christianity. I am almost ashamed to state the reason of this. I am not yet prepared to withstand and to suffer the persecutions and trials which a true believer in Christ has to undergo in India when he confesses his Master before his countrymen. Oh, may He grant me the boldness that Luther had at Worms! May He give me His Spirit, and encourage me to say, ‘Here I stand; I can do nothing else. So help me God!’ Yet I fully admit that all my trials are nothing in comparison with the sufferings of Christ, who died for our salvation.

“It is true that the love of my parents and family sometimes overcomes me and makes me forget my resolution, but again the burden of my sins and the fear of the sinner’s doom in a future life greatly trouble me. Thus there is a constant struggle in my mind between the desires of this life and the hopes of a future one. My mind is not at rest. I am dissatisfied with my own righteousness. My promises to myself are in vain. I need a mighty Saviour; I need a guide to direct me, to help me, and to take me safely through the wilderness of this world of sin and sorrow in which I am lost. My guilty conscience terrifies me when offering up prayer at the throne of the Holy God. I pray to Him in the name of One whom I have found revealed in the

writings of the Prophets of old and in those of the Evangelists. Yet He is not my friend. He appears to me as a Judge, severely rebuking me for my past sins, and for the present ones in which I still live.

“Now, Sir, this is the real state of my mind at the present time. I hope you will believe me in this. I have not exaggerated nor invented anything to please you. But all this is *within* me. None but God and myself know it. I shall now tell you about my outward behaviour towards my friends and relatives. I make no *pūjā* to the idols that are in our house. I perform no *sandhyā*, but instead of this I pray to my Creator and ask His blessing. I often speak to my friends on the necessity of a Divine revelation and of a true religion.” (26th Sept. 1852.) •

There was one thing that somewhat reconciled my dear father to me and my opinions, and that was the books that I had composed between 1851 and 1854. I published five works. He saw from these publications that I was not a mere simpleton, duped by the missionaries. He felt assured that I had an intelligent acquaintance with the subject of religion, and was able to think for myself, uninfluenced by the words of others. He also felt convinced that I was sincere, and that nothing but purely spiritual considerations controlled me.

CHAPTER XIV.

OPPOSITION OF MY PARENTS.

IN 1854 my father was transferred from Satara to Belgaum. He made a short stay at Bombay before taking up his new appointment. He was besieged by my Bombay relatives, and earnestly advised to remove me from the Mission school without delay. He knew my sentiments, and did not quite sympathise with my clamorous relatives. He would quietly listen to their arguments and my answers to them when they discussed my opinions, and he tried sometimes to settle our points of difference. An old friend of my father's, who was most strenuous in his efforts to change my mind, would use abusive language so plentifully, that every time he employed an objectionable word, I checked him by quoting a Scripture text denouncing swearing. My father laughed every time when the advocate of Hinduism was nonplussed. There was another individual, a man from the north of India, who had received his training in a Mission school in the south, who was my most violent opponent.* He openly reviled the Scriptures, and suggested that I should

be made to read infidel books. My father brought me some thirty publications of this character, supplied chiefly by this very man. These were the productions of European and American unbelievers, with some composed in India, chiefly by Parsis. I did not refuse to read them, but in God's mercy my knowledge of the Bible was sufficient to help me to see the falsehoods of such books, and these I pointed out to my dear father and others. Mora Bhat Dândekar, a learned Brahman controversialist, who had had a controversy with Dr. Wilson, and had written a book in defence of the Hindu religion, was brought to me to disprove the truth of Christianity. My father was out when he called, and as I had never met him before, I did not know who he was, or on what errand he had come. In the course of conversation he accused Christ of stealing an ass. I then placed the Bible before him, and begged him to show where the statement was made. He was unable to find the passage, which he had, wittingly or unwittingly, misunderstood. I then showed him all the passages containing the story of the ass which Christ obtained for His entry into Jerusalem; and the candid man admitted his mistake. I then asked his name, and having learnt that he was the author of a Marathi anti-Christian work, I asked him how he could make so false a charge against Jesus Christ in a

printed book. He answered that he did not know English, and had not read the Marathi New Testament; he had written on the authority of friends who were acquainted with English!

My father often reproved me for my anxiety to make a public profession of Christianity, when many others well acquainted with it had not done so. He mentioned by name several such persons. In reply, I pointed to a number of able men from Dr. Duff's College in Calcutta that had joined the Christian Church; and I reminded him that religion was an affair absolutely personal; every man must think and act for himself, and dare to do his duty though he should be in a minority.

The case of Colonel Vans Kennedy, a well-known Oriental scholar, was often cited to me by my father. This English gentleman was constantly in the company of the Shastris and read Hindu works. He was not silent about his sceptical opinions, and was understood by the Hindus generally to be a believer in the Hindu religion. But he was a spendthrift, and was always in danger of being dragged to jail for his debts. I pointed out to my father the lies of European sceptics, and showed that the renunciation of Christianity morally degraded man. The attempts made to turn me from religion were most varied. They would charge me with a breach of the fifth commandment of the Decalogue for wishing to em-

brace Christianity against the consent of my parents. Some of the means which they adopted were even grossly wicked. Evil-minded men tried to corrupt my morals; and when I expressed my extreme indignation, they threatened to employ violence. But they did not venture to use such threats in the presence of my father.

The female members of our family imagined there was some magic in the Bible, and earnestly entreated me to give up the perusal of it. "Why read that book, when there are so many others in your possession?" they would tenderly ask. They would consult the astrologers and entreat them to produce a change in my views.

My uncle wrote me a long letter, in which he dwelt upon these three points: first, that it was a great sin to embrace Christianity, because the man who does so is guilty of disobedience to his parents and causes them much pain; secondly, the converts disgrace themselves and their friends; and thirdly, the converts become miserable; they are doomed to starvation; they go begging from door to door, Bible in hand, and they seek in vain to be restored to their relatives. I need not quote here the answer I sent him, but will give the letter which he subsequently wrote to my father in March 1854:—

"I do not approve of your delay in removing Baba from school. It is impossible for him to re-

form while he remains there and has the society of his friends. Instead of using mild means, I would suggest that you should at once order him to give up school and come to you. What education he has acquired is enough ; he could work under you in your office. He might not get an appointment just yet, but he would be removed from the pernicious influence of the school. He is doing mischief in the house ; his younger brothers are altogether under his influence, and Bhau" (the brother next me in age) "has been already spoiled. If he can be induced to conform himself to the enjoyments and duties of this life, he may be completely weaned from his love of religion."

My poor father was greatly affected by these continued complaints from his friends. He once, in great agony, declared to me before my mother and brothers, that if I submitted to the rite of baptism, he and all the rest in the house would drown themselves in the river.

I was in terrible perplexity. I did not know what to do. I knew it was my duty to be faithful and loyal to my Saviour, and to take His yoke upon me publicly by receiving baptism, as He had expressly commanded ; but the difficulties in my way overwhelmed me. Sometimes I thought I would go to Calcutta, Madras, or some other distant place, and there quietly receive baptism. Sometimes I thought

of swallowing poison, and, when at the point of death, confessing Christ and submitting to the holy rite; at other times, I wished to call a missionary to our house, and declare my faith before him. But the Lord delivered me from these vain fancies.

I shall give here part of the conversation I had with my father on a night previous to that on which we expected an invitation to a temple ceremony in honour of the Holi festival. On that night, friends who are in distress or are visitors from other places are taken to the temple with great ceremony and entertained by seeing dances. My father, who had recently come from Satara, expected the same entertainment.

“Father. I have not hitherto had a quiet time for conversing with you; and I am glad of this opportunity. Now tell me freely what your plans are for the future. I purpose retiring from Government service; but, should you consent to go with me to Belgaum, I may postpone my retirement for a couple of years.

“Son. I am quite willing to abide by your advice, and follow you wherever you may wish to take me. I would only ask you to give me religious liberty. I cannot disregard the higher claims of God, while rendering due obedience to human friends and benefactors.

“Father. But what do you want? I do not force

you to worship idols, neither do I worship them myself. I take my meals like you, without practising any idolatrous rites, neither do I ask you to do anything morally wrong.

"*Son.* I wish to walk consistently with the teachings of the religion I believe.

"*Father.* What do you mean?

"*Son.* I desire to submit to baptism and associate with Christians, with an open disregard of the rules of caste.

"*Father.* Will people then allow us to remain among them? We shall have to flee from this town.

"*Son.* I do not want you to violate the rules of caste or to follow the precepts of Christianity, since you do not feel the burden of your sins.

"*Father.* Should you alone follow Christianity, we shall be subjected to great persecution and disgrace. Please do nothing of the kind; only follow your convictions secretly at home.

"*Son.* That would be hypocrisy; but when I insist on consistency, you charge me with disobedience.

"*Father.* We brought you up, and have been most kind to you; and will you leave us and go away?

"*Son.* No, no; I do not wish to be separated from you. I would give anything to live with you and all my dear ones, and I shall always do so if my profession of Christianity do not put you to inconvenience.

"*Father.* But how would such a thing be regarded

by the people generally? Would any one then come to our house? To-night there is the ceremony at the temple; and you must come with me, for if you do not, I shall feel disgraced. We must submit to the demands of society.

“*Son.* There, sir, you see how we differ in our views of duty. I am advised to act as if there were not One higher than this world to whom we are responsible for our conduct. Will the world avail us anything when we shall have to give account to God for wilful transgressions of His express command in deference to its wishes? Will it make our path easy through the last dark hours of our lives?

“*Father.* No; God alone can then help us. Man’s help will be of no avail.

“*Son.* Then it becomes us to give constant heed to His injunctions. Would it do if we went to Him only when we are dying? What earthly friend on whose bounty we depend would be pleased if we went to him only when in distress, and not at other times? Shall we then spend our life in violating God’s commandments, and turn to Him only at the conclusion of it?”

At night, friends came to take us to the entertainment at the temple. My father sent them to persuade me, for he said that he would go only if I went; but I did not consent, and so we both stayed at home.

When my good father saw how firmly resolved I was to follow my conscience, he ceased to trouble me any more on the subject. He would only say, "Teach us the religion in which you believe; we shall all together embrace Christianity." I did not know if he was sincere; and I consulted with my missionary friends, who advised me not to entertain any suspicion about the matter, but go with him to Belgaum and attend to his suggestion.

In the month of March of the year 1854 I wrote a long letter to the most influential newspaper of the time in reference to the Hindu New Year's Day, in which I openly declared—"This year the Christian religion will be largely extended, and other religions will be enfeebled." The conclusion was as follows:—"God is King this year. He is unchangeable. He stands in need of no councillors. He is independent and all in all. The planets and the stars exert no influence upon the destinies of men; they are obedient to His commands. God alone should be worshipped; and when He alone is so, gladness will fill the world."

My father's term of leave expired, and he prepared to start for Belgaum; and I made up my mind to go with him. The students of the Free Church Institution made a collection for a testimonial to me, and a copy of Cobbin's Family Bible was presented to me with a very kind inscription. I still possess this

work. Some of my Hindu reformed friends gave me an entertainment at their country-house, where before partaking of the feast I was asked to offer up prayer, which I did after the Christian mode. An entertainment was also given me by the students, presided over by the Rev. Dr. Sheshadri. Mr. Nesbit gave me a copy of his printed discourses, and Mrs. Wilson a book-marker with the words "Follow the Lord fully." But the greatest present I got indicative of sincere affection and interest in my welfare was this, that the Rev. Mr. Nesbit took me into a room and prayed earnestly for me, and fervently exhorted me to be strong in the Lord. Before leaving Bombay I purchased a copy of the Marathi Old Testament, which specially rejoiced me; and I made the following note at the time of purchase:—"1st March 1854.—This day I have purchased a copy of God's Word as contained in the Old Testament. I cannot express the joy I feel. It is a great mercy of God that we have got His Word written in our own language. I have now got the whole Bible. How happy I am! Those who may desire to read it shall be shown the wonderful works of God; those who may argue with me can be now easily shown the evidences of its truth. God's Word is a sword. By its might we shall overcome all our trials and conquer India for the Lord. O God! I thank thee for Thy Word, which Thou hast given us in our native language."

CHAPTER XV.

RETROSPECT.

BEFORE continuing my narrative, I wish to dwell on a few points in my past history, so that the kindness of God to me may be more distinctly perceived.

(1.) If I had not been compelled to remain in Bombay against all our plans, by the refusal of the Military Board to grant me a pass to go to Aden, and if I had not been persuaded to join the Mission Institution by the young man of my caste, I could, *humanly speaking, never have received any Christian instruction.* Is not the hand of God manifest in this? As it was said of old, "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me" (Isa. xlv. 5).

(2.) The arrangement existing in the Free Church Institution for communicating religious instruction contributed largely towards my enlightenment. My teachers were not only men of learning, ability, and kindness, but adorned with Christian virtues and graces. They were earnest about the salvation of souls; and this earnestness showed itself very clearly in their life and conduct; and, though so ardent, they understood the most rational and effective

method of imparting Christian truth. They were familiar with the trials and difficulties of students, and took a hearty interest in their well-being. While they were anxious for the salvation of their souls, they did not neglect their temporal welfare. They sought to make them excellent scholars, and so fit them for the higher walks of usefulness in life. But the chief aim of our teachers was to bless us with spiritual light and truth, and their highest energies were directed to that end. Science, literature, philosophy, and languages were taught, and taught most efficiently; but we were never allowed to lose sight of the grand object for which Mission schools exist, and for which the missionaries have come to live and labour amongst us. They confidently expected immediate and substantial results, not in our success as cultured men, so much as converted men, redeemed by the blood of the Saviour and renewed by God's Holy Spirit, that we might possess and manifest Divine life in our walk and conversation. And God blessed their labours. Their religious instruction had an attraction and power in it that captivated even those who came to the school with a strong antipathy to Christianity. The atmosphere of the Institution was entirely Christian, and every one who came breathed it and was affected by its healing influence.

I can never adequately thank God for the teachers that I had in the College. I cannot help praising them here; and this will be one of my chief themes of praise in the world to come. I dare not say they were perfect, but this I must say, that the image of the Lord Jesus shone distinctly in them; their hearts were glowing with the love of the blessed Saviour.* . . . The Rev. Dr. Sheshadri was as useful in leading me to the Saviour as the European Missionaries. It was by his teaching that I became acquainted with the evidences of the Christian religion. After our religious lessons were over, he would read to us interesting things from Christian magazines and newspapers. I remember the addresses which the late Rev. Rajahgopal of Madras gave in Scotland, which were read to us by Mr. Narayan with the

* Mr. Padmanji next speaks at considerable length of the Missionaries individually. His language is most affectionate, and shows how endearing were the ties that bound him to his Christian teachers. But I naturally omit these references.

Of these teachers it may be well to mention that Dr. Wilson died in a green and honoured old age—Dr. Sheshadri and I still survive—but Mr. Nesbit was taken away in comparatively early life. To me his death was like the rending away of *animæ dimidium mee*; and it is most touching to see that, at the distance of nearly forty years, every allusion to this admirable man, made by any of his surviving friends or pupils, is marked by an almost passionate tenderness. Mr. Padmanji further speaks of his work as a Missionary both in English and Marathi—of his teaching, preaching, and public lecturing—with unbounded admiration.

Oh, blest are they who live and die like him;

Lóved with such love, and with such sorrow mourned.—*Edit*

greatest animation and delight. During the recess this zealous Christian teacher would read to the headmaster, who was a Hindu gentleman, esteemed alike by Christians and Hindus for his moral character, which was, no doubt, the result of the Christian teaching he had received in the Institution and the intimate converse he had with earnest Christian men.

(3.) The newspapers I read and the Hindu friends I associated with were also most useful to me.

(4.) My early resolution to make no secret of my religious opinions, though it excited much persecution and exposed me to much discomfort and obloquy, was in the end most helpful. Trials and troubles test sincerity and confirm faith. The inquirer also experiences the blessedness of those who, by passing through tribulation, are purified. My mental anxiety gave me more pain than did outward trials, and this I endured most keenly for full three years. But God helped me in His great mercy to endure to the end. Indeed, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force (Matt. xi. 12).

5. Lastly, I may observe that God showed His special favour to me by the kindly attitude of my dear and much esteemed father. Though he did not profess to be a reformer, and had no acquaintance with the Christian religion, he acted towards me all along with great moderation and consideration. He

looked after my temporal interests most carefully, and was lavish in expenditure on my education. He not only purchased for me some of the very costliest English books that could be procured in the country, but ordered others out from England through the officers under whom he was employed. He gave large sums of money for my private use. I foolishly spent sometimes handfuls of rupees on useless articles of luxury; but I was not held responsible for any of my prodigalities. Even after I was altered in mind and character, and had openly declared my determination to follow Christianity, he did not change his generous dealings with me, and ever afterwards he continued to be my kind friend and generous benefactor.

In such wonderful ways God led me on slowly but steadily from darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ, and defeated the attempts of the devil to keep me in sin and error. I would ever exclaim with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all Thy diseases, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies" (Ps. ciii. 2-4).

CHAPTER XVI.

BACK TO BELGAUM.

I LEFT Bombay with my parents for Belgaum by sea. We landed at Vingorla, a seaport, from which we prosecuted our journey in bullock conveyances. We went thence to a neighbouring town, where an old friend of my father held the appointment of civil judge, my father hoping that he might succeed in changing my mind. I had a long talk with this old gentleman on the subject of religion. After our ablutions, my father and I were introduced into the room where the gods were worshipped. My father performed the *pūjā*, but I did not. Our kind host did not take notice of this omission; but a serious trial awaited me at breakfast. Hindus are in the habit of performing some little ceremony at the commencement of every meal, and if I did not perform it, I feared that our host would be offended, and chide my father for bringing an unclean person to eat in the same room with him. This would disgrace and hurt my dear parents, especially my father. But I reasoned with myself that if I now yielded to convenience, and practised an idolatrous rite which

I had long since abandoned, I should be guilty of inconsistency. I should deny the professions I had made to my host, and I should raise in his mind doubt of my sincerity. I remembered the noble heroism of Luther, about which I had learnt at College, and I prayed secretly for Divine help to enable me to be faithful. I waited till our host and my father had commenced to eat, and I followed them without performing any ceremony. Nobody took any notice of my conduct, and the next day I had no difficulty on the subject. I would suggest to my educated friends who are striving after reformation, that they will find a little firmness will help to smooth their way very much. When we resumed our journey, I was advised by the gentleman, who had entertained us most hospitably, to act with prudence, and make no public profession of my religious principles. This, he said, was the safest and wisest course.

When we got to Belgaum, my parents argued hard with me to take up some employment and settle down. I told them that I would not do so; that I had not accompanied them with that object—I had come to acquaint them with the truths of Christianity. But they would not listen to me. However, I commenced my work of instruction gently. My younger brother, who had learned something of Christianity in Bombay, joined me

very heartily in this work. We had thus two seekers after truth in our family. We used to read the Bible openly, and talked with the other members of the family on religious matters. It was chiefly in the evening that we engaged in these exercises. Soon afterwards the large Bible, presented to me by the students of the Institution in Bombay, arrived, and I showed and explained the maps and pictures that were in it to my father and others. As my father was a proficient in engineering, he gave me some interesting information regarding the construction of the figures in the book. I hung on the walls of the house some Scriptural pictures which I had brought from Bombay. I put these in frames, and they proved useful in instructing my people. Dr. Wilson had given me his own picture in a frame, which I also hung up. In this way our house was adorned with splendid pictures of Scripture scenes and the portrait of a distinguished missionary. Nobody objected to this kind of decoration. My father furnished the house for me in the European fashion with tables, chairs and lamps, fully expecting me to reside in it permanently.

My father's friends at Belgaum soon heard of my religious state, and many came to see and argue with me. A learned Shastri was especially called to converse with me, and the conversation took a turn which my father did not anticipate. He spoke of

the authority of the Vedas ; and when I stated what I knew on the subject, he at once became mute. He positively declared that he would not talk with any one that questioned the authority of the Vedas. My father was very much surprised at this, and dismissed him, after presenting him with half a rupee. Though I had constantly to carry on religious discussions, I was free from the violent opposition of people of my caste. Those belonging to other castes had no personal motive to use any violence against me, for my conversion did not affect the reputation of their communities. They therefore contented themselves with simply reasoning with me. Some of them even encouraged me in my bold advocacy of principles which they disbelieved. Most of the young men of my acquaintance were members of the Paramhans Society of Bombay.

One day my father took me to the Collector, Mr. Inverarity, for whom he had procured, without my knowledge, letters of introduction from Dr. Wilson and Mr. Nesbit. The Collector offered me a place as translator, and expected me to attend at his office on the following day. When we went home, I told my father that he had not kept his word, and that I did not mean to take up any appointment before embracing Christianity. At this all the members of my family were extremely angry, and all, except my reformed brother, regarded me as a

bitter foe. My mother was in great sorrow. My grandmother and my uncle took me aside and earnestly expostulated with me, and, when their entreaties were unsuccessful, they scolded me severely. I made the following note on a page of my Marathi Bible on this occasion:—"1854, 19th May, Belgaum.—My father is trying to get me employed, so that my mind may turn from following the Lord. I am, therefore, in great distress to-day. The words of Job xii. 21-30 give me comfort and point to me the straight path of duty."

My father was a very sagacious man, and at once changed his mode of procedure. He did not further insist upon my joining the office, but expressed a desire to learn about Christianity. As he had to go into the districts, I gave him a few books to read, on his promising to peruse them carefully. I do not exactly remember what those books were, but evidently the Gospel of John, the Psalms of David, and the Pilgrim's Progress were among them, as would appear from a letter that I wrote to him on the subject. The concluding part of the letter was as follows:—"These two books (the Gospel of John and the Psalms) do not contain anything derogatory to the character of God, nor anything calculated to corrupt men. The Person about whom John writes was wonderful. I venture to affirm that you will find that His life was characterised by

perfect goodness and majesty—Divine truth, mercy, wisdom, and power shining forth in His every word and deed. . . Please try and see if truth, mercy, grace, infinite power, boundless wisdom do not thus appear in His life. Please attentively mark these words: ‘I am the bread of life;’ . . . ‘He who believeth in Me hath everlasting life, . . . and I shall raise him at up the last day.’ ‘The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.’ ‘He that committeth sin is the slave of sin.’ ‘Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.’”

As regards those who were outsiders, I may say that I met with much kindness and encouragement from the native Christians at Belgaum, whom I often met when I went out for a walk. At first they were shy, but afterwards grew more friendly, and they promised to pray for me. I went and called on Mr. Taylor and Mr. Beynon, the Missionaries, who had been my teachers twelve years before. They were much pleased to hear of the change that had taken place in my mind, and exhorted me to perseverance and faithfulness to my Redeemer. Besides these Christian friends none sympathised with me except an old teacher of mine, who had ceased to believe in Hinduism, and who did not express displeasure at my religious condition. He was now a Government clerk, and often called at my

house, and advised my relatives to treat me kindly. I attended the meetings of a debating society in the town, and often spoke. I also got Mr. Beynon to lecture on temperance.

At this time some Mormon missionaries arrived at Belgaum, and their meetings were largely attended. They did not make any impression upon the natives, but they succeeded in deluding some English soldiers. Captain, now General Sir Robert Phayre, who was then there, wrote a small tract against Mormonism, and I supplied him with some books on the subject which I had in my possession. My father spoke to me of the differences of opinion existing amongst Christians, and earnestly urged me to give up Christianity.

At this time I had all the worldly comfort that one could desire, but I was very unhappy. I feared lest my comforts would rise up against me in the day of judgment. I do not find anything written about the state of my mind at this period, except on a scrap dated 15th July 1858, in which I have made this note:—"I am strangely placed, in the mysterious providence of God. I do not know why I am so. Why canst Thou not draw me to Thyself, O Lord, who dost not desire the death of a sinner? O God, look down upon me a sinner, who am perishing. Mark how I am reviled by the people! They laugh me to scorn. They misunderstand and misrepresent my purest motives and my most laudable

desires. O God, I trust in the shadow of Thy wings alone. When wilt Thou, in Thy mercy, visit me? May the day appointed for my salvation be hastened." The following words I find in my diary, dated the 30th July:—"It would be better to enjoy the blessings of religion on a bed of sickness all my life than to live in my present condition."

I have a portion of a letter which I wrote to Dr. Murray Mitchell at this time, which I may here transcribe:—"I have been striving hard for the last two years. I have engaged with myself to give up the world for Christ; and although I cannot say that I have overcome the world, still I must gratefully acknowledge that my eyes have been opened to see the vanity of it. Although I have many of the comforts of this life, I do not find any satisfaction in them; and during the past twelve months this has been strongly felt by me. The burden of my sin, which presses me, and the terrors of the second death have extinguished completely the love of the pleasures of life in my mind. I am always gloomy and sad; and I am painfully conscious of my inability to stand the terrible ordeal that awaits me. Still I have the hope that God's strength will be perfected in my weakness, and I shall glorify God in my lack of strength."

And God soon wrought my deliverance. My father frequently came home from the districts, and

I had opportunities of speaking to him; and, when he was away from home, I sent him letters full of earnest counsel. One day I took him to see Mr. Taylor, who spoke to him in a very affectionate way about my religious state and intentions. My father, in accordance with Indian courtesy, said nothing at the time in opposition, but he scolded me severely when we returned home. Mr. Taylor was fully informed about my religious feelings and difficulties in a long letter, to which he sent a most valuable answer.

The critical moment, so long delayed, at last arrived, and I had to decide forthwith. I was asked to engage in certain religious rites, which could not be performed according to Hindu usage, except by myself. It was a festive occasion. Music of all sorts was employed, and the clang and clatter resounded far and wide. A magnificent booth was erected in which to seat my wife, and an altar was prepared on which to burn the sacrificial offerings with the aid of Brahman priests. There would be feastings and rejoicings, in which my dear mother hoped to play an active part. But I declared my firm resolution not to take any part in idolatrous ceremonies. My uncle informed my father of this when he was absent, and he sent an order to stop the festivities. The shame of so abrupt a conclusion of the ceremonies, of which the whole town had

been apprised by the clamorous music, was more than my dear mother could endure, and she sought a private interview with me. She implored me with tears in her eyes, and spreading out the long skirt of her robe, that I would give way, and for once oblige her by submitting to the rite; otherwise, she said, they would be utterly disgraced. All this was most painful to me; but I could not set aside the claims of truth. I did all I could to comfort her, but in vain.

I passed the night in great agony. I prayed; I wept. The Spirit of God suggested such helpful passages of Scripture to my mind as Luke xiv. 16-24, and the words, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come," impressed me most deeply. I feared I should share the fate of the unfortunate man of whom it was declared, "None of those men who were bidden shall taste of my supper." I there and then resolved that I would accept my Saviour at once. Then I found rest and peace.

I informed Mr. Taylor next morning of my resolution, and asked him to give me shelter in his house. On the following Sunday Mr. Taylor wrote that it would be best to apprise my father of my intention to leave my home; but there was not time to do this, and I felt that delay might prove dangerous. The day for the Hindu family rite had been fixed and the preparations had been made, and if I had delayed, it

would have been impossible for me to have refused to engage in it; and I felt that such conduct would amount to a denial of the Saviour, and might cause the eternal ruin of my soul. After some correspondence with Mr. Taylor, he assented to my request that I should go to his house and remain there till I was baptized.

CHAPTER XVII.

JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING.

AS I set out for church on Sunday, the 1st August 1854, I took leave of my mother, cast a glance at my wife, who sat in a corner, and spoke to my brothers and sisters, who were playing in the yard. I met some Christian friends, who walked with me to church. It was Mr. Beynon's turn to preach that evening. He was not aware of my intention of going after the service to Mr. Taylor's house for shelter, with a view to receive baptism, as matters had been finally settled only late the evening before. But it so happened that Mr. Beynon preached on the same parable which had led me to decide only three or four days previously. I listened to the sermon most attentively, and it convinced me of the wisdom of the step I had taken. His last appeal was most impressive. Yet at the conclusion of the service, in spite of my firm resolution, which had been strengthened by the powerful discourse of the evening, I began to hesitate; the keeping away from home was so difficult. My Christian friends were waiting to accompany me on the way to my home, and the devil suggested that I

might quietly go away with them. But the Lord was dealing with me mercifully, and was taking me as a brand out of the fire (Zech. iii. 2). Mr. Taylor, who stood at the door, asked me, "Are you coming?" I immediately answered "Yes." This good man was like the angel who appeared to Peter in prison and bade him follow him. I accompanied Mr. Taylor to his bungalow. Then I felt as if the load of sin and sorrow that oppressed me had suddenly dropped off, and unspeakable joy filled my heart. I read and prayed, then lay on my bed a-thinking. I had put out the lamp, but still the room appeared to be full of light; and one like the Son of God, arrayed in glory, I thought, came to me as to a friend, and a sense of perfect safety and peace possessed my soul. I felt refreshed and happy, as the weary wanderer who has been pinched with cold and hunger does when he finds rest and shelter in his home. Light and joy almost overwhelmed me, and I was lost in blessedness. The experience of this night was unique, and the memory of it will never die. The vision of God then given was a dim reflection of that which the children of God enjoy in heaven. I was indeed standing on Pisgah or on the Mount of Transfiguration, or I was in the land of Beulah. "He brought me to the banqueting-house, and His banner over me was love" (Song of Solomon, ii. 4). I had several such visions in those days, but none so glorious as

this. I have no copies of letters written to friends at this time, but I find an extract from one of them published in Mr. Spurgeon's "Feathers for Arrows," which I may here transcribe:—"How I long for my bed—not that I may sleep, for I lie awake often and long—but to hold sweet communion with my God. What shall I render unto Him for all His revelations and gifts to me? Was there no historical evidence of the truths of Christianity, were there no well-established miracles, still I should believe that the religion propagated by the fishermen of Galilee is divine. The holy joy it brings to me must be from heaven. Do I write boastingly, brother? Nay, it is with tears of humble gratitude that I tell of the goodness of the Lord."

Mr. Nesbit, who saw some of my letters, wrote to me:—"We give unceasing thanks to God for all His goodness to you. I have read most of your letters with great interest and pleasure; but the one that gave me most delight was that in which, previous to your baptism, you spoke of your delighting in God, meditating on Him in the night-watches, and holding sweet and satisfying communion with him. Your experience and David's are the same (Ps. lxxiii. 5-8). I always wish young converts such experiences of holy joy. They are to them not only the shortest and surest proofs of Christianity, but they make them miserable afterwards when they go

astray in sin or carelessness and lose their sense of the Divine presence. I bless God for the guiding light you had. May you ever remember your privileges, and strive to attain to the height of them. You glorified God and enjoyed Him in the most sensible manner; you may again and again. Let your soul still follow after Him, and His right hand will uphold you."

These experiences proved most useful to me at the time of the severe trials that awaited me; they stirred up my love and zeal, and enabled me to overcome the weakness of the flesh.

Though I had perfect peace and rest, my relatives were in great distress. My mother, on finding that I had not returned home, at once sent for my uncle; and he with a few friends called at Mr. Beynon's, who lived out of the town, to inquire about me. By this time it was very late at night, and the gate of the fort was closed, and they could not come for me to Mr. Taylor's bungalow. Next morning, however, my mother came along with all my brothers and sisters, that she might persuade me to go home. This first meeting was most painful; it is impossible to describe it. Only God supported me. Somehow the earnest pleadings of my dear ones did not at the time affect me much; I remained calm. When all their persuasions had been unavailing, my poor mother burst forth into loud wailings, pronouncing

imprecations on Mr. Taylor and me. I still have a vivid recollection of the terrible scene. But when my relations went away, my firmness was gone, and I could not restrain my tears. I shut myself up in my chamber, and prayed earnestly to my Father in heaven for my beloved ones. Captain Phayre, who was present at Mr. Taylor's, expressed great sympathy for me, and gave me comfort by quoting passages from the Scriptures, and by referring to his own experience at the time when he yielded his heart to the Lord and gave up the world.

Every day people came from our house to see me, and on the fourth day after my separation my dear mother sent my clothes. About this I find the following note in my diary:—"To-day my dear mother sent me my clothes, and, what is to me more pleasing, she sent me a message of love. She asked me not to grieve further, but to be comfortable and happy where I am."

She also sent me money, and promised to send more. On the same page I have written across this verse, "If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour" (John xii. 26).

On the 18th I wrote to the *Dharmketu*, a Bombay Marathi newspaper, a long letter communicating the intelligence of my open renunciation of Hinduism, and the reasons for this step, which the editor kindly published verbatim without any comment. The pub-

lication of this letter spread the tidings far and wide, and the other newspapers noticed it in their own way. Dr. Wilson wrote to me :—"Much is said about you here, but the natives admit your sincerity and capacity of judgment. I am glad to say many youths in our Institution approve of your proceedings. Full Christian obedience on our part is the most effective argument with all our friends."

I will make a few extracts from the meditations which I wrote about this time :—"O God, I am one of Thy children. May I realise more and more that I am one of the invisible flock of Jesus. May I have a growing idea of the kingdom of Christ, and my participation in its peace and imperishable glories." "Oh, my soul, rejoice that thou hast thus found the privilege of holding communion with thy Creator. Ignorant idolaters know nothing of the riches of Christ's grace; do thou feel compassion for them; pray for them, weep for them! Strive to show thyself to them as a living trophy of the power of the Gospel, that they may emulate thy happy condition, and seek the priceless treasures of the Lord Jesus."

"Oh, how happy I am! Christ has obtained the pardon of my sins; He has died for me; He has secured righteousness for me. I am not afraid now of being called into judgment for my iniquities. I know that I have a Mediator, and that He is pleading for me. My Saviour will lead me through this

world of temptation and sin, as a father guides his child. I will make Him my guide and teacher in all things. O Jesus, the Holy One of God, give me thy Holy Spirit, the Almighty Comforter. May I submit to His teachings, and be fashioned anew in all virtue and goodness, that I may experience fully what it is to be a new creature !”

My mother called again on the 18th to see me, and entreated me to go home ; but this time she was calm. My wife also sent me a message that she would be happy to go with me to Bombay.

My father came from the districts, and sent me a request to go home to see him. Mr. Taylor thought it would be unsafe to do so before my baptism, and I therefore asked him to do me the favour of giving me an interview at the Mission-house. He came two days after, early in the morning, and sent the driver to call me. He took me into the carriage and wept. After a few minutes he ordered the coachman to drive the carriage homewards. I was somewhat alarmed, but I restrained myself, and determined to go home. The people at home had no previous intimation of my visit, and they were all in bed when we arrived. My father awoke them, and strictly forbade them to make any loud lamentations. In the meantime I was directed to write a note to Mr. Taylor to inform him of my visit to my relations, and of my intention to return in the evening. Mr.

Taylor called at ten o'clock on his way to school, and saw that I was quite safe. A nice breakfast was prepared for me, which was served me in a separate room by my wife; and when she saw that I began to eat without changing my dress and wearing the sacred garments, she meekly asked, "How can food be relished with such garments on?"

Some friends called to see me, but I did not talk with them. I spent my time in reading the Bible, praying, and writing letters to my friends in Bombay. As promised, my father sent me back to Mr. Taylor in the evening. After this I often went to see my relatives.

It is impossible to commend adequately the judicious dealings of my parents with me after my separation from them. They did not use violence of any kind, as has been done in the case of many converts; and their conduct deserves to be followed by those who create a disturbance on the occasion of a conversion, and seek to restrain the liberty of their relatives who seek to follow out their convictions.

Mr. Taylor put off my baptism till he had heard from my teachers in Bombay, whose instruction had proved so beneficial to me; and the Missionaries had cordially consented to the rite being administered by that good man. Dr. Wilson wrote to me a long letter, in which he said, "We are united in our judgment of what, with the help of God, you should

immediately do; that is, 'Come out and be separate.' You cannot be too soon in the visible fold of Christ, having, we trust, already entered that which is invisible. You will be able to preach more advantageously to your parents from Christian than from equivocal ground. Your public profession of the truth will be blessed to give peace to your own soul. There can be no peace while we do not fully follow the Lord. If there were, we should often secure ourselves in that which is wrong. Don't be afraid of them who can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. The grace of Christ is sufficient for you. As your day is, so will you find your strength to be. I can testify this from blessed experience."

My relations did not manifest any great sorrow now that I used to visit them, for they fully expected me to return to them permanently after my enthusiasm had abated. They were sanguine that the people of our caste would not object to restore me to caste privileges, and that Shankaracharya would absolve me from the guilt of defilement. Crowds from the town came every day to see and converse with me; and when I went with Mr. Taylor in his conveyance to church, there would be troops of people behind our carriage all the way from the bungalow to the church-door. They seemed to take me for some strange creature that had come from another sphere.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MY BAPTISM.

AT last the day of my baptism was fixed, and my father was apprised of it. He asked me if I had to pay any fee to the Padri Sahib for the performance of the rite. He did not say this in jest, but quite seriously. He offered to attend the ceremony. But when the day arrived, my bitterest trials commenced. Early in the morning my father requested me to see him; but I could not comply, as I had purposed to spend this momentous period of my life in holy meditation and close communion with my God. Then he sent a request that the baptism should be postponed. I wrote and asked the reason of this suggestion. He gave no reason, but ordered me to visit him. In this way several notes passed between us, and much time was wasted, and my mind was greatly disturbed. But I would not have the day changed. At the evening service Mr. Beynon preached, and Mr. Taylor then administered the sacred rite. A large number of people came from the town to witness the ceremony, though it was raining at the time. I had prepared two state-

ments, one in English, the other in Marathi; the former of which was read by Mr. Beynon, and the latter by me. I received this message from home: "You have entered into light, but we are groping in darkness." My mother made great lamentation, for she had hopes of my return until my baptism took place; but now all her hopes were blasted.

I made it a point to visit my relations regularly, and when I expressed a desire to go back to the college at Bombay, my father objected, on the ground that I ought to write a book for his enlightenment before leaving him. I wrote one in the space of two months, which was published with the title of "A comparison of Hinduism and Christianity." It was composed in the form of a dialogue between a father and a son, in which the converted son gives his reasons for embracing Christianity. When it was being prepared, it was read to my father, who made suitable suggestions. While I was writing this, I found time also to prepare another small work, a conversation between Death and the Soul, which was first published in the *Dnyānodaya*, and then printed in the form of a small tract. These books were published by the Bombay Tract and Book Society.

As soon as my father-in-law heard of my conversion, he set out for Belgaum with one of his sons-in-law. Before his arrival my father had en-

treated my wife to join me, and I also strove hard to incline her mind to this. She showed her willingness to come to me; and, to assure me of her sincerity, she once drank water which had been touched by me. She had thus broken her caste. But my father was unwilling openly to take the responsibility of sending her to me, and therefore suggested that she should go to the Mission-house during his absence in the districts. Her father, however, carried her off the very day she was to have come to me, and our plans were all disappointed. My father-in-law was a very superstitious man, and I could not go to our house till my father had returned; and then too I could call only at certain fixed times, for he objected to see me before he had performed his morning ablutions, worshipped the gods, and taken his early meal. At the first meeting he expressed sorrow at what happened, and then with an angry look he commenced to scold me, in which my brother-in-law joined with energy. In fact, it was the latter who set my father-in-law against me and poisoned my wife's mind, so that she consented to go to Bombay with them. I found opportunities of speaking with her late at night after my father-in-law had gone to sleep, but she persisted in stating that she would join me in Bombay. My father was much grieved at the sad turn affairs had taken, and even openly advised my father-in-law to

let my wife come to me. But the man was obstinate. I quote a few sentences from a letter I wrote to my father on the subject:—

“You need not reproach yourself for having delayed to send my wife to me, nor do I so. I have been faithful to my resolutions. I trust and hope in the God for whom I have separated myself from father, mother, brother, sister, and wife. I do not grieve for myself, but for my wife, that she is unwilling to come to me. I feel sad that her life should be spent in widowhood and ignorance. Her separation from me will not diminish my happiness, for the God who gave His Son to die for me will not allow my mind to be unhappy. I counted the cost long before I joined the Christian Church. Christ plainly declares, that he who leaves all for His sake shall have a hundredfold in this life with persecutions, and in the world to come everlasting life. Such is the consolation which a Christian feels; and I earnestly hope that you may be enabled to experience the same in the time of difficulty and sorrow.”

I may briefly anticipate the events that took place after my wife went to Bombay. I tried in every possible way to have access to her, in order to find out her real state of mind, but I was prevented from approaching her by her father and other relatives. Her father would not even reply to my repeated communications. I learnt, however, that she was

secretly willing to join me, but had been prevented by her friends. In this way I strove hard for four years; after which I thought it best to have an interview with her through the Supreme (now the High) Court of Bombay. As soon as the writ of Habeas Corpus was served upon her father, she was assiduously trained to refuse in the court to come to me. Sir Matthew Sausse was the judge before whom the inquiry was made, and I was given half-an-hour to persuade her, but she would not consent. When we came out of the chambers, my solicitor repeated this Scriptural passage to me for my comfort, "If the unbelieving depart, let him depart." I had to expend about 200 rupees on this suit. This amount I had obtained by the sale of my "*Story of Yamunā*," which describes the sufferings of Hindu widows.

Three years later (in 1860), I was married to a Christian wife. Two years afterwards my first wife suddenly appeared at the house of a dear Christian brother, the Rev. G. R. Navalkar, where I had put up in Bombay, as I then generally resided at Poona. She insisted upon my taking her back, as she declared that her brother and others who protected her were dead, and she was free to come to me. I told her it was impossible for me now to recognise the old relationship, as I could not, according to my religion, have two wives. As she was most persistent, I asked her to come the next day, when I might

be able to decide the matter. She came the next day, and my dear Christian brother, the Rev. Dhanjibhai Nauroji and myself told her that she could not now look upon me as her husband, as I had another wife, but that, if she chose, she might come and live in some Christian family, and I would support her, and educate her for some useful work, and if she chose afterwards to embrace Christianity and marry, she would be at perfect liberty to do so. But she would not consent to this arrangement. After a long interview she left us, evidently very sorrowful. She is now dead. Her surviving relations have long since been reconciled to me, and frequently visit me.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN BELGAUM, AFTER MY BAPTISM.

I LIVED in Mr. Taylor's family for three months, and the members of it were most kind to me. I improved both in body and mind. Faith was confirmed and invigorated. Indeed, the young Christian convert is like a tender plant, which requires the utmost care of the husbandman. Some words which I heard Dr. Murray Mitchell quote in his class from Archbishop Leighton dwelt continually in my memory, and in my own experience I found them to be most true. They are these:—"The grace of God in the heart of man is a tender plant in a strange unkindly soil, and therefore cannot well prosper and grow without much care and pains, and that of a skilful hand, which hath the art of cherishing it." The living, personal illustration of Christian graces, as every day seen in the life of Mr. Taylor and his excellent lady, was most useful to me; my spiritual life took a turn from it. Mr. Taylor's prayers were most precious. He would pray for his children and grandchildren by name; and while praying for an additional measure of grace to those who were

walking in the path of duty, he earnestly pleaded for those who had not surrendered their souls to the Saviour. Once he read to me a letter which he had received from a grandson of his who had been converted at college, and he expressed the greatest pleasure and thankfulness. How exultingly he breathed his grateful praises at the family altar! This grandson, the Hon. Justice H. Birdwood, has since become a most consistent Christian and an ornament to the Church. Once I had a slight attack of illness, and Mr. Taylor was most tender in his sympathy and help. In short, he acted towards me like a kind and tender parent, and thus comforted Christ's little one who had been orphaned for the Saviour's sake.

I was also much benefited by my intercourse with Mr. and Mrs. Beynon and the native Christians of Belgaum. Some of the latter were earnest men, glorifying the Saviour in their lives, and they proved the truth of the hundredfold return which the Lord has promised to those who renounce the world for His name's sake. These dear brethren, too, had suffered the loss of all things for the Master; and yet how humble and patient they were, living in spiritual liberty and mutual love!

CHAPTER XX.

RETURN TO STUDY IN BOMBAY.

I DESIRED to qualify myself for future usefulness in the service of the Lord, who had redeemed me; and as there were no suitable arrangements existing at Belgaum in the London Mission for acquiring this fitness, I resolved, with my father's permission, to go to Bombay. It was hard for my poor mother to consent to the separation; she declared that though I was a Christian, she would like me to be near her. But she did not understand how injurious to her and to me such proximity must be. She lamented my baptism every time she saw me, and it pained me to see her fret. Before I left Belgaum, I had gone to live in my father's house, where I had been given a separate room. My dear mother supplied me with all requisites for the journey, and sent me in the family conveyance as far as the seaport where I was to embark for Bombay. I was also provided with a handsome sum as pocket-money. Mr. Taylor manifested all a parent's tenderness at parting. He pressed me to his heart and wept, and gave me his parental benediction in most touching words. The

prayer was long and impressive. My dear parents and all the other members of the family, together with the domestics, came with me beyond the limits of the town; and when I urged them to return, they, one and all, pressed me to go back with them. This was another time of intense suffering; it was hard to tear myself from them. Young and old implored me earnestly to go back with them. God upheld me, and my resolution was not shaken. I there and then openly prayed for all of them, and then bade them farewell.

On board the steamer on which I got at Vingorla I had the congenial society of a Parsi gentleman and his son, who having learnt that I was a Christian, asked me to eat with them. Some Roman Catholic traders were equally hospitable and friendly. None of them would take remuneration for their hospitality; but I handed to the son of the Parsi merchant the sweets that my mother had given me. In this journey I experienced the truth of the words, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He prepareth a table for me in the presence of my enemies."

I met a cordial reception from all the members of the Mission. Mr. Nesbit, who could not personally welcome me, as he was busy in preparing for the public service, that day being Sunday, sent me the following note:—

“My dear Baba, with much joy and thankfulness I welcome you to Bombay. May our intercourse be abundantly blessed, and greatly profitable to you and to us! Since hearing of your arrival, I have been preparing to preach, and I go to service at the jail; otherwise I should have come to see you.”

I put up with Mr. Narayan Sheshadri, who was formerly my teacher, and now my Christian brother. It was a most happy circumstance that I first of all lived in this good brother's family; and my father also was greatly pleased. Not only were all my bodily wants most carefully supplied, but I had the beautiful example of Christian life ever before me.

CHAPTER XXI.

KIND FEELINGS OF MY RELATIVES AND FRIENDS.

THERE are many people who imagine that the man who embraces Christianity becomes quite estranged from his own people; but it is not so. His Hindu relations for some time are annoyed and keep aloof from him, but generally in course of time they become reconciled to him. Many of the offended relatives believe in destiny, and regard the convert's adoption of Christianity as a thing decreed by God, so that he is not responsible for his proceedings. But there are a few others who take a higher view of the matter, and declare that he has not done anything wrong; he has not committed theft or any other immorality, and therefore he is not to be condemned. He has simply erred, if he has erred, in sentiment. They think that, like ascetics, who renounce the pleasures and the worrying duties of life and take to a life of poverty and celibacy from religious motives, so the Christian convert has renounced his original faith to follow another which he considers better. Reasoning

in this way, non-Christian relations come to satisfy their minds.

My father took this view of my case, and continued to regard me with affection. Any improvement that took place in my circumstances cheered him, and when I was ordained a minister of the Gospel, he felt quite proud. I twice visited him afterwards at Belgaum, and though I lived in a separate house, still he spoke of me with pride to his friends and acquaintances. He gave me free permission to pray and read the Bible with the members of his family. He took great care not to offend my religious principles, and had a tender regard for my conscientious scruples. When once travelling with him, he halted on two Sabbaths, as it was against my religion to work on those days, and did not grudge to pay extra hire to the cart-drivers. When we halted at any place for our meals, he would not disturb me when engaged in prayer, but would wait till my exercises were over. On Sunday he did not talk with me on secular matters. He sent me 100 rupees on the occasion of my Christian marriage, and offered to support my Hindu wife, if she went and lived with them. I also was helped by God to act towards him as a dutiful son; and he was convinced that our religion is a holy religion, faith in which exalts and purifies man's nature. And he believed also that Christian prayer is very powerful.

My uncle, who was at first much offended, became also reconciled to me; and when I lived at Poona, where he was now employed, he came often to see me, and invited me and my wife to an entertainment in honour of my recent marriage. A few of his Hindu friends also were present on the occasion. I was forbidden to see my sisters who lived in Bombay, by their husbands and other relations. Gradually, however, I was freely received into their houses, and kindly entertained. A great many of the people of my caste showed the same liberal feelings. My other Hindu friends—especially my college companions—showed a largeness of mind and heart that was most praiseworthy; and some of them manifested quite a fraternal affection. My change of religion did not in any way abate their friendship and regard.*

In conclusion, I beg to observe that this detailed

* With regard to the feeling of the Hindus, Mr. Nesbit wrote as follows:—"His native friends have shown nothing but respect. Indeed the native newspapers either hold a respectful silence, or give a respectful notice. His character was so high before his baptism that they dare not touch it now."

A short time afterwards Mr. Nesbit wrote thus: "The conversion and baptism of Baba Padmanji has had, I think, a quickening influence on the natives of this city and elsewhere. Happily, Parsis are coming forward as well as other natives. If that section of the inhabitants of Western India were to a considerable extent converted, they would, through Divine grace, exert a mighty influence on the whole population." Most true; but as yet this interesting people seem content when they can more and more refine their creed into a system of mere theism.—*Edit.*

account of my early life has not been written to gratify any literary or historical curiosity on the part of my readers, but solely that they may see the wonderful way in which God in His goodness "delivered me from the power of darkness, and translated me into the kingdom of His dear Son." My Christian brethren will not fail to observe in all this, God's great mercy and benevolence, and they will join with me in laying humbly at His feet heartfelt offerings of love and praise. My non-Christian countrymen will see how great is the power of Christianity in changing the heart of sinful man; how Christian truth, when once it becomes influential in the mind, renovates and sanctifies it, whatever may have been its original condition, and crowns feeble man with superhuman power to overcome the greatest obstacles in the path of duty. Those who only appreciate intellectually the worth of Jesus, and have not offered Him their hearts, cannot experience the peace and power which He bestows; and such of my dear friends as may have only head-religion and mere intellectual convictions, must seek something deeper and more substantial, otherwise they will not be benefited by the Saviour. And the Saviour is ever ready to impart His choicest blessings to every earnest suppliant. He emphatically declares, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." The truth of this declaration

will be found demonstrated by many facts recorded in this book.

Am I not a happy man? Yes, a most blessed man, in spite of my imperfect obedience and feeble resolutions. Who will deny it who knows and understands the value of these blessings—the forgiveness of sin, a heart that can overcome sin, the power of doing right and serving God, and eternal blessedness after death? Even now I have Christ, and intimate communion with Him, who is the fountain of all true happiness.

“Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
(Rev. i. 5, 6.)

APPENDIX.

A.

BRIEF SKETCH OF MY WORK FROM 1854 TO 1889.*

AFTER my baptism in 1854 at Belgaum I returned to Bombay; but, before I did so, my father asked me to write a book in Marathi stating the reasons for my embracing Christianity. I complied with his desire, and wrote in two months' time my first Christian work. It was entitled "A Comparison of Hinduism and Christianity."

In Bombay I resumed my work as a teacher and a student in the Institution. I was soon enrolled as a divinity student, but ill-health obliged me to give up all study, and I went to reside at Poona in 1860. Here I was married, and remained for sixteen years. For some time I was engaged as a teacher in connection with the Free Church Mission of Poona. In 1867 I was ordained pastor of the native congregation belonging to the Mission. In 1873 I had to give up this work owing to a difference in ecclesiastical matters, and for three years I was occupied in the work of book-writing.

* Mr. Edmanji has kindly, at our request, supplied for this edition this rapid sketch of his employments since his baptism.—*Edit.*

The works I prepared at this time were chiefly two dictionaries — one being Marathi-English, an abridgment of Molesworth's elaborate work, and the other English-Marathi, an abridgment of Candy's valuable dictionary. I also prepared commentaries on the Book of Genesis and the New Testament. I also prepared several books for the Christian Vernacular Education Society.

I twice visited my father at Belgaum, the place of my first and second birth. Once I did so to get him out of official difficulties. I succeeded, by the help of God, in getting him restored to the post from which he had been dismissed. This had been entirely through misrepresentations. But the Lord had mercy on him; he was not only honourably restored to his office, but fully pensioned. My helping him in the time of his great trial made a deep impression upon his mind, and convinced him of the benevolent character of Christianity. He became very tractable, and listened with serious attention to my teaching. I was with him at the time of his death, which took place in Poona in 1874. He allowed me to pray while he was passing away, and he showed by outward signs that he departed in faith.

In 1877 I had a call for work both from the Bible Society and the Tract Society of Bombay, which I accepted. I am still in connection with the Bible Society. My work is to carry through the press the editions of the Marathi Bible, and of separate portions of it. I prepared for this Society an edition of the Marathi Bible with revised paragraphs and headings; I am a member of the Translation Committee of this Society. My work in connection with the Tract Society was to write original tracts and books, make translations of

English works, revise and carry through the press new editions of old tracts and books, and editions of new ones accepted by the Society for publication.

In 1888 the Tract Society dispensed with my services for reasons given in the letter given below.* Since that time I have been engaged in literary work on my own account, such as revising and reprinting my dictionaries and composing some new books. I write very often for the *Dnyānodaya* articles on religion, defending Christianity from the attacks of non-Christian writers. I preach occasionally in the native churches in Bombay belonging to the American Board, the Episcopal Methodist, and the Free Church Missions.

* MY DEAR MR. BABA FADMANJI,—The Committee of the Bombay Tract and Book Society are very unwilling that you or any one else should infer from the proposed action regarding the editorship, that they have not a high estimate of the services you have rendered the Society. There can be no question that your services are very valuable—too valuable to be measured by any pecuniary stipend. Your pen is consecrated to the Lord Jesus, and will doubtless be employed in His cause while God shall give you strength.

But in the presence of a large indebtedness, the Committee have found themselves necessitated to reduce expenditure by suspending in a measure vernacular printing; and as your relation to the Society as a Marathi editor runs parallel with vernacular printing, they thought it advisable at this juncture to entertain the thought of relieving you from the editorship. . . .

At the request of the Committee and in their name I address you, and am, my dear Baba, yours very faithfully,

(Signed) GEO. BOWEN.

BOMBAY, *January 11*, 1888.

B.

LIST OF TRACTS AND BOOKS COMPOSED BY
MR. BABA PADMANJL.I.—*Published by the Tract and Book Society of Bombay.*

1. Prize Essay on Female Education.
2. Prize Essay on Hindu Festivals.
3. Ātmârâmpant and the Angel of Death.
4. Comparison of Hinduism and Christianity. 93 pp.
12mo.

5. Comparison of Krishna and Christ.
6. Comparison of Hindu and Christian Life.
7. What is in the Veda?
8. What is in the Satya Veda? (i.e., true Veda).*

Part I.

9. What is in the Satya Veda? Part II.
10. Commentary on the Book of Genesis. Pp. 250.
(Transl.)
11. Annotated New Testament. 1455 pp. (Partly
translated, partly compiled.)
12. Garland of Christian Doctrines. 108 pp. 12mo.
13. Manual of Christian Duties. 85 pp.
14. Daybreak in Great Britain. 125 pp. (Transl.)
15. Manual of Hinduism. Part I.*
16. Manual of Hinduism. Part II.
17. Heaven; as it is described in the Hindu and
Christian Scriptures.
18. Life of Christ. 383 pp. 8vo. (Compiled.)

* Although the language in which it is written is hardly known at
of India, this valuable work has attracted the notice of some Oriental
scholars in Europe. It ought to be translated into English.—*Edit.*

19. Select Sermons. 214 pp. (*Transl.*)
20. Beatitudes of the Kingdom.* 260 pp. (*Transl.*)
21. Dialogue on Idolatry. 100 pp.
22. A Few Discriminative Thoughts on Caste. 72 pp.
23. Examination of the Claims of Deism. 180 pp.
24. The Opening of the Prison. (*Transl.*)
25. Doubts Resolved. (*Transl.*)
26. Naranâyak : a Story Based on the Parable of the Prodigal Son. 91 pp.
27. Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation. 152 pp. (*Transl.*)
28. Pilgrimage to Nâsik.
29. The Sins of our Holy Things borne by Christ. (*Transl.*)
30. The god Ganpati.
31. Pilgrimage to Pandharpûr.
32. Wanderings of Yamunâbâi ; or Narrative of Hindu Widow Life. 167 pp., 2nd edition.
33. Arunodaya (Autobiography of Bâoa Padmanji). 411 pp. 8vo.
34. Richard Baxter. A Lecture. 23 pp.

II.—*Published by the Author.*

35. Sahitya Shatak ; or One Hundred Helps. (*Quotations from various Hindu writers.*)
36. Compendium of Molesworth's Marathi-English Dictionary. 620 pp. 8vo. 4th edition.
37. Compendium of Candy's English-Marathi Dictionary. 668 pp. 3rd edition.
38. Shabd Ratnâvalî. (*Drawn up on the same plan as Roget's Thesaurus.*)
39. Difficulties of Indian Authors.

* Translation of a work by Principal Dykes.

40. Exils of Licentiousness.

41. The Communicant's Companion. (*Transl.*)

42. The Watchman's Voice. (*Transl.*) (A work designed to bring the claims of Christianity before the minds of the Jews. Written in English by a Jewish convert of the Mission.)

43. Address to the Inhabitants of Purandar Zilla. (*Transl.*) (This refers to the missionary life of a devoted Missionary, the Rev. Adam White, the last years of whose life were spent among the people of the Purandar Zilla.)

III.—*Prepared for the Christian Vernacular Education Society.*

44-46. Reading Books II., IV., and Sequel to Book III. (*Transl.*)

47, 48. Hints on Education. Parts I. and II.

49. A Short History of Mahârâshtra.

50. India in Vedic Times.* (*Transl.*)

51. Reading Books for Girls.

IV. *Published by the Dakshinâ Prize Committee†*

52. Nibaud Mnâlâ. (A Series of Essays, original and translated.)

53. Hindu Domestic Reform.

* This, I believe, is the translation of a little treatise by Dr. Wilson.
—*Edit.*

† The word *Dakshinâ* means money given to Brahmans. Large sums were annually disbursed at Poona by the later Maratha sovereigns to the Brahmans simply, as Brahmans. Under the British rule part of this money has been handed over to a Committee—called the Dakshinâ Prize Committee—which has for its object the encouragement of native authorship. Some valuable books have been published under its patronage.—*Edit.*

V.—Periodicals

- 54–65. Satya Dîpikâ (Lamp of Truth.) 12 vols.
(Edited for the Christian Vernacular Education Society.)
- 66–70. Satya Dîpikâ. (Enlarged size. 5 vols.)
(Published by the author.)
- 71, 72. Satya Wâdî. 2 vols. *(Published by the author.)*
73. Kutumbmitra (Family Friend). A monthly publication for the Tract and Book Society. 2 vols.

THE SHAKTA WORSHIP.

The worship referred to on p. 6 is the most lamentable of all the strange delusions of Hinduism. Orthodox Hinduism rests on the “eternal” Vedas, along with which it usually classes the six philosophical schools and the eighteen Puranas as fully authoritative. But there are later writings, called Tantras, which run into the wildest mysticism and magic. They inculcate the worship of the wives of the deities—the female deity being called the *shakti*—literally, the power of the god. Some of the Tantras are simply dark as midnight—incomprehensible. But the “left hand” section of them is characterised by frightful, almost inconceivable, immorality. We need not dwell on this dreadful subject. Even the brief reference given to it on p. 6 will indicate to the thoughtful reader a moral abyss into which he will hardly care to look.

In connection with this system it is very remarkable that many who profess in public to be orthodox Hindus

violate in their secret assemblies the most distinctive precepts of Hinduism, and this, it would appear, without any qualms of conscience. They boast of being truly enlightened, and those who are not initiated into the dreadful Shakta mysteries are designated "beasts."
—*Edit.*

D.

SHOULD MISSIONARIES BE MARRIED?

In a letter recently received, Mr. Padmanji takes occasion to express his strong convictions on a question which has been a good deal canvassed of late. After speaking of the motherly affection which was shown him from the very outset by the wives of the Missionaries, Mr. Padmanji goes on to say:—

"Such were Mrs. Nesbit, Mrs. Wilson, and Mrs. Murray Mitchell.—I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that India requires married missionaries—men whose wives are filled with the spirit of the Master, serving Him in His people, especially His little ones, newly born, newly converted. They are most useful in building up the Church, and also in inviting those without to enter into the fold of the Lord."—*Edit.*