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THE HISTORY

OF

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CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE

CHRISTIAN ERA.

464

BY THE

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PERPETUAL CURATE OF HAM:

LATE CHAPLAIN TO THE HONOURABLE EAST-INDIA COMPANY AT MADRAS.

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CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 25. Lord Clive concludes peace with the Native Powers - - - - - | 16 |
| 26. Present state of the Mission - - - - - | 17 |
| 27. Conversion of a Jew - - - - - | 17 |
| 28. Public benefit of the Schools - - - - - | 19 |

SECOND DECADE. 1767—1776.

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Commencement of a new Church - - - - - | 19 |
| 2. Conversion of M. Bento, a Romish Priest - - - - - | 20 |
| 3. Bento's employment in the Mission - - - - - | 20 |
| 4. Romanists' opposition unavailing - - - - - | 21 |
| 5. Promising cases of Conversion - - - - - | 22 |
| 6. Grievous famine in 1770. Mission preserved from its effects - - - | 23 |
| 7. Completion of the new Church - - - - - | 24 |
| 8. Conversion of F. J. Hanson, a Romish Priest - - - - - | 24 |
| 9. Conversion of another Priest, M. J. Ramalhete - - - - - | 26 |
| 10. Satisfactory conversions - - - - - | 27 |
| 11. Mrs. Kiernander's death. Her bequest to the Mission - - - - - | 28 |
| 12. Romanists' reasons for not following their convictions - - - - - | 28 |
| 13. A new Missionary arrives at Calcutta - - - - - | 29 |
| 14. Difficulty in obtaining suitable Teachers - - - - - | 29 |
| 15. Desecration of the Lord's Day in Calcutta. Good result from honouring it - - - - - | 30 |
| 16. Conversion of a Persian Scholar - - - - - | 31 |
| 17. Conversion of a Romanist and his household - - - - - | 32 |
| 18. Two other Romish Converts - - - - - | 33 |
| 19. Mission Cemetery—Alms Houses—Endowments - - - - - | 34 |
| 20. Sickness of the Missionaries - - - - - | 34 |

THIRD DECADE. 1777—1786.

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Two Missionaries from Tranquebar - - - - - | 35 |
| 2. Improvement in the Christians - - - - - | 35 |
| 3. A Convert from Cochin China - - - - - | 36 |
| 4. Contributions to the Mission and Charity Fund - - - - - | 37 |
| 5. Military Orphan Asylum - - - - - | 38 |
| 6. State of the Mission - - - - - | 38 |

FOURTH DECADE. 1787—1796.

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. M. Kiernander's liberality - - - - - | 39 |
| 2. His pecuniary embarrassments - - - - - | 39 |
| 3. He retires from Calcutta - - - - - | 40 |
| 4. Committee of Management for the Mission - - - - - | 41 |
| 5. Rev. A. T. Clarke sails for Calcutta - - - - - | 42 |
| 6. Rev. D. Brown's attention to the Mission - - - - - | 42 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 7. Establishes a School for the Native Orphans | 43 |
| 8. Conversion of a Teacher | 44 |
| 9. Mr. Brown quits the Asylum for the Mission | 44 |
| 10. His proposal for a Mission in Bengal and Bahar | 45 |
| 11. Governor-General declines to sanction it | 46 |
| 12. Circulated in India and England | 46 |
| 13. Rev. A. T. Clarke arrives and begins his work | 47 |
| 14. He is appointed Superintendant of the Free School | 47 |
| 15. Another Missionary required | 48 |
| 16. Mr. Clarke accepts a Chaplaincy and quits Calcutta | 49 |
| 17. Mr. Brown re-occupies the Mission Church | 49 |
| 18. Enlargement of the Church | 51 |
| 19. Testimonies to Messrs. Chambers and Grant | 51 |
| 20. Mr. Brown appointed to the Government Church | 53 |
| 21. Improvement in the Mission Congregation | 55 |
| 22. Mr. Brown over-worked, without hope of relief from home | 56 |
| 23. He protests against all compliance with Hindoo superstitions | 56 |
| 24. Erection of St John's Church, Calcutta | 58 |
| 25. Establishment of Public Institutions | 61 |

FIFTH DECADE. 1797—1806.

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. M. Ringletaube's arrival at Calcutta | 62 |
| 2. Return of Kiernander to Calcutta | 62 |
| 3. Kiernander's Letter to Ringletaube. His death | 64 |
| 4. Ringletaube abandons the Mission | 65 |
| 5. Two Chaplains take charge of it | 67 |
| 6. Special Prayer for the diffusion of the Gospel | 67 |
| 7. Native Flock improves under a converted Romish Priest | 68 |
| 8. Earl Mornington, the Governor-General, promotes reformation of manners | 70 |
| 9. Public Thanksgiving for the triumph in Mysore | 72 |
| 10. Design of the College of Fort William | 74 |
| 11. Established by Minute in Council | 75 |
| 12. Public Disputations at the First Anniversary | 76 |
| 13. Order from home to abolish the College suspended | 77 |
| 14. Injurious consequences of this order | 77 |
| 15. Beneficial influence of the College | 78 |
| 16. Order for its dissolution countermanded | 78 |
| 17. Institution of a Charitable Fund | 79 |
| 18. Institution of Bengal Civil Fund | 81 |
| 19. Activity of the College Press | 82 |
| 20. Prejudices against the Translation of the Scriptures | 82 |
| 21. First Translations of Scripture from the College Press | 83 |
| 22. Chinese Class, and Translation of Scripture | 84 |
| 23. Sir George Barlow's testimony to the benefit of the College | 85 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 24. Orders for the reduction of the College - - - - - | 86 |
| 25. The Provost offers his gratuitous services - - - - - | 87 |
| 26. The College reduced - - - - - | 87 |
| 27. Evil consequences of its reduction - - - - - | 87 |
| 28. The benefits that have accrued from its operations - - - - - | 88 |
| 29. Pecuniary difficulties of Mission Church relieved - - - - - | 89 |
| 30. Arrival of four new Chaplains - - - - - | 90 |

CHAPTER II.

BAPTIST MISSION IN BENGAL. 1793—1806.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Mr. Thomas's first voyage to Calcutta - - - - - | 92 |
| 2. His second voyage to Calcutta - - - - - | 93 |
| 3. Establishment of the Baptist Missionary Society - - - - - | 95 |
| 4. Messrs. Thomas and Carey their first Missionaries - - - - - | 95 |
| 5. Their arrival in India - - - - - | 96 |
| 6. Undertake the superintendence of two indigo factories - - - - - | 97 |
| 7. The propriety of this undertaking questioned - - - - - | 97 |
| 8. They commence their secular and Missionary Work - - - - - | 98 |
| 9. They meet with impediments - - - - - | 99 |
| 10. Their preaching and attention to the Natives - - - - - | 100 |
| 11. Instance of oppression detected - - - - - | 101 |
| 12. Effect of their exertions - - - - - | 101 |
| 13. Arrival of another Missionary - - - - - | 101 |
| 14. Journey to Bootan - - - - - | 102 |
| 15. Opening at Dinagepoor - - - - - | 102 |
| 16. Four Missionaries arrive. Their object suspected - - - - - | 103 |
| 17. Their settlement at Serampore - - - - - | 105 |
| 18. Case of a Suttee - - - - - | 106 |
| 19. Opposition of the Brahmins - - - - - | 107 |
| 20. Death of Mr. Fountain - - - - - | 108 |
| 21. Missionaries resolve to maintain themselves - - - - - | 108 |
| 22. Their division of labour - - - - - | 109 |
| 23. Two Natives renounce caste - - - - - | 110 |
| 24. Baptism of the first Convert - - - - - | 112 |
| 25. Printing of the Bengalee New Testament - - - - - | 112 |
| 26. Death of two Missionaries - - - - - | 113 |
| 27. Varied reception of the Gospel - - - - - | 114 |
| 28. Capture of Serampore by the English - - - - - | 115 |
| 29. Missionary Excursions - - - - - | 116 |
| 30. Conversion and murder of a Native - - - - - | 116 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 31. History and tenets of Ram Dulol - - - - - | 117 |
| 32. Station formed at Calcutta - - - - - | 118 |
| 33. Favourable reception at Luckpool - - - - - | 119 |
| 34. Persecution of Converts - - - - - | 119 |
| 35. Questions relating to the Heathen Wives of Converts - - - - - | 121 |
| 36. Superstitions at Saugur Island - - - - - | 123 |
| 37. History and Death of a Convert - - - - - | 125 |
| 38. Arrival of four Missionaries - - - - - | 127 |
| 39. Unstable character of Converts - - - - - | 128 |
| 40. Native Preachers - - - - - | 129 |
| 41. Bengalee, Hindoostanee, and Persian Testament - - - - - | 130 |
| 42. Project for an extended Translation of the Scriptures - - - - - | 130 |
| 43. General alarm at the Missionaries' proceedings - - - - - | 132 |
| 44. Review of the State of the Mission - - - - - | 134 |

CHAPTER III.

REFORMATION AT MADRAS.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Low state of Religion at Madras - - - - - | 136 |
| 2. Remonstrance on the subject from the Court of Directors - - - - - | 137 |
| 3. Arrival of Rev. R. H. Kerr at Bombay - - - - - | 138 |
| 4. Is taken to Madras. Opens a Seminary - - - - - | 138 |
| 5. Appointed Chaplain at Ellore - - - - - | 139 |
| 6. His Appointment not confirmed at home - - - - - | 140 |
| 7. Removes to Masulipatam - - - - - | 140 |
| 8. Appointed to the Asylum at Madras. Confirmed in his Chaplaincy - - - - - | 141 |
| 9. Establishes a Printing Press in the Asylum - - - - - | 142 |
| 10. Public benefit of his Press - - - - - | 143 |
| 11. Establishes a School of Industry in the Asylum - - - - - | 143 |
| 12. Builds a Chapel in Black Town - - - - - | 144 |
| 13. Appointed Senior Chaplain. Persecution raised against him - - - - - | 146 |
| 14. Proceeds to England for Priests' Orders. Obtains degree of D.D. at Dublin - - - - - | 148 |
| 15. Returns to Madras. Consecrates Black-Town Chapel by commission - - - - - | 149 |
| 16. Appointed Senior Chaplain. His zeal rouses opposition - - - - - | 150 |
| 17. Publishes weekly a series of Religious Tracts - - - - - | 151 |
| 18. His firmness and consistency of conduct - - - - - | 152 |
| 19. Appalling description of Europeans at Madras - - - - - | 154 |
| 20. Dr. Kerr's second Letter to the Directors - - - - - | 155 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 21. Vellore massacre attributed to attempts to convert the troops - - - | 156 |
| 22. Commander-in-Chief contradicts the report - - - | 157 |
| 23. He recommends greater attention to religious duties - - - | 157 |
| 24. Dr. Kerr's health declines - - - | 158 |
| 25. His report on the state of Christians in Malabar - - - | 158 |
| 26. Is induced to remain at his post - - - | 159 |
| 27. His death and burial - - - | 160 |
| 28. Delineation of his character - - - | 162 |

BOOK X.

CHAPTER I.

EXERTIONS IN ENGLAND IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY
IN INDIA.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Necessity of increased exertions at home - - - | 163 |
| 2. Missionary Societies in England - - - | 164 |
| 3. Need of a Missionary Society for the Church - - - | 165 |
| 4. Church Missionary Society established - - - | 166 |
| 5. Ancient office of Catechist - - - | 167 |
| 6. Church Missionary Society's primary Address - - - | 169 |
| 7. Institution of the Bible Society - - - | 169 |
| 8. Rev. C. Buchanan calls attention to the necessities of India - - - | 171 |
| 9. Compositions for his prizes - - - | 172 |
| 10. Memoir of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for India - - - | 173 |
| 11. Dedicated to the Archbishop of Canterbury - - - | 174 |
| 12. Approved by English Bishops - - - | 175 |
| 13. England's responsibilities in India - - - | 177 |
| 14. Second Prize Compositions - - - | 178 |
| 15. Controversy raised by these proceedings - - - | 179 |
| 16. Dr. Buchanan's rupture with the Bengal Government. He arrives in England - - - | 181 |
| 17. His "Star in the East" - - - | 184 |
| 18. His Church Missionary Sermon - - - | 184 |
| 19. Favourable movement at Cambridge - - - | 185 |
| 20. Dr. Buchanan's Commencement Sermons - - - | 185 |
| 21. His Christian Researches - - - | 185 |
| 22. Other means used to inform the public mind - - - | 186 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 23. Dr. Buchanan's visit to Ireland - - - - - | 187 |
| 24. Need of an Act of Parliament to facilitate the evangelization of India - - - - - | 187 |
| 25. Prospectus of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for India - - - - - | 190 |
| 26. Interruption from the Prime Minister's assassination - - - - - | 191 |
| 27. Christian-Knowledge Society memorialize Government and the East-India Company - - - - - | 192 |
| 28. Lord Liverpool's proposals - - - - - | 192 |
| 29. Favourable manifestation of public feeling - - - - - | 193 |
| 30. Enactment favourable to Christianity in India - - - - - | 193 |
| 31. Ecclesiastical Establishment for India - - - - - | 194 |
| 32. Buchanan's Apology for Christianity in India - - - - - | 195 |
| 33. His death - - - - - | 195 |
| 34. Dr. Middleton, first Bishop of Calcutta - - - - - | 196 |
| 35. The Bishop and two Archdeacons sail for India - - - - - | 197 |
| 36. Concluding Remarks - - - - - | 197 |

CHAPTER II.

TRANQUEBAR MISSION. 1807—1816.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Straited circumstances of the Mission - - - - - | 200 |
| 2. Need of Missionaries and publications - - - - - | 201 |
| 3. State of the Congregations at Tranquebar and Negapatam - - - - - | 202 |
| 4. Dr. John's zeal for reform - - - - - | 202 |
| 5. His establishment of Free Schools - - - - - | 203 |
| 6. Assisted by Government and other parties - - - - - | 205 |
| 7. Assisted by the Church Missionary Society - - - - - | 205 |
| 8. Death of Dr. John - - - - - | 206 |
| 9. State of his Schools - - - - - | 208 |
| 10. Two Missionaries from the Church Missionary Society - - - - - | 210 |
| 11. The Missionaries called to Madras - - - - - | 211 |
| 12. Bishop of Calcutta visits Tranquebar - - - - - | 211 |
| 13. Mr. Schnarré's return to Tranquebar - - - - - | 212 |
| 14. Congregations transferred to Tanjore Mission - - - - - | 212 |
| 15. Pecuniary relief from the King of Denmark - - - - - | 213 |
| 16. Concluding remarks on the decline of this Mission - - - - - | 213 |



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER III.

MADRAS MISSION. 1807—1816.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 1. State of the Mission | 217 |
| 2. Charity of Poor Christians | 217 |
| 3. Accessions to the flock | 218 |
| 4. Misconduct of the Missionary | 219 |
| 5. Continuation of the reform at Madras | 221 |
| 6. The Governor concerned for the religious improvement of the Service, | 221 |
| 7. Low state of Religion at Cuddalore | 222 |
| 8. Cuddalore Mission fallen to decay | 223 |
| 9. Cuddalore Chaplain called to Madras | 224 |
| 10. Additional Service in the Church at Madras | 226 |
| 11. Increasing demand for Bibles and Religious Publications | 226 |
| 12. Commencement of Bible Society's operations | 227 |
| 13. Opposition to the progress of Religion | 228 |
| 14. Erection of St. George's Church | 231 |
| 15. Chaplains appointed. Improved attendance | 232 |
| 16. The Friend-in-Need Society | 234 |
| 17. Corresponding Committee of the Church Missionary Society | 236 |
| 18. Increase of Chaplains | 237 |

CHAPTER IV.

TANJORE, TRICHINOPOLY, AND PALAMCOTTAH. 1807—1816.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. The Missionaries' varied labours | 238 |
| 2. Rajah's kindness to the Christians | 239 |
| 3. General Fidelity of the Christians | 239 |
| 4. Conversion of a Brahmin and his family | 240 |
| 5. Death and character of two Catechists | 241 |
| 6. Want of Funds for their growing expenses | 242 |
| 7. Death of Mr. Horst | 242 |
| 8. Ordination of four Native Priests | 243 |
| 9. Increase of the Flock | 243 |
| 10. Appointment of Mr. Jacobi to the Mission | 244 |
| 11. His arrival and death | 244 |
| 12. A caution for future Missionaries | 246 |
| 13. Increase of the Mission | 246 |



6

CSL

CONTENTS.

TRICHINOPOLY.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 1. State of the Mission - - - - - | 247 |
| 2. M. Pohle's application for help - - - - - | 247 |
| 3. Fatal pestilence in Madras and Dindegul - - - - - | 248 |
| 4. Labourers and wants of the Mission - - - - - | 249 |
| 5. Bishop of Calcutta's appeal in its behalf - - - - - | 250 |

PALAMCOTTAH.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. State of the Mission - - - - - | 250 |
| 2. Concluding remarks - - - - - | 252 |

CHAPTER V.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN SOUTH INDIA. 1804—1816.

VIZAGAPATAM.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Three Missionaries sent to India - - - - - | 254 |
| 2. Two of them go to Vizagapatam - - - - - | 254 |
| 3. Extent to which Telooگو is spoken - - - - - | 255 |
| 4. Missionaries welcomed at their Station - - - - - | 256 |
| 5. A young Arab convert - - - - - | 257 |
| 6. Commencement of operations - - - - - | 257 |
| 7. Mission House and Free School. - - - - - | 258 |
| 8. Missionaries' encouragement and trials - - - - - | 259 |
| 9. Their Telooگو translations - - - - - | 259 |
| 10. Progress of their Schools - - - - - | 261 |
| 11. Conversion of a Telooگو Brahmin - - - - - | 262 |
| 12. His reception and labours at Vizagapatam - - - - - | 263 |
| 13. Death of Mr. Cran - - - - - | 264 |
| 14. Arrival of two Missionaries - - - - - | 264 |
| 15. Death of Mr. Des Granges - - - - - | 265 |
| 16. His character and labours - - - - - | 266 |
| 17. Another Missionary arrives - - - - - | 266 |
| 18. Summary of the state of the Mission - - - - - | 267 |
| 19. A Brahminy reader of the Scriptures - - - - - | 268 |
| 20. Influence of the Gospel in the country - - - - - | 269 |
| 21. The translation of the Scriptures - - - - - | 270 |



CONTENTS.

GANJAM.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 1. A Missionary removes to Ganjam - - - - - | 270 |
| 2. His promising exertions - - - - - | 271 |
| 3. Compelled to relinquish the Station - - - - - | 271 |

MADRAS.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Arrival of two Missionaries - - - - - | 272 |
| 2. One appointed Master of the Asylum - - - - - | 273 |
| 3. His application to be relieved - - - - - | 273 |
| 4. Erection of a Chapel and two Schools - - - - - | 275 |
| 5. Mr. Loveless resigns the mastership of the Asylum - - - - - | 276 |
| 6. Arrival of a Missionary - - - - - | 276 |

SOUTH TRAVANCORE.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. M. Ringletaube prepares for his work - - - - - | 277 |
| 2. His thoughts on the prospect before him - - - - - | 278 |
| 3. His peculiarity of character - - - - - | 278 |
| 4. He sails for Tuticorin - - - - - | 279 |
| 5. Traverses the Tinnevely province - - - - - | 279 |
| 6. Resolves to settle in South Travancore - - - - - | 280 |
| 7. Returns to the South. Numerous baptisms - - - - - | 281 |
| 8. Extreme ignorance of the people - - - - - | 281 |
| 9. Benefit of his exertions - - - - - | 282 |
| 10. His varied labours and success - - - - - | 283 |
| 11. He leaves the country - - - - - | 284 |
| 12. Character of the Catechist in charge of the Mission - - - - - | 284 |

BELHARY.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Commencement of the Mission - - - - - | 286 |
| 2. The Missionary's studies and converse with Natives - - - - - | 287 |
| 3. Establishes an English School - - - - - | 288 |
| 4. Opens a Native School - - - - - | 288 |
| 5. Intercourse with Natives - - - - - | 289 |
| 6. Arrival and death of a Missionary. Another assistant - - - - - | 290 |
| 7. Mr. Hand's Journey to the coast - - - - - | 291 |
| 8. Joined by a Romish Catechist - - - - - | 291 |
| 9. Favourable reception by the Heathen - - - - - | 291 |
| 10. Progress of translations - - - - - | 293 |
| 11. Account of the Schools - - - - - | 293 |
| 12. Distribution of Scriptures and Tracts - - - - - | 294 |
| 13. Arrival of another Missionary - - - - - | 295 |



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VI.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN SOUTH INDIA. 1814—1816.

MADRAS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 1. A Corresponding Committee of the Church Missionary Society formed at Madras - - - - - | 296 |
| 2. Grant from the Parent Society - - - - - | 296 |
| 3. Missionaries stationed at Madras - - - - - | 297 |
| 4. Their favourable reception by the Governor - - - - - | 297 |
| 5. Their residence in Black Town - - - - - | 298 |
| 6. Interview with an Idolater - - - - - | 298 |
| 7. Interview with Romanists - - - - - | 299 |
| 8. Care in distributing the Scriptures - - - - - | 300 |
| 9. Commencement of Religious Service in Tamul - - - - - | 300 |
| 10. Increase of Visitors at the Mission House - - - - - | 301 |
| 11. A Free School for all Castes - - - - - | 301 |
| 12. Steady progress of the Mission - - - - - | 302 |
| 13. First Anniversary of the Mission - - - - - | 303 |
| 14. A Scripture Reader - - - - - | 303 |
| 15. Rayappen, a Catechist - - - - - | 304 |
| 16. Advantage of distributing the Scriptures - - - - - | 304 |
| 17. Decline of prejudice against the Schools - - - - - | 305 |
| 18. Religious Services in Tamul - - - - - | 305 |
| 19. Romish opposition to the Schools - - - - - | 306 |
| 20. Manifest advantage of the Schools - - - - - | 306 |
| 21. Various Visitors to the Mission House - - - - - | 308 |
| 22. An Impostor - - - - - | 308 |
| 23. Unfaithfulness of the Scripture Reader - - - - - | 309 |
| 24. Appavoo, A Native Christian - - - - - | 309 |
| 25. Sandappen, a Native Assistant - - - - - | 311 |
| 26. Temporary place of worship - - - - - | 312 |
| 27. Ground obtained in Black Town for a Church - - - - - | 312 |
| 28. Opening of a third School - - - - - | 313 |
| 29. A Christian Congregation gathering together - - - - - | 314 |
| 30. Missionaries' varied occupations - - - - - | 314 |

TRANQUEBAR.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Mr. Schnarré's return to Tranquebar - - - - - | 315 |
| 2. His reception at Tranquebar - - - - - | 316 |
| 3. State of the Schools - - - - - | 317 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 62. Mr. Thomason's faithful remonstrance to the Governor - - - | 383 |
| 63. European and Native Christians in Camp - - - | 383 |
| 64. Mr. Thomason returns to Calcutta - - - | 383 |
| 65. Apostasy of Sabat - - - | 384 |
| 66. His return to Christianity - - - | 386 |
| 67. His second Apostasy - - - | 387 |
| 68. He goes to Penang - - - | 388 |
| 69. His appalling death - - - | 388 |
| 70. Female-Orphan Asylum - - - | 389 |
| 71. Natives establish a College for European Literature - - - | 392 |
| 72. Concluding Reflections - - - | 393 |

CHAPTER II.

BAPTIST MISSION IN BENGAL. 1807—1816.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Missionaries memorialize Government for Protection - - - | 395 |
| 2. Obstructed in their Labours - - - | 396 |
| 3. Two Missionaries sail for Burmah - - - | 397 |
| 4. Mr. Carey's view of their Opponents' design - - - | 398 |
| 5. Mitigation of their trials - - - | 399 |
| 6. Proceedings at Calcutta - - - | 399 |
| 7. The Benevolent Institution - - - | 400 |
| 8. Proceedings at Dum-Dum - - - | 402 |
| 9. Ram Mohun Roy - - - | 402 |
| 10. Evils of an Unscriptural Education - - - | 403 |
| 11. Proceedings at Serampore - - - | 403 |
| 12. Destructive fire at Serampore - - - | 405 |
| 13. Proceedings at Gundulpara - - - | 406 |
| 14. General View of Country Stations - - - | 407 |
| 15. Robbery and murder at Bootan Mission House - - - | 408 |
| 16. Balasore in Orissa - - - | 409 |
| 17. Conversion of a Brahmin - - - | 409 |
| 18. Proceedings in Western India - - - | 411 |
| 19. At Chittagong - - - | 411 |
| 20. In the Burman Empire - - - | 412 |
| 21. Mr. F. Carey's services and afflictions - - - | 413 |
| 22. Mr. Judson proceeds to Rangoon - - - | 413 |
| 23. Mr. F. Carey goes to Calcutta as Ambassador from the Court of Burmah - - - | 414 |
| 24. Mr. George H. Hough goes to Rangoon - - - | 415 |
| 25. Translations of the Scriptures - - - | 415 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 26. Facilities for the work - - - - - | 417 |
| 27. Precautions to secure accuracy - - - - - | 418 |
| 28. The translations intelligible and useful - - - - - | 421 |
| 29. The first types cast in India - - - - - | 423 |
| 30. Manufacture of Paper - - - - - | 423 |
| 31. Translation and printing religious Tracts - - - - - | 424 |
| 32. Progress of education - - - - - | 424 |
| 33. Superior Schools for Youth - - - - - | 425 |
| 34. Success of the Mission - - - - - | 426 |
| 35. Improvement in public feeling towards Missions - - - - - | 429 |
| 35. Governor, Bishop, and others, visit Serampore - - - - - | 430 |

CHAPTER III.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN BENGAL TO 1816.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Mr. Forsyth's call for assistance - - - - - | 432 |
| 2. Mr. May providentially directed to Chinsurah - - - - - | 432 |
| 3. Favourable commencement of his Schools - - - - - | 433 |
| 4. The Missionary's difficulties and exertions - - - - - | 434 |
| 5. Government Grant towards the Schools - - - - - | 435 |
| 6. Extension of the Schools. A second Grant - - - - - | 436 |
| 7. Arrival of three Missionaries - - - - - | 437 |
| 8. Character of the Schools - - - - - | 438 |
| 9. Scholars prematurely removed - - - - - | 440 |
| 10. Seminary for training Teachers - - - - - | 440 |

CHAPTER IV.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN NORTH INDIA. 1807—1816.

AGRA.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Commencement of Church Missionary Society in Bengal - - - - - | 442 |
| 2. Appropriation of their grant of money - - - - - | 442 |
| 3. Abdool Messeeh the first Reader - - - - - | 443 |
| 4. Abdool proceeds with Rev. D. Corrie to Agra - - - - - | 443 |
| 5. Incidents by the way - - - - - | 444 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 6. Abdool's interview with his family - - - - - | 445 |
| 7. Arrival at Agra - - - - - | 447 |
| 8. Commencement of his labours - - - - - | 447 |
| 9. Interviews with Muhomedans - - - - - | 447 |
| 10. Heathen Converts - - - - - | 449 |
| 11. Mahomedan Converts - - - - - | 451 |
| 12. Persecution for the Gospel's sake - - - - - | 451 |
| 13. Conversion of a Mahomedan Molwee - - - - - | 451 |
| 14. Administration of the Lord's Supper - - - - - | 453 |
| 15. Numerous baptisms - - - - - | 453 |
| 16. Summary of the Mission - - - - - | 453 |
| 17. Talib Messee Reader at Meerut - - - - - | 454 |
| 18. Baptisms and Congregation at Meerut - - - - - | 455 |
| 19. Death and burial of two Converts - - - - - | 456 |
| 20. Various inquirers after the Truth - - - - - | 456 |
| 21. A Convert from Bundelcund - - - - - | 457 |
| 22. Abdool visits Lucknow - - - - - | 458 |
| 23. Mr. Corrie's departure. State of the flock - - - - - | 460 |
| 24. Mr. Corrie's loss severely felt - - - - - | 461 |
| 25. The Church Missionary Society's augmented grant - - - - - | 462 |
| 26. Proceedings of Abdool and Mr. Bowley at Agra - - - - - | 463 |
| 27. Abdool's Letters to Mr. Corrie - - - - - | 463 |
| 28. His practice of physic - - - - - | 464 |

CHUNAR.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Mr. Bowley removed to Chunar - - - - - | 466 |
| 2. His intercourse with the Natives - - - - - | 466 |
| 3. Promising results - - - - - | 468 |

MEERUT.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. State of the Church at Meerut - - - - - | 470 |
| 2. Unexpected aid in time of need - - - - - | 470 |
| 3. Circumstances which led Permunund to Meerut - - - - - | 471 |
| 4. His varied occupations - - - - - | 472 |
| 5. Appointed Reader - - - - - | 472 |
| 6. The Chaplain's account of Permunund and his flock - - - - - | 473 |
| 7. Baptism of Permunund - - - - - | 474 |

CALCUTTA.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Opening of a School at Kiäderpoor - - - - - | 475 |
| 2. Native Youths educating for the Mission - - - - - | 475 |
| 3. Arrival of two Missionaries at Calcutta - - - - - | 476 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| 4. Estate purchased at Garden Reach | 477 |
| 5. Summary of the Mission | 478 |
| 6. Concluding reflections | 479 |

BOOK XII.

CHAPTER I.

WESTERN INDIA.

CHRISTIANITY IN BOMBAY TO THE YEAR 1816.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. First Church erected in Bombay in 1718 | 481 |
| 2. A Charity School established | 484 |
| 3. Scriptural instruction given in the School | 484 |
| 4. Benefits resulting from its lessons | 486 |
| 5. Abolition of infanticide in Guzerat | 486 |
| 6. Low state of Religion in Bombay | 488 |
| 7. Visit of Henry Martyn | 489 |
| 8. Profanation of the Sabbath prevented | 490 |
| 9. Favourable effect of Mr. Martyn's visit | 490 |
| 10. Contrast between senior and junior civilians and officers | 491 |
| 11. H. Martyn's intercourse with learned Natives | 492 |
| 12. Governor's death. Acting Governor's improved example | 492 |
| 13. Arrival of Sir Evan Nepean as Governor. His religious example, | 493 |
| 14. Paucity of Chaplains | 493 |
| 15. Number of Chaplains doubled | 494 |
| 16. Establishment of Bombay Bible Society | 494 |
| 17. Exertions of a Native Christian lady | 495 |
| 18. Good effects of European example | 496 |
| 19. Arrival and exertions of Archdeacon Barnes | 497 |
| 20. Bombay Education Society's Report | 498 |
| 21. State of the Schools | 500 |
| 22. Second Report of the Bombay Bible Society | 501 |
| 23. Local operations of the Bombay Bible Society | 503 |
| 24. Extended operations of the Society | 504 |



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER II.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN WESTERN INDIA. 1807—1816.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. London Missionary Society project a Mission at Surat | - | - | 506 |
| 2. Two Missionaries sent to India for the purpose | - | - | 507 |
| 3. One arrives at Bombay | - | - | 507 |
| 4. His prospects | - | - | 507 |
| 5. He accepts a medical appointment | - | - | 509 |
| 6. Mission commenced at Surat | - | - | 509 |
| 7. Missionaries' call for aid | - | - | 510 |

CHAPTER III.

AMERICAN MISSION. 1813—1816.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. Arrival of two Missionaries. Ordered away | - | - | 511 |
| 2. They leave clandestinely, and return under arrest | - | - | 512 |
| 3. Hopes of their being allowed to remain | - | - | 514 |
| 4. Court of Directors sanction their continuance | - | - | 514 |
| 5. Their studies and translations | - | - | 515 |
| 6. Their intercourse with the Natives | - | - | 517 |
| 7. Heathen liberality contrasted with Christians' parsimony | - | - | 518 |
| 8. Their ministrations in English and Mahratta | - | - | 519 |
| 9. Their Schools | - | - | 520 |
| 10. Jewish Auditors, Scholars, and Teachers | - | - | 520 |
| 11. Arrival of a Missionary. Increased exertions | - | - | 522 |
| 12. Operations of the Press | - | - | 523 |

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANITY IN CEYLON. 1796—1816.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. Capture of Ceylon by the British. Religious establishments suspended | - | - | 525 |
| 2. Revived under Governor North | - | - | 526 |
| 3. High Seminary for Teachers founded at Columbo | - | - | 527 |
| 4. Good effect of this revival | - | - | 528 |



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 5. Need of English Clergymen - - - - - | 529 |
| 6. Christian inhabitants of Ceylon in 1801 - - - - - | 529 |
| 7. State of Religion in the island - - - - - | 529 |
| 8. Dr. John's Report of the prospect in Ceylon - - - - - | 530 |
| 9. Mr. North's patronage of benevolent Institutions - - - - - | 531 |
| 10. Sir A. Johnstone favourable to the Natives' improvement - - - - - | 532 |
| 11. Dr. Buchanan's account of Religion in Ceylon - - - - - | 533 |
| 12. Proposal for a Cingalese Translation of the Scriptures - - - - - | 534 |
| 13. Sir A. Johnstone's exertions in England for the inhabitants - - - - - | 535 |
| 14. Auxiliary Bible Society established at Columbo - - - - - | 536 |
| 15. The objects of the Society - - - - - | 536 |
| 16. History of Mr. A. Armour - - - - - | 539 |
| 17. Character of the King of Kandy - - - - - | 540 |
| 18. His cruelties disgust and alarm his subjects - - - - - | 541 |
| 19. Conquest of Kandy, and capture of the King - - - - - | 543 |
| 20. Description of the Kandian country - - - - - | 544 |
| 21. Operations of the Columbo Bible Society - - - - - | 545 |
| 22. Brightening prospect for the diffusion of Christianity - - - - - | 546 |
| 23. Abolition of Slavery in Ceylon - - - - - | 547 |
| 24. Christian education for the emancipated children - - - - - | 549 |
| 25. The Chief Justice departs from Ceylon - - - - - | 549 |

CHAPTER V.

LONDON MISSION IN CEYLON. 1804—1816.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Three Missionaries arrive - - - - - | 551 |
| 2. Mr. Vos is banished the island - - - - - | 552 |
| 3. Mr. Ehrhardt's difficulties - - - - - | 553 |
| 4. Low character of Native Christians - - - - - | 554 |
| 5. Mr. Palm at Tillipally - - - - - | 554 |
| 6. Mr. Read at Point de Galle - - - - - | 555 |
| 7. Importance of Christian example - - - - - | 555 |
| 8. Missionaries directed to attend to the Natives - - - - - | 556 |
| 9. Revival of the Government Schools - - - - - | 557 |
| 10. Missionaries removed to Columbo - - - - - | 558 |
| 11. State of Schools and Native Christians at Point de Galle - - - - - | 558 |
| 12. The want of Missionaries deplored - - - - - | 559 |



CONTENTS.

CSL

CHAPTER VI.

BAPTIST MISSION IN CEYLON. 1812—1816.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Mr. Chater commences the Mission | 560 |
| 2. Mr. Siers joins him | 560 |
| 3. Mr. Chater preaches by an interpreter | 561 |
| 4. State of his Congregation | 561 |
| 5. Opens a School for Natives | 562 |
| 6. Translations into Cingalese and Portuguese | 562 |

CHAPTER VII.

WESLEYAN MISSION IN CEYLON. 1814—1816.

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Reasons for undertaking the Mission | 564 |
| 2. Missionaries sail. Dr. Coke dies at sea | 565 |
| 3. Missionaries arrive at Bombay | 565 |
| 4. Their arrival and reception in Ceylon | 566 |
| 5. The Governor approves of their design | 567 |
| 6. A proposal from Government accepted | 568 |
| 7. Two Missionaries proceed to Columbo | 569 |
| 8. A Mahomedan Convert | 569 |
| 9. Missionaries' arrival at Jaffna | 570 |
| 10. Commencement of their labours | 570 |
| 11. Matura Station | 571 |
| 12. Batticaloa Station | 571 |
| 13. Galle Station | 572 |
| 14. The Missionary desires to dwell among the Natives | 573 |
| 15. Facilities unexpectedly offered him | 574 |
| 16. Commences operations | 574 |
| 17. Attention of a Priest to the Gospel | 575 |
| 18. His sincerity tested | 576 |
| 19. He is anxious for baptism | 578 |
| 20. Perils of his situation | 579 |
| 21. His reception at Columbo | 580 |
| 22. His baptism | 580 |
| 23. His subsequent employment | 581 |



12

CSL

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 24. Arrival of Mr. Harvard - - - - - | 582 |
| 25. Death of Mr. Ault - - - - - | 583 |
| 26. System of village preaching - - - - - | 584 |
| 27. Inexpediency of preaching through an Interpreter - - - - - | 585 |
| 28. English Service for Natives - - - - - | 586 |
| 29. They commence building a Chapel - - - - - | 587 |
| 30. Opening of a Sunday School - - - - - | 587 |
| 31. The operations of the Press begun - - - - - | 588 |
| 32. Proposition for a Boarding and Day School - - - - - | 590 |
| 33. Intercourse with an Ava Priest - - - - - | 590 |
| 34. His mind changed - - - - - | 591 |
| 35. His baptism - - - - - | 592 |
| 36. Prejudice against women's attendance at Church overcome - - - - - | 592 |
| 37. Baptism of a Native Youth - - - - - | 593 |
| 38. Conversion of a Kandian Priest - - - - - | 593 |
| 39. Conversion of another Priest - - - - - | 594 |
| 40. Arrival of five Missionaries - - - - - | 595 |
| 41. Two Local Preachers received - - - - - | 595 |
| 42. Conversion of a Priest at Galle - - - - - | 596 |
| 43. Station formed at Colpetty - - - - - | 596 |
| 44. Mission commenced at Madras - - - - - | 597 |
| 45. Opening of the Chapel at Columbo - - - - - | 598 |

CHAPTER VIII.

ARMENIANS AND GREEKS.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Origin and Character of the Armenians - - - - - | 600 |
| 2. Their settlement in India - - - - - | 601 |
| 3. Their Ecclesiastical History - - - - - | 602 |
| 4. Antiquity of their language - - - - - | 603 |
| 5. Their literature - - - - - | 604 |
| 6. Their version of the Bible - - - - - | 605 |
| 7. Their Churches in India - - - - - | 608 |
| 8. Their Creed and Ritual - - - - - | 609 |
| 9. Their population in India - - - - - | 611 |
| 10. Their Alms-house and School - - - - - | 612 |
| 11. Favourable to Protestant Missions - - - - - | 613 |
| 12. Settlement of the Greeks in Calcutta - - - - - | 615 |
| 13. Foundation of their Church in Calcutta - - - - - | 615 |



CSL

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 14. Their community in India - - - - - | 617 |
| 15. Their proselytes - - - - - | 617 |
| 16. Their intercourse with Bishop Middleton - - - - - | 618 |

APPENDIX.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Translation of the Syrian Liturgy and Services - - | 619 |
|--|-----|



A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA.

BOOK IX.

CHAPTER I.

ENGLISH MISSION IN BENGAL, ESTABLISHED IN 1758.

1. THE English factory at Calcutta was established by Mr. Job Charnock in 1689, and the fortifications of Old Fort William were raised in 1696; but when the first temple was built for the worship of God cannot now be ascertained with precision. Mr. Charnock did not follow the good example set him at Fort St. George. He merited, no doubt, the encomiums he has received for his attention to the British interests in Bengal¹; but little regard for the cause of religion could be expected from a man, of whom it is recorded, that as long as he survived the native mother of his children, on every anniversary of her death he publicly testified his regard for her memory by sacrificing a cock to her manes

FIRST
DECADE.
1758 to
1766.

Settle-
ment of
Calcutta.

(¹) Orme's History of Hindostan. Book vi. TRIBUNUS, the writer of a communication in the Asiatic Miscellany, supposed to be Colonel Ironside. Vol. i.

CHAP.
I.State of
religious
destitution
in Bengal.

in her mausoleum.¹ He died in 1692, and at that time there was not so much as a Chapel at Calcutta, nor indeed in any other Indian Settlement of the English, except Madras, for the celebration of the religious ordinances of their native land. When they did assemble for Divine Worship it was in the room in which they took their meals.²

2. In January 1714 the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge invited the Chaplain of Fort William, the Rev. Samuel Briercliffe, to become a corresponding member of their body, and requested him to give them some information relating to the state of Christianity in Bengal. In his answer, Mr. Briercliffe, besides other matters now of less moment, stated that the Christians in Bengal bore but a very small proportion to the Mahomedans and Gentoos. "In this settlement," he added, "we are not above one in two thousand: we have few Protestants in this place besides those of our own nation." Then, after naming the Portuguese Stations, he mentions that they had "not carried on their religion by means of Schools; but chiefly by bringing up their slaves and servants, while young, in their own faith." "When I came here first," he remarks, "I proposed to have a School set up in this place, and that I should willingly spend an hour or two in a day to overlook it, and assist in such an undertaking; but my project dropped again." Then, to give some idea of the expense of maintaining a religious teacher, he adds, "A man cannot lodge and board here tolerably well under forty rupees per month, *i.e.* five pounds."³ He next proceeds to explain the

(¹) Captain Alexander Hamilton. Travels in the East Indies from 1688 to 1723.

(²) Dean Prideaux' Account of the English Settlements in the East Indies. 1794.

(³) The rupee then current in Bengal was the Arcot rupee, worth



difficulties they must expect to encounter, especially from the Mahomedans, who were at that time the rulers of Bengal. These difficulties are similar to what have been already explained in the Missions of South India.⁴

3. This Letter appears to contain the earliest authentic record extant of the state of Christianity in North India. It was probably the interest manifested by the Christian-Knowledge Society on the subject, together with the religious books which they sent to the Chaplain for distribution, that first awakened the attention of the British residents in Calcutta to the duty of providing a suitable place for the celebration of Public Worship. Mr. Briercliffe's Letter is dated December 31st, 1715; and it has been concluded, with great appearance of probability, that the old Church in Calcutta was founded shortly after. That Church is mentioned by Captain A. Hamilton, quoted above, who was in India at that time, in the following terms:—"About fifty yards from Fort William stands the Church built by the pious charity of the merchants residing there, and the Christian benevolence of seafaring men, whose affairs called them to trade there; but Ministers of the Gospel being subject to mortality, very often young merchants are obliged to officiate, and have a salary of fifty pounds per annum added to what the Company allow them, for their pains in reading Prayers and a Sermon on Sundays."

Erection
of the first
Church in
Calcutta.

Other writers describe the construction of this

worth, at that time, about 2s. 6d., though afterwards reduced in value. The Sicca rupee was not introduced till after the year 1757.—*Asiaticus*, p. 7. The work here referred to was published in Calcutta in 1802. It contains a useful collection of Ecclesiastical, Chronological, and Historical sketches respecting Bengal.

(⁴) Propagation of the Gospel in the East. Part iii. pp. 185—189. The remainder of this Letter is now of no moment.



CHAP.

I.

temple as perfect, stating that its steeple "was very lofty and uncommonly magnificent, and constituted the chief public ornament of the settlement." It was built, indeed, "without any assistance from the Company," "in days when gold was plenty, labour cheap, and not one indigent European in all Calcutta." Some of the original contributors being of the society of Freemasons, it is said that, by their influence, the Church was dedicated to St. John; and it is likewise recorded, that the Governor on every Sunday walked in solemn procession to Church, attended by all the civil servants, and all the military off duty.

When information of this building was transmitted to the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, they returned "an answer expressive of their approbation, and of the great satisfaction they derived from so pious and so meritorious a work. The Society also sent a silver cup, with an appropriate inscription, in testimony and commemoration of it." ¹

Formation
of a Charity
Fund.

4. About the year 1732 a Charity Fund was established in connexion with the Church, principally by the liberality of an individual, Mr. Bouchier, a prosperous merchant, who resided in Bengal between 1720 and 1733, and at one time was master attendant

(¹) Asiaticus. Part i. pp. 1—4. 18. 26. The author has examined the records of the Propagation Society from the year 1715, with the hope of authenticating the statement given in the text, and thereby ascertaining, with some precision, the date of this building; but he has not been successful. In the Report for 1715, p. 30, after mentioning the grants made to their own Mission settlements in North America and elsewhere, this brief notice occurs, under the head of 'Incidental Expenses:' "Not to mention at present the furnishing of surplices and other church *utensils* to some congregations who could not well purchase them." Whether the silver cup mentioned above is included herein, must remain a subject for conjecture. It is to be regretted that the cup itself has not been preserved: it is said to have been melted down, with some old-fashioned plate belonging to the Company, about the close of the last century.—Asiaticus, p. 18.



at Calcutta. This gentleman built the old Court-House at Calcutta, soon after the arrival of the charter for the Mayor's Court, which was granted in August 1726. In 1734 Mr. Bouchier was appointed Governor of Bombay ; but before his departure from Calcutta he presented the Court-House to the Company, on condition that Government should pay four thousand Arcot rupees per annum to support a Charity School, and for other benevolent purposes. About the same time a subscription was raised towards the formation of the Charity Fund mentioned above, and the proceeds were lodged in Government Securities. The sacramental collections, and fees for the palls kept for use at funerals, were added to this fund. Among other benevolent objects contemplated by the establishment of this fund was the support of a Charity School for twenty children, who were maintained and educated at an annual expense of about two thousand four hundred rupees.²

5. At this time, in 1732, some Dutch, Germans, and other foreigners, residing in Bengal, applied to the Missionaries at Tranquebar to send one or more of their number to establish a Mission in those parts, for the benefit, not only of the Natives ; but also of themselves and their children, who were growing up without any instruction. The Dutch had an occasional visit at their factory at Hooghly from a Chaplain or Missionary of their own nation ; but no one had yet settled among them. The Dutch Director promised to any who should settle there all the liberty and encouragement in their territories that it lay in his power to grant. Though the Missionaries were not then able to comply with their

Applica-
tions from
Bengal for
a Mission-
ary.

(²) Asiaticus, pp. 7. 18. 19. These were probably the children of soldiers, whether by European or Native mothers.

CHAP.
I

request, yet they continued to urge it with such importunity, that in 1734 the Brethren forwarded their application to Europe, where it awakened a lively sympathy in the minds of all, both in England and Germany, who were interested in the progress of Christianity in India. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge entered warmly into the proposal, and engaged to contribute towards the support of any Missionary who should be appointed, and the contributions from other quarters flowed in with a liberality which encouraged hopes of soon accomplishing their object; but no suitable person could yet be found among the theological students at Halle. Three new Missionaries were sent out shortly after to Tranquebar, with the expectation that one of the senior Brethren might, on their arrival, be sent to Calcutta; but this plan was frustrated by the death of Messrs. Worms and Reichsteig in 1735, and the hopes of the Bengal friends were still deferred.¹ However, they did not despair; and though disappointed for the present, they continued to manifest a growing zeal in behalf of the Missions on the coast, for which they remitted, from time to time, contributions to the amount of about eleven hundred rupees.²

Church
steeple
destroyed
by an
earth-
quake.

6. In October 1737 a destructive hurricane, accompanied by a violent earthquake, swept over the province of Bengal, and, besides throwing down two hundred houses in Calcutta, and doing other damage to a great extent, it is said that "the high and magnificent steeple of the English Church sunk into the ground without breaking."³ Another account, by an eye-witness, states that the steeple fell pro-

(¹) Niecamp. pp. 411, 412.

(²) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Reports, 1743, 1751—1754.

(³) The Gentleman's Magazine, 1738.



strate⁴, which is the more probable, as the body of the Church, though injured, remained standing, which were hardly possible had the steeple "sunk into the ground."

7. From this period there are no ecclesiastical notices of Bengal till the year 1756, when Calcutta was taken by Sujah Dowlah, whose troops demolished the old Church, with other buildings. It was on this occasion that one hundred and forty-six Englishmen were confined in the Black Hole at Calcutta, of whom one hundred and twenty-three were found dead the next morning, June 30th. The Chaplain, Rev. Jervas Bellamy, was among the sufferers.

Church demolished by the Mahomedans.

8. By these disasters—the devastation of Calcutta by the hurricane of 1737, and again by the unsparing hand of the Mahomedans on the present occasion—all the records of the place were destroyed; and we are left without any certain source of information respecting the state of Christianity in Bengal up to this period.

Destruction of the Calcutta records.

9. Twelve months after, in June 1757, the victory of Plassey, gained by Colonel Clive, laid the foundations of NEW CALCUTTA and NEW FORT WILLIAM. Decisive, however, as this battle was, the troubles of the four succeeding years so engrossed the thoughts of the English, that they do not appear to have contemplated repairing the dismantled walls of their sacred edifice, nor proposed to erect another.

Calcutta recovered by the English.

10. But the providence of God was opening the way for the establishment of the Bengal Mission, so long desired. The occupation of Cuddalore by the French in 1758, and the retirement of the Missionary, M. Kiernander, to Tranquebar, we have already recorded.⁵ After remaining there for three months, and seeing no immediate prospect of the restoration

M. Kiernander removes to Calcutta.

(⁴) Asiaticus, p. 6. Note.

(⁵) B. 8. c. 2. Dec. iii. ss. 3—6.

CHAP.
I

of the English to Cuddalore, he began to turn his thoughts to Bengal, the only English settlement now open to him for Missionary labour. Accordingly, with the unanimous concurrence of his Brethren, he embarked for Calcutta September 11, 1758, and arrived, after a dangerous passage, on the 29th. He found the Governor, Colonel (afterwards Lord) Clive, together with the Members of Council, cordially disposed to take him under their protection, and to patronize his Mission.¹ Of this friendly disposition he received a pleasing token in November, when, at the baptism of his son, Colonel and Mrs. Clive, Mr. William Watts, a Member of Council, and his lady, stood sponsors for the infant, which was named after its distinguished godfathers, Robert William. He was kindly welcomed by the Chaplains also, the Rev. Henry Butler and the Rev. John Cape, who procured large subscriptions for carrying on his Mission, and assisted him in his peculiar offices as a minister of the Gospel.²

Auspicious
com-
mence-
ment of
his Mis-
sion.

11. Thus encouraged, on the 1st of December he opened a Mission School at Calcutta, inviting all classes to send their children to him for instruction; and so readily was his invitation responded to, that by the middle of January 1759 he had forty scholars of various castes—English, Armenians, Portuguese, and Bengalees. Two of the Bengalees were Brahmins, and several of the boys were from fifteen to eighteen years of age. From this time the School filled apace; and at the close of the year it contained one hundred and thirty-five scholars, making, with thirty-seven who had gone out to service, and two deceased, a total of one hundred and seventy-four. Besides English Reading, Writing, and Accounts, they were all instructed and catechized in

(¹) Meier's *Missions-Geschichte*, p. 470.

(²) *Asiaticus*, p. 25.



the Christian Religion, to which no objections whatever were made : and such was the progress of some of the Heathen, and the interest which they seemed to take in their lessons, that Kiernander indulged the hope that when they came to maturity, and were at liberty to act for themselves, they would openly avow their belief in the truth now instilled into their minds. Several of the Bengalees were much interested in a religious treatise, entitled, *Instruction for the Indians*, and soon began to ask very pertinent questions concerning the faith of Jesus Christ.³

12. The Missionary had brought two Native Christians from Cuddalore to assist him, one of whom died this year. He had four other Assistants for the different classes, and he found a good English Master in the Clerk of the Fort Church ; but he deemed it necessary for some months to spend the greater part of his own time in the School. The Charity School mentioned above, which was re-established after the restoration of Calcutta, was committed to his care : at present it contained only sixteen children. Although not connected with the Mission, yet this and one or two other charitable institutions in Bengal became so intimately associated with Missionary proceedings, that they are unavoidably interwoven with our History ; and it is interesting thus to trace to its humble origin that stream of Christian benevolence, which was destined, in a few years, through God's assistance, to cover so vast an expanse of the moral desert of Hindostan.

He takes charge of the Charity School.

13. It is worthy of remark, that the first two converts to the Protestant faith in Bengal were of

First two Converts.

(³) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1759. The little work mentioned here, *Instruction for the Indians*, was written by the Bishop of Sodor and Man for the Indian Missions.

CHAP.
I.

Com-
mences
Divine
Service in
Portu-
guese.

the classes supposed to be the most bigoted to their own superstitions, a Romanist and a Brahmin. The former was an old Portuguese, who understood English; and after frequent communications with the Missionary, he was convinced of the errors of Popery, which he abjured, and became a zealous Protestant. The Brahmin also, about the same time, turned from the idolatries of India and the prejudices of his caste, to the truth of the Gospel, and learned to be, like the Saviour, meek and lowly in heart.

14. M. Kiernander found at Calcutta several Portuguese who had belonged to his Church at Cuddalore; and with these, his family, the two converts, and his Christian pupils, he commenced Public Worship on the 2d of June 1759, in Portuguese, the Governor and Chaplain allowing him the use of the Fort Church when not required for the English Service. During the first year he had fifteen baptisms; and there was reason to believe that the increase of his congregation would have been greater, if the Natives, and especially the Romanists, could have been assured of the permanency of the Mission. The parents of one of his Portuguese scholars expressed their gratitude for the instruction which their son had received, and avowed their desire to join his congregation; but they were apprehensive, they said, that if he should die, and no one were appointed to succeed him, they would be placed in greater difficulty than before: they determined, therefore, to postpone the public declaration of their minds.

His
exertions
among
Euro-
peans.

15. Besides these Missionary Services, M. Kiernander was active in distributing the religious publications, in English and other European languages, sent for the purpose by the Christian-Knowledge Society. By desire of the Danes at Fredricknadore and Serampore, about twelve miles from Calcutta,



he occasionally preached and administered the Sacraments at those Stations. The foreign soldiers also, in the Company's service, claimed his attention; and he was sometimes called upon by the English Chaplains to preach and read Prayers in their Church. So incessantly was he occupied with these services and his attendance at the Schools, that he had no time to study the native languages: he therefore wrote home in urgent terms for a colleague to be sent to him, that one of them might apply himself to Bengalee, and the other to Hindostanee, in order to preach to the Natives of both classes the glad tidings of redemption.

Such was the result of the first year of the Calcutta Mission; and Kiernander was animated with hope that it would prove the first-fruits of an abundant harvest soon to be gathered in from the plains of Bengal.

16. The Mission School grew in popularity, and at the close of 1760 it contained two hundred and thirty-one scholars¹, of whom nineteen were girls, English and Portuguese. About one half of the children were wholly maintained; some paid for their education; and the residue were instructed gratuitously. But the establishment was no expense to the Christian-Knowledge Society, beyond the supplies of books and writing materials occasionally sent, the School being chiefly supported by charitable contributions in Bengal. Kiernander also appropriated a portion of his scanty stipend to fitting up a building, which he was permitted to use both as a Church and Schoolroom. He himself lived rent free in a small house adjoining.

Increase
of the
School.

17. But he was not left to proceed without interruption. Several scholars of the Romish Church, from fifteen to twenty-five years of age, soon disco-

Roman-
ists' oppo-
sition.

(1) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1760.



CHAP.

1.

vered how they had been neglected by their own priests, and declared their determination to join the Protestant communion. This movement, as might be expected, alarmed the priests, who endeavoured to counteract the growing influence of Kiernander. They laboured hard to obtain possession of his little Church and dwelling-house, but hitherto without effect. Notwithstanding this opposition, the School continued to increase, and the assistance of a pious Schoolmaster, named Dirk Steenhoven, was soon obtained. This good man had filled a similar post at Madras, with credit to himself and benefit to his School.¹

Senior Chaplain applies for another Missionary.

18. In January 1761 the Rev. H. Butler, senior Chaplain, wrote to the Christian-Knowledge Society, bearing testimony to the diligence of their Missionary, and recommending them to send out a person of industrious habits and unblemished morals to assist him in the School: at the same time he held out the prospect of a considerable increase to the salary of such a man at Calcutta. The Society not being able immediately to procure a suitable teacher in Europe, wrote to M. Kiernander, recommending him to apply to the Brethren on the coast to send him a Catechist who should be capable of assisting him, that he might be at liberty to attend to the native languages.²

Death of Mrs. Kiernander and three Chaplains.

19. This year his wife died, and also his two valuable friends, the Chaplains. The gentleman who succeeded, Rev. Samuel Staveley, was no less zealous to further the objects of his Mission; but neither was he spared to him long, being carried off in the autumn of the following year by an awful epidemic that raged in Bengal. Kiernander him-

(¹) Meier's *Missions-Geschichte*, p. 481. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Reports, 1760, 1761.

(²) Meier's *Missions-Geschichte*, p. 496.



self suffered severely from this calamity ; but at length, after not less than six relapses, he was graciously restored to health. The mortality among the Natives was so great, that parents were afraid to send their children to School, which was now reduced to forty scholars ; but there was no diminution of numbers on the books, and the rest returned when the cause for alarm was removed.³

20. In the year 1763 Calcutta was thrown into great consternation by the rising of the Natives, first under command of the Nabob, Cossim Aly Kawn, and afterwards under Sujah Dowlah. They appeared in sufficient force to call the whole of the British army into the field ; but on both occasions they were completely defeated, and their forces dispersed. In consequence of these successes, the English territories became more settled and secure than they were before. During the hostilities, Kiernander was apprehensive for the safety of his Mission : but his fears were now removed ; and he soon found that the triumphs of the sword had opened for him a more extended field than he was able to cultivate without the assistance of a European colleague.⁴

Native
insurrec-
tions sup-
pressed.

21. This year the Chaplains altered the arrangements in the Charity School, reducing the number of children, yet putting them on a more efficient footing, and appointing a Master of their own. M. Kiernander, though still entrusted with the general superintendence of the Institution, was relieved by this alteration, and enabled to assemble the Mission School more conveniently than before. In a short time, however, the scholars, as well as the congregation, became too numerous for the premises he occupied ; and on applying to the authorities for

Improve-
ments
in the
Mission.

(³) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1761.

(⁴) Ibid. 1762—1764.



a larger house, the Governor himself immediately ordered that a building of a convenient size should be appropriated for the present use of the Mission. With some alterations, these premises were rendered commodious enough to lodge all the charity children, and to provide a habitation for the Master. A spacious hall was fitted up as a Chapel, and solemnly dedicated, by Kiernander, to the worship of God. He preached on the occasion from 1 Kings viii. 27. "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have builded?"

Notice of
Governor
Vansittart.

22. The Governor, Mr. Vansittart, besides lending the premises, generously assisted to repair and enlarge them. This gentleman had formerly resided at Fort St. George, where he became acquainted with M. Swartz and other Missionaries on the coast, whom he had learned to esteem. Of Swartz especially he used to speak in the highest terms, commending his piety, integrity, and disinterestedness. He also bore testimony to the great reverence paid him by the Natives, and to the influence which he had over them by his high character. Such was the patron whom Divine Providence had raised up to cherish this infant Mission in Bengal. He was able to appreciate the Missionary's undertaking, and glad to contribute his best endeavours to advance it. But the Mission was too soon deprived of his fostering care. He left Calcutta in November 1764, and was subsequently lost, in the *Aurora* frigate, which perished at sea.¹

Conversion of
Romanists
and others.

23. During the absence of the German soldiers with the army, M. Kiernander was more at liberty

(¹) For part of this information the author is indebted to Mr. Vansittart's noble son, Lord Bexley. The rest is taken from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1765.



to attend to the Natives. His exertions among the Bengalees were straitened by his imperfect acquaintance with their language; but he was very assiduous with those who understood Portuguese, Heathen as well as Romanists. He now preached to them twice on the Lord's Day, and these services were well attended. Among the converts in 1764 there were three Malays, a married couple and a seaman; also three Portuguese, one of whom was a young man in the School, named Domingo Simon, aged eighteen, who became very useful in teaching the younger scholars. Several other Romanists, who attended his Church, avowed their conviction of the truth of what they heard, and their desire to join the Protestants; but they postponed it for the present.

24. The Portuguese were very numerous at Calcutta, and Kiernander was indefatigable in distributing among them the religious Tracts in their language which the Brethren had sent from Tranquebar. This roused their priests again to oppose him. Of all the Romish Priests in India, those in Bengal seem to have been hitherto the most inattentive to their people's instruction and morals²; but no sooner was the attempt made to enlighten them, than they took the alarm, and exerted every means in their power to prevent the escape of any from their domination. So great was their influence, that it was with the utmost difficulty that Kiernander, or any Protestant, could hold communication with their people; and the methods whereby they laboured to maintain it will be best understood by the description of one or two cases. A woman who had joined the Protestant Church was taken dangerously ill, when she desired to see M. Kier-

Hostility
of Romish
Priests.

(²) The low state of the Roman Mission in Bengal has been mentioned in a former part of this History. Book v. c. 3. s. 2.



ander, and to receive the Lord's Supper at his hands; but the priests contrived clandestinely to prevent the meeting, and to deprive her of the consolation of that ordinance at her last moments: and when she died, they had her buried in their own cemetery, pretending that she had returned to their communion. They were afterwards convicted of having surreptitiously drawn up her will in their own favour, which was so manifestly unjust towards her family, that it was set aside in the Mayor's Court.

Whenever a European Protestant married a Romanist, and the children were baptized by the English Chaplain, it was the constant practice of these priests to take advantage of the father's absence from home, or of his death, to re-baptize the children, that they might claim them as members of their own Church; and whenever the Protestant Clergy demurred about marrying a couple, in consequence of some legal impediments, the priests immediately stepped in and performed the ceremony, without asking any questions about the lawfulness of the union. By such methods did they labour to impede the progress of Christianity in the country, and thereby confirm the intolerant character of their Church.

Lord Clive
concludes
peace
with the
Native
Powers.

25. In May 1765 Lord Clive arrived to take charge of the Government, with full powers, together with a Select Committee, to negotiate peace with the Natives, which he lost no time in settling upon a firm basis, and on terms highly advantageous to the East-India Company. He was also empowered to act in other matters as often as he and the Committee might deem it expedient, without consulting the Council, or being subject to its controul.¹ This propitious state of affairs encouraged M.

(¹) Mill's *British India*. 8vo ed. 1820. Vol. iii. pp. 322 *et seq.*



Kiernander to reiterate his application to the Society for one or two fellow-labourers, in the confidence that the Lord would open a door for them in every part of the country, when they should have learned the native languages.

26. Soon after the conclusion of peace, the German soldiers returned to Calcutta, when Kiernander resumed his service in their language. His own congregation was augmented this year with twelve converts from Romanism, eight adult Bengalees, and fifteen children. Of his native flock, nineteen were communicants; and he bears testimony to the improvement in character of all under his charge, stating that they were more devout at Public Worship, and more careful in conforming their lives to the precepts of the Gospel. In the following year thirty-nine were added to the Church; making a total, since the commencement, of one hundred and eighty-nine.² About half these converts were from Romanism: of the other moiety, about two-thirds were children of the Romish converts, and one-third Heathen, with one Jew.

Present
state of
the Mis-
sion.

27. The Jew, named Aaron Levi, was baptized in 1766. He had lived formerly at Smyrna, with his father, an officer in the Dutch Custom House. After leaving his father, he went to England, where he learned the language of the country, and lived for some years with one of his own nation. Subse-

Conversion
of a Jew.

(²) The numbers in each year were—

| | |
|----------------|----|
| 1759 | 15 |
| 1760 | 11 |
| 1761 | 24 |
| 1762 | 4 |
| 1763 | 29 |
| 1764 | 32 |
| 1765 | 35 |
| 1766 | 39 |

—189

CHAP.
I.

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CHAP.
I.

quently he sailed for Bombay; and suffering much from sickness on the voyage, he was induced to attend the Church prayers, which were read on board every Sunday; and he derived so much comfort and instruction from them, that he became desirous to embrace Christianity. On his recovery, however, and return to the business of the world, he seems to have lost these favourable impressions; until, on his arrival at Calcutta, they were revived under a return of indisposition, and again he resolved to become a Christian. In his anxiety for instruction, he consulted a Jewish convert to Romanism, who advised him to apply to a Romish Priest; but his abhorrence of image-worship was so strong that he at once rejected this advice, and applied to the Protestant Missionary. M. Kiernander found him very determined in his resolution to join the Church of Christ; and as he understood Hebrew well, and had a tolerable knowledge of English, he gave him a Bible in each language, directing him specially to study the 22d Psalm and the 53d of Isaiah. Levi took the books home, and came back to him next day, when he avowed his conviction that both David and Isaiah pointed to Jesus as *the* Christ; that it was in vain to look for another; and that, therefore, he would believe in Him. After some further instruction in the Scriptures, on the 26th of October 1766 Kiernander baptized him by the names of John Charles, which seemed to relieve his mind of a heavy load. The appearance of dejection was supplanted by cheerfulness and contentment. On Sundays he was regular in his attendance at Church, and on other days he diligently followed his usual calling. M. Kiernander was greatly encouraged by the conversion of this son of Abraham at so early a period of his Mission, regarding it as an omen of its future prosperity.¹

(1) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1767.



28. At this period the Schools were in a satisfactory state. Besides educating five of the present Teachers, they had already produced several clerks and other servants for the public offices and courts ; and some of the scholars were in the employment of private gentlemen. This was a valuable return for the patronage which the Schools had received from the officers of Government. Though few of these youths had embraced Christianity, yet M. Kiernander ventured to hope, that, as the principles of true religion had been inculcated on their minds, their fidelity and good conduct would be such as to ensure the esteem of those who employed them, and that the general benefit thus accruing from the education given in the Schools, would recommend the Mission itself to the favour and protection of the East-India Company.

Public
benefit of
the
Schools.

In 1767, the house which the Government had lent for the use of the Mission being required for the public service, M. Kiernander resolved to purchase some ground, and build a Church at his own expense. He had been for some time in comparative opulence, having, after the decease of his wife in 1761, married a widow of some property, Mrs. Anne Wolley. A considerable portion of his income he devoted to the cause of God ; and in the month of May he began to lay the foundation of his new Church, and to prepare materials for the building. It was calculated that the whole expense would amount to twenty thousand Sicca rupees², which he hoped to supply without increasing the burden of the Christian-Knowledge Society.

SECOND
DECADE.
1767-1776.

Com-
mence-
ment of a
new
Church.

About this period the Court of the Emperor, SHAH ALLUM, at Allahabad, requested from him some copies of the Psalter and New Testament, in Arabic. He gladly complied with the request ; and

(²) 2500*l.* sterling.

CHAP.
I.Conversion of M.
Bento, a
Romish
Priest.Bento's
employ-
ment in
the Mis-
sion.

hearing that the books were well received by his Majesty's Mullahs (Priests), he was encouraged to send them further supplies, until he had none left.¹

2. Of thirty-six converts this year, twenty were Romanists; and in 1768 a priest of that communion joined the Protestant Church. His name was Francis Bento de Sylvestre, of the Order of Augustin, and forty years of age. He had officiated formerly on the western coast, but had latterly been employed in Bengal, especially at Calcutta, where he learned the truth of the Gospel. His own account of the progress of his mind from darkness to light he thus described, in a Letter to the Christian-Knowledge Society. After stating that he was a native of Goa, born of European parents, and that he had served as "a Popish Missionary in Bengal upwards of fifteen years," he declared that, "having discovered the false zeal, hidden malice, and unwarranted doctrines of the Church of Rome, he thought that continuing in that communion would tend rather to the ruin than the salvation of his soul." For this reason, he added, he had quitted the Romish Church and embraced the Protestant faith, in which, by the grace of God, he was firmly purposed to live and die.²

3. After much deliberation and fervent prayer, on the 7th of February he deliberately abjured the errors and superstitions of Rome, and M. Kiernander publicly received him into the Protestant Church. The Society afterwards took him into their service, to be employed in the Bengal Mission; and as he understood French, Portuguese, Bengalee, and Hindostanee, he became, through Divine assistance, very successful in publishing the Gospel of Christ in those parts. Besides preaching regularly in Por-

(¹) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1768. Asiaticus, pp. 25, 26.

(²) Ibid. 1769.



tuguese to the congregation at Calcutta, he had a little flock at a village called Parull, distant about a day's journey, where the Natives, chiefly Romanists, assembled from the surrounding villages for instruction, preparatory to their being received into the bosom of the Church of England. These people are described as very attentive ; and there were no less than five hundred Catechumens, hitherto Romanists by profession, who avowed their desire to follow Padre Bento's example.

Besides these public ministrations, he employed himself in translating the Church Catechism and many parts of the Common Prayer into Bengalee, for his own use ; and he found them of essential service in conducting Divine Worship, and in teaching the candidates for admission into the Church.

4. M. Bento proved a valuable colleague to Kierlander, whose hands were further strengthened at this time by the temporary assistance of another convert from the Romish priesthood, Da Costa, mentioned above³, who preached alternately with M. Bento in Portuguese. The effect of their united testimony against the errors of Rome and for the truth of the Gospel was such as to fill the conclave of Goa with alarm ; and in July 1769 a priest arrived at Calcutta, who declared himself to be commissioned by them to excommunicate Padre Bento, provided he refused to return to the Romish communion. This man wrote him a letter, containing the several charges alleged against him, and demanding an answer within twenty-four hours. But he replied to them immediately, and desired that his answers might be publicly read in their Church. As, however, he knew the Romish priesthood too well to expect from them even this measure of candour, he himself distributed copies of

Romanists' opposition unavailing.

(³) Madras Mission. Decade v. sect. 2.



Promising
cases of
conversion.

his letter in Calcutta, which served to increase the stir among the Romanists in his favour. But he heard nothing more of the man from Goa, nor of the priests who had joined him; for they found the people too well instructed in the doctrines of pure Christianity to submit any longer to their imperious dictation; and the "vain threats" of the stranger "did not in the smallest degree affect the Protestant Mission in Calcutta."¹

5. Among the Heathen converts in 1769 there was a Bengalee of some promise, twenty-four years of age. He was baptized by the name of Thomas; and such was his proficiency in religious knowledge and the Portuguese language that he was soon found competent for the duties of a Catechist, in which office he became very acceptable and useful to his countrymen. A Chinese, from Canton, was likewise baptized this year, who settled afterwards at Calcutta. There were several other interesting cases, both among the Bengalees and Romanists, received about this time into the Church. One of the latter was a native of Leghorn, named Antonio Scaffery, who had resided at Calcutta twenty-nine years, and was now fifty-nine years of age. For some time past his mind had been exercised with doubts concerning the religion of Rome; and at length he avowed, with gratitude to the Lord, his conviction of the Truth as revealed in the New Testament. Indeed, the movement among the Romanists in Bengal continued to spread, under the ministry of Padre Bento, notwithstanding the persevering endeavours of their priests to counteract his influence.

(¹) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1771. Asiaticus, p. 26. It will serve to mark the progress of Christian benevolence in Bengal, to mention, in this place, that the Presidency General Hospital in Calcutta was commenced in the year 1768.—Hist. of Calcutta Institutions, by C. Lushington, Esq. p. 291.



6. This year Captain Griffin bequeathed the residue of his estate to the Mission; but his property was found to be so scattered, and his accounts in so irregular a state, that it was very doubtful whether any thing would be left for the Mission after all the legal demands on the estate should be discharged.² This was a great disappointment to Kiernander; but we find him, in the following year, acknowledging with gratitude the Lord's fatherly care over him and his Mission, in supplying all their wants amid the general famine that prevailed around him, and even giving him a sufficiency to relieve others who were perishing with hunger. Thus did the gracious providence of God make this Mission another Goshen amid the calamity that was depopulating the country.³

Grievous
famine
in 1770.
Mission
preserved
from its
effects.

(²) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1771. The anonymous author of *ASIATICUS* avers (p. 26), "I have seen the will and papers of Capt. GRIFFIN, and can assert, that of the residuary legacy left to the Mission not one cash ever was realized."

(³) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1772. In this calamity above fourteen hundred thousand persons are said to have perished in Calcutta and its vicinity; while at Muxadabad, Patna, and other places, the mortality was much greater. In expectation of this famine, in consequence of a long drought, large quantities of rice and other provisions had been laid up in store; but several of these granaries were consumed by fire, which greatly aggravated the poor people's distress. "The whole valley of the Ganges," was filled "with misery and death. Tender and delicate women, whose veils had never been lifted before the public gaze, came forth from the inner chambers in which eastern jealousy had kept watch over their beauty, threw themselves on the earth before the passers-by, and, with loud wailings, implored a handful of rice for their children. The Hooghly every day rolled down thousands of corpses close to the porticos and gardens of the English conquerors. The very streets of Calcutta were blocked up by the dying and the dead. The lean and feeble survivors had not energy enough to bear the bodies of their kindred to the funeral pile or to the holy river, or even to scare away the jackals and vultures who fed on human remains in the face of day. The extent of the mortality was never ascertained; but it was popularly reckoned by millions."—Macaulay's *Critical and Historical Essays*. Vol. iii. p. 194.

CHAP.
I.Comple-
tion of
the new
Church.

7. The Mission Church, after much delay, in consequence of the architect's death, and from other minor causes, was finished in December 1770, and M. Kiernander consecrated it on the Fourth Sunday in Advent, by the name of BETH-TEPHILLAH.¹ Though erected chiefly at his own expense, yet he set it apart for the use of the Mission, under the care of the Christian-Knowledge Society. Thus, after a lapse of fourteen years from the time that the Mahomedans destroyed the old Church, Calcutta beheld a substantial Place of Worship completed, at the responsibility, and almost at the expense, of a stranger. But it proved a much heavier undertaking than he had expected, costing not less than sixty thousand rupees², and thus exceeding the original estimate by five thousand pounds. Towards this very serious amount he received in benefactions no more than eighteen hundred and eighteen rupees, and was therefore responsible for the remainder. This excess of expenditure was occasioned chiefly by the alterations made in the plan and materials during the progress of the building, as M. Kiernander found it necessary, in consequence of the increase of his flock, to make it more commodious than he had originally contemplated, and was also desirous that it should be a permanent structure. Divine Service was henceforth performed in it on Sundays, both in English and Portuguese; and also on Wednesdays and Fridays, when the young were publicly catechized. The English communicants were eighty-five, and the Portuguese and other Natives, sixty-nine.³

Conver-
sion of F.
J. Hanson,
a Romish
Priest.

8. Padre Bento proved, as had been anticipated, an efficient colleague to M. Kiernander; and on

(¹) Hebrew—*House of Prayer*.

(²) 7500*l.* sterling.

(³) Memorial Sketches of the Rev. D. Brown, Chaplain at Calcutta, p. 284. Asiaticus, p. 26.



January 1st, 1772, another priest, named Francis Joseph Hanson, abjured the apostacy of Rome, and embraced the Protestant faith. He was born at Vienna in 1739; educated and ordained in the Roman Church; had officiated for some time in Europe; and was then sent to Bussorah, as a Missionary of the order of Carmelites, where he laboured four years. By reading the Scriptures he had, through the Divine blessing, been brought to the knowledge of the Truth, and, in consequence, to a full conviction of the numerous and perilous errors of Rome. The same gracious influence which disclosed to his mind the system of falsehood in which he had been trained, also inspired him with resolution to forsake it. Accordingly, on his removal to Calcutta he went to M. Kiernander, and opened to him all his mind. Disburdened of his labouring thoughts, he listened with avidity to all that the Missionary said; found his own previous views of the Gospel thoroughly confirmed; and, in about a month after his arrival, he publicly read his abjuration of the Church of Rome, and then delivered the document to M. Kiernander, who received him as a member of his flock. This was followed by prayer, singing the Hundredth Psalm, and an appropriate sermon by the Missionary.⁴ The Lord's Supper was then administered to the convert and others. The Church was crowded on the solemn occasion; the Governor, several Members of Council, the Rev. Dr. Burns, Chaplain, and many other English gentlemen being present.

M. Hanson was a man of considerable intelligence and good abilities, being acquainted with eight

(4) On Rev. xviii. 4, 5. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."

CHAP.
I.Conversion of
another
Priest, M.
J. Ramal-
hete.

languages, and every way competent for the service of God in the Mission, in which he desired to be engaged. As, however, Kiernander was expecting a colleague from Europe, he could not at present undertake to engage him; but he obtained employment for him in the public service, in which he gave great satisfaction.¹

9. On the 29th of November in the same year another priest renounced the errors and abominations of his Church; and on this occasion, also, M. Kiernander delivered a suitable discourse. This convert's name was Marcellino Joseph Ramalhete. He was awakened to the discovery of his ignorance in religion about four years before, at the abjuration of Padre Bento, with whom he had since carried on a secret correspondence. He had also diligently read the Bible and other religious works with which Kiernander had furnished him, until his search after truth had, under God, wrought in his mind a thorough conviction of the errors of Rome, and a firm resolve to forsake her communion. There were one or two more Padres at Calcutta who seemed almost ready to yield to the force of truth; and this movement of the priests kept alive and extended the stir already created among their people, who became more and more desirous to read the Bible and other Protestant books which were distributed among them. M. Ramalhete was anxious to be sent up the country, in order to preach the Truth as it is in Jesus to those who were still in the bondage from which he was now set free; but the low state of the Society's funds, and their present engagement to send out two new Missionaries, precluded them at this time from taking him upon their establishment.² He gave

(¹) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1773.

(²) Ibid. 1774.



himself, however, to the service of the Lord in the Portuguese congregation at Calcutta, content with the scanty subsistence which Kiernander and Bento were able to afford him out of their own salaries. He was of special service during the illness of Padre Bento; and his disinterested conduct was a satisfactory evidence that he had embraced the Protestant faith from no mercenary motive. "Though very poor," Kiernander remarked, in his Report to the Society, "and burdened with many wants, his contented mind, by the grace of God, greatly alleviates his distress."

10. Among the adult converts this year there were several cases worthy of notice. One was a Heathen woman, born at Macassar, but now residing at Chinsurah. She came to Calcutta with an earnest desire after the knowledge of God and the Redeemer; and the Missionary describes her as receiving instruction with an open heart, and testifying her gratitude for the Divine goodness towards her. After her baptism she married a Dutch gentleman at Chinsurah, and her Christian deportment gave great satisfaction to all who knew her. A female convert from Romanism may also be mentioned, as tending to show the collateral benefit resulting from the sound instruction given to the school children. She was a Portuguese, from Chandernagore, and had resided a considerable time at Calcutta, where her son attended the Mission School. When he returned home in the evening, he took pleasure in reading the New Testament to his mother, and she was no less pleased to hear him, until, through the Divine Blessing on the instruction thus imparted, she resolved to renounce the errors of Popery and join the Protestant Church. A Portuguese man likewise, at Calcutta, who had long wished to separate from the Roman Church, but had been prevailed on by his wife to postpone it,

Satisfac-
tory con-
versions.

CHAP.
I.

Mrs. Kier-
nander's
death—her
bequest
to the
Mission.

now, upon her decease, fulfilled his desire, bringing with him a son and two daughters, who willingly followed their father's example.¹

11. In June 1773 M. Kiernander was afflicted with the loss of his second wife, after an illness of six months' continuance. Before her sickness she had resolved to dispose of some of her jewels for the benefit of the Mission, and was waiting an opportunity to sell them to the best advantage. A few days after her decease her sorrowing husband found consolation in executing her will, and with the proceeds of her bequest he built a spacious School-room. It was erected on his own ground, to the east of the Church, and consisted of three large rooms, calculated to contain two hundred and fifty children. The building was completed on the 14th of March 1774.²

Romanists'
reasons for
not follow-
ing their
convic-
tions.

12. As the Portuguese were become very desirous to read the Scriptures in their own tongue, Kier-nander obtained for them, from Tranquebar and Madras, a good supply of Bibles and religious Tracts, which they read privately in their houses, without regard to the denunciations of their priests. Many of them told him that they could see plainly enough numerous absurdities and abuses in their own religion; but they observed, that as he had now been at Calcutta more than fifteen years without any one coming to assist and succeed him, they must still hesitate to renounce their Church, lest they should be left altogether destitute of a guide. M. Kier-nander himself no less felt the importance of a colleague. Though in good health, yet his eyes were growing so dim that he was apprehensive of soon losing his sight. This circumstance, together with the not unreasonable objection of these Portu-

(¹) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1774.

(²) Ibid. Asiaticus, pp. 26, 27.



guesse inquirers, naturally increased his anxiety to have an assistant from Europe without delay.

13. The Society were by no means inattentive to the wants of this important Mission; but they were unsuccessful in several applications to the Divinity Professor at Halle for two Missionaries. In 1773 one young man offered himself to the work, named John Christman Diemer, who sailed from England in December 1773, in company with M. Kiernander's two children, who had been sent home for education. The East-India Company granted them all a free passage on one of their ships.³ After a tedious voyage, they reached Calcutta February 19th, 1775. For a few months the Missionaries lived together, until M. Diemer's marriage with a young lady at Calcutta, when he removed to a house belonging to his father-in-law. His progress in the study of English was such, that he soon assisted in the public service; and by the month of September he was able to preach in that language. He officiated at Chinsurah also, in German, where his ministrations were most acceptable.

A new
Missionary
arrives at
Calcutta.

14. M. Kiernander, on the death of his principal Schoolmaster, found great difficulty in supplying his place, owing to the demand for assistants for the Government service. Men of ordinary abilities could obtain much higher wages in any public office than the Mission could afford to give. At length a respectable man was induced to undertake the office for one hundred rupees⁴ a month, just double the stipend of Padre Bento; and the four Assistants were paid in equal proportion. Kiernander describes them all as well qualified for their duties, and discharging them to his satisfaction; and though their pay was great, it did not exceed the

Difficulty
in obtain-
ing suit-
able
Teachers.

(³) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1774.

(⁴) About 12*l.* sterling.

CHAP.
I.

Desecra-
tion of the
Lord's Day
in Calcut-
ta—good
result from
honouring
it.

half of what they might have obtained in secular employment.

15. About this time he was greatly distressed at the general profanation of the Lord's Day by Europeans in Calcutta; and his remarks upon it may be useful to others under similar circumstances. He wrote to the Society, "Supposing that the law lays no restraint upon the Heathen in this particular, though the stranger within thy gates is included within the commandment, yet I cannot see why the Europeans, in their settlements, should, in this respect, conform to Paganism. When the Heathen have their festivals they cease from labour, and observe them strictly, and then the Europeans stop their works; but on Sundays the Natives are allowed to go on with their labours, which are not suspended even during the time of public worship. When I built the Church, the School, &c., I never suffered any work to be done on that day; and yet, as I hired the labourers by the month, I always paid them for seven days, though they worked only six; and I observed they did more in the six days by having the seventh to rest. When their festivals did not fall on a *Sunday*, they would not mind the lesser ones at all, but continue their work as usual; and on the greater ones, which last sometimes three or four days, would only absent themselves the last afternoon to go to their feast. Hence I judge it not impracticable to bring the stranger within our gates to a nearer conformity to the commandment; at least, there can be no reason why Christians should break the Divine injunction in compliment to Heathenism. This makes them, with their Lord's Day, appear very contemptible in the eyes of the pagans: whereas, could they once see the Christian religion practised, and good examples set them, in this and other respects, by the *Europeans*, it would soon weaken the strongest objection they have



against Christianity, and, in time, make way for them to come in by flocks." ¹ Seeing that this wise, considerate, and Christian conduct commanded such respect for a private individual, and so much consideration for his interest on the part of the Heathen in his employment, had his example been followed by other Christians, instead of the compromising and irreligious, the timid and selfish course which they too generally adopted, they would have gained an hundredfold more in the good opinion of the Natives ; and it is impossible to calculate the extent to which, with the Divine blessing, they might thereby have commended the Christian religion to the benighted pagans around them. Ignorant and selfish as the Hindoos are, we here see that they can understand and appreciate Christian character ; and fearful is the responsibility of those persons whose conduct can tend only to prejudice their minds against the Gospel of Christ.

16. We may specially notice one of the adult converts from paganism this year, named Gunnesawn Doss. He was born at Delhi, had joined the English army at the age of fifteen, and served several officers as Persian interpreter. In 1770 he accompanied one of them to England, where he met with much kind attention, and instructed several persons in the Persian language. Returning to Calcutta in 1774, the year when Judges were first sent to India, and the Supreme Court of Judicature was established at Calcutta ², he was appointed Persian interpreter and translator to the Court. Not long after, he began occasionally to attend the Mission Church, where he listened attentively to the preachers, until,

Conversion of a
Persian
scholar.

(¹) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1776. Abstract of Reports, pp.173—175.

(²) Mill's British India. Vol iv. pp. 267. *et. seq.*

CHAP.
I.

Conversion of a
Romanist
and his
household.

in May 1775, he avowed to one of them his intention to become a Christian, and expressed a desire to be baptized. They found him well acquainted with the Catechism, the Book of Common Prayer, the Bible, and several other religious books, which he had read in England; and his knowledge of Christianity thence obtained led to his conviction of its truth, and his abhorrence of his former religion and mode of life. Being persuaded that he was sincere in his determination to renounce the idolatries of his country, and trust in Christ alone for salvation, the Missionary baptized him by the name of Robert. His sponsors were the Honourable Mr. Justice Chambers and his lady, and a Mr. Naylor.¹ It is interesting thus to see persons of the first rank in India taking so lively an interest in the conversion of the Natives. They could not use their influence more to their own honour, or in a way better calculated to promote the glory of God.

17. Among the converts from Romanism also there was one worthy of notice. This was a young man who had been educated some time before in the Mission School. His object in attending the School was merely to learn to read and write English; but he confessed that what he had heard when the other children were catechized made an impression on his mind which he could not obliterate, and prompted him to inquire into the reasons of the difference between the Protestant and Romish persuasions. At length, by reading the Bible in Portuguese, he had become fully satisfied that truth was on the side of the Protestants, and resolved to embrace their religion. He disposed of his house at Bandel, at that time the only Portuguese settle-

(¹) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1777. Abstract of Reports, pp. 179, 180.



ment in Bengal, for the purpose of settling at Calcutta, and his wife and two children, with his seven slaves, joined the Church with him.

18. Among the deaths in the Mission this year was that of an old Portuguese, who was converted many years ago under the ministry of M. Schultze at Madras. Circumstances obliged him to go to Calcutta, where, finding no Protestant ministry on which he could attend, he relapsed to the Romish Church. As soon, however, as M. Kiernander arrived, he gladly embraced the opportunity of retracing his steps to the true fold, and evinced heartfelt sorrow for his former backsliding. Since that time he had been diligent in attending public worship, reading the Scriptures, and receiving the Lord's Supper. While thus careful for his own soul, he lost no opportunity to admonish others also; and he had a particular method of convincing Romanists of their errors, which God had blessed to the conversion of several. He died about this time at the age of ninety-two.²

Two other
Romish
converts.

One of the converts from Romanism in 1776, a man of good repute among his neighbours, had requested M. Diemer to set him right in the following articles of his creed: the worshipping of images, saints, and the Virgin Mary; purgatory, the mass, and transubstantiation. Satisfied with the Missionary's refutation of those errors, he found rest for his mind, and became a constant attendant on the services of the Church. He then strenuously exerted himself, by exhortation and instruction, to prevail on his wife and others to turn from Popery to the Protestant faith; but it is not stated with what effect.

(²) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1777. Abstract of Reports, pp. 179, 180.

CHAP.
I.Mission
cemetery.
Alms
houses—
endow-
ment.

19. The Mission was augmented during this Decade with four hundred and ninety-five souls.¹ The communicants of the English and Portuguese congregations attending the Mission Church were, together, one hundred and ninety-two. The School contained at present no more than eighty-eight children, several having recently left for service whose places were not yet filled up.

Some years before M. Kiernander had purchased a piece of ground for a cemetery, which he now enclosed with a brick wall. Last year he had built seventeen alms-houses for poor widows, who were dependent on the funds at his disposal. Several small legacies had from time to time been bequeathed to the Mission, amounting together to fifteen hundred rupees, which he placed in the public funds, trusting that it would form the nucleus of a permanent endowment.

Sickness of
the Missio-
naries.

20. At this time the want of efficient Missionaries was severely felt. M. Diemer was suffering from a pulmonary affection, which compelled him to relinquish all duty, and retire to Chinsurah. In the following year he rallied sufficiently to return to Calcutta and resume part of his work for a short time; but in a very feeble manner. M. Kiernander also, who took his place in the pulpit, was soon obliged to desist, in consequence of his dimness of

(¹) The numbers were—

| | |
|-----------|----|
| 1767..... | 36 |
| 1768..... | 42 |
| 1769..... | 49 |
| 1770..... | 48 |
| 1771..... | 33 |
| 1772..... | 41 |
| 1773..... | 55 |
| 1774..... | 47 |
| 1775..... | 67 |
| 1776..... | 77 |



sight and other infirmities of age. The only person left to conduct the service was his son, who had already read the Lessons and Prayers for M. Diemer, and now preached for his father. Though not in orders, yet it was deemed advisable, by Mr. Justice Chambers and other friends at Calcutta, that he should officiate for the present, rather than suspend the service altogether till the arrival of another Missionary.²

1. This state of his own and his colleague's health, and also the increasing delicacy of Padre Bento, induced Kiernander to apply to the Brethren at Tranquebar for help. They sent him M. Koenig, who remained at Calcutta a few months, officiating in the Portuguese language. In 1778 he returned to Tranquebar, when his place at Calcutta was supplied by M. Gerlach, the junior Missionary. Kiernander's son continued to officiate in the Church, and Padre Ramalheté was actively employed as a Catechist.

THIRD
DECADE.
1777 to
1786.

Two Mis-
sionaries
from
Tranque-
bar.

2. Notwithstanding this paucity of labourers, the Portuguese and Bengalee congregations continued to improve both in numbers and character. The communicants were increased to two hundred, and the piety of several of them was such as to attract observation.³ This Report was confirmed by Mr. William Chambers, in a Letter to M. Swartz, as we gather from the answer of the latter. "It is cheering," he writes, "to reflect on the externally devout behaviour of the congregation. Oh may the Spirit of Jesus come on them like a rain, that the Bengal desert may become a fertile soil, and fruitful field of the Lord!" "It is a most pleasing reflection to me, which has been much strengthened by the reading of your favour, that God is able to raise

Improve-
ment in
the Chris-
tians.

(²) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1778.

(³) Ibid. 1779, 1780.

CHAP.
I.

Himself servants to do His will, and to promote the glory of His Name, though those who are most obliged to do it should turn faithless to their charge." Allusion is here made to the misconduct of some person whom Mr. Chambers had been the means of awakening to a sense of his duty.¹

The sickness of all the Missionaries interrupted their correspondence with the Society till April 1781, when a short Letter from M. Kiernander mentions an accession of ninety-five to the Church since their last Report.² The next Letter added thirty to this number in the same year. The Missionaries were then all restored to health; and M. Kiernander himself, who at one time was almost blind, had been couched; and by this operation he so far recovered his sight as to be able, in some measure, to resume his duties. He mentions, as an unusual instance of piety among the British in Bengal, the devout attendance of Sir Eyre Coote's lady at the Mission Church, stating that her example exercised a happy influence on others. The Missionaries were thankful for this distinguished countenance of their exertions, and encouraged by its effects.³ In 1782 the printing of the Book of Common Prayer in Portuguese was finished.

A convert
from
Cochin
China.

3. Among the adults baptized in 1783 there was a young man from Cochin China, who, upon war breaking out in his own country, had fled with his family into the woods for protection, and, losing his way, wandered near the coast, where an English ship lay at anchor, the captain of which received him on board, and brought him to Calcutta. Some time after, the captain recommended him to the service of an English gentleman, who sent him to

(¹) Memoirs of Swartz. Vol. i. pp. 336, 337.

(²) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1782.

(³) Ibid. 1783. Asiaticus, p. 27.



the Calcutta Mission School, paying for his education. Here he remained four years, when, having made good progress in writing and accounts, he was employed in a Government office. But he had learned something better than this. The Bible was his favourite reading; and after he left School he continued to improve the religious knowledge which he had acquired, and never omitted attending Divine Service on the Lord's Day. When sufficiently instructed, and, as far as man could judge, under the influence of Divine truth and grace, he was received into the Church by baptism.

4. At the conclusion of the last Decade⁴ mention was made of a small sum which M. Kiernander placed in Government Securities, towards the formation of an endowment for the Mission. In 1783 he added to it another thousand rupees; his son gave three thousand; and the Rev. Westrowe Hulse, Chaplain to Sir Eyre Coote, contributed five hundred more. An account was given above⁵ of the establishment of a fund for the support of a School and other charitable purposes. This fund was subsequently augmented, by the restitution money which the Mahomedans were required to pay for pulling down the English Church at the capture of Calcutta in 1756; by a large donation⁶ from the estate of a wealthy native, named Omichund, who died in Calcutta in 1763; and by a bequest of about seven thousand rupees, in 1773, from M. Lawrence Constantius, an opulent Portuguese merchant. Government also, upon the enlargement of the Court House by the inhabitants of Calcutta, engaged to double their original contribution, making it eight hundred rupees a month; and when the Court

Contributions to the Mission and Charity Fund.

(⁴) Section 19.

(⁵) Decade i. sect. 4.

(⁶) It is not certain whether the amount was twenty, twenty-five, or thirty thousand rupees.—*Asiaticus*, pp. 7. 18, 19.

CHAP.
I.Military
Orphan
Asylum.State of
the Mis-
sion.

House was pulled down, they agreed with the churchwardens to pay that sum in perpetuity.¹

5. The Charity School for twenty boys, maintained out of this fund, was followed, in the year 1783, by a more extended establishment, called the Bengal Military Orphan Society. This valuable Institution owed its origin to the benevolent proposal of Major-General Kirkpatrick; and its object was, to provide permanent funds for the maintenance of the children of officers dying in indigent circumstances. To these were afterwards added the children of soldiers, whether born of European or native mothers. The officers of the army generally allowed a portion of their pay to be stopped for the support of this establishment.² In 1786 it was placed under the superintendence of one of the Chaplains, Rev. David Brown, who had arrived that year from England.³ The founding of this asylum for the friendless orphan we may regard as another indication of the growing improvement of the European society in Bengal.

6. But the Calcutta Mission was in a state to cause great anxiety to its friends. In 1783 M. Diemer's declining health compelled him to return to Europe. In 1786 Padre Bento, whose health had been declining for some time past, was released from his sufferings; and M. Kiernander, who had recently been enjoying some respite from labour, was now, at the age of seventy-four, and after a period exceeding forty-five years of Missionary service, obliged again to resume the active duties of his office. The Native Schools contained about one hundred and fifty children. The communi-

(¹) Asiaticus, p. 19. Hist. of Calcutta Institutions, by C. Lushington, Esq. pp. 322, 323.

(²) Lushington's History of Calcutta Institutions, pp. 229, *et seq.* Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1785, p. 94.

(³) Memorial Sketches of Rev. D. Brown, p. 8.



cants amounted to two hundred and eighty; five hundred and eighteen souls⁴ were added to the Church during this Decade; and there was every appearance of an increasing interest among the Heathen and Mahomedans in favour of Christianity⁵; but without efficient labourers, little improvement could be made of these encouraging indications.

1. For some time after M. Kiernander's marriage with Mrs. Wolley, the rich widow mentioned above, he was considered one of the wealthiest men in Calcutta; and we have seen the beneficial use he made of a considerable portion of his money. Besides erecting the Church, Schoolroom, and Mission House, almost at his own expense, he was the chief stay of the Mission when struggling with pecuniary difficulties. His charities to the poor also, who thronged the Mission Premises for relief, were profuse; and he is supposed to have expended upon Missionary objects upwards of one hundred thousand rupees⁶ of his private funds.

FOURTH
DECADE.1787 to
1796.M. Kiernander's
liberality.

2. Thus far, then, his possession of wealth had proved a public benefit; but we must give the shade as well as the light of the picture. During the past year he saw the cloud of adversity gathering

His pecu-
niary em-
barrass-
ments.

| | |
|------------------|----|
| (*) In 1777..... | 74 |
| 1778..... | 75 |
| 1779 } | 95 |
| 1780 } | |
| 1781..... | 30 |
| 1782..... | 39 |
| 1783..... | 53 |
| 1785..... | 81 |
| 1786..... | 71 |

—518

(*) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Reports, 1787, 1788. Asiaticus, p. 27.

(6) About 12,000*l.* sterling. Swartz's Memoirs. Vol. ii. pp. 261, &c.

CHAP.
I.

around him; and at last, in 1787, it burst upon his hoary head. It was not the large sums he bestowed on charitable objects that impaired his fortune, but his profuse expenditure of the remainder. His second marriage had connected him with some of the most opulent families in Bengal, and his riches introduced him to others in similar circumstances. In the friendly intercourse which he thought it proper to maintain with these parties he was induced to adopt their mode of living, hoping thereby to gain an influence over them which might enable him gradually to lead them into the paths of religion. But, alas! instead of succeeding with them, he himself became the victim of his worldly conformity. His wealth soon began to waste away, and in the hope of repairing his ruined fortune he entered into several secular speculations; but his schemes all failed: his Missionary character was gone; and he found himself involved in pecuniary difficulties from which he had no means of extricating himself. Under circumstances so distressing, he naturally wished to retire from the scene of his humiliation; and, in several of his recent letters to the Christian-Knowledge Society, he expressed a wish to be allowed to return to Europe, on the plea of the infirmities of age, and earnestly solicited them to send out another Missionary, "lest his congregation should be forsaken, and his Church shut up." When, however, he thought of his little flock, again and again his heart misgave him. As he was now their only remaining pastor¹, and must have left them as sheep without a shepherd, he could not bear the thought of tearing himself away. .

He retires
from Cal-
cutta.

3. But necessity soon drove him from the post

(¹) It does not appear what became of M. Gerlach or Kiernander's son.



which he was so unwilling of his own accord to relinquish. His effects were seized; and the creditors claiming the Church as his personal property, the Sheriff of Calcutta affixed his seal to the door. No doubt it was "with a trembling hand" that he "closed the gates of BETH-TEPHILLAH;" but the magistrate must obey the law of which he is only the executor.² But with what feelings must the venerable Kiernander have seen the gates of the sanctuary thus barred against him through his own imprudence. Though in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and the forty-seventh of his Mission, he was more oppressed with grief than with natural infirmity as he withdrew from the scene of his useful labours, and fled for refuge to Chinsurah, where he spent the remainder of his days, in poverty, indeed, but not in disgrace; for he lived, as we shall see, to retrieve his character; and the memory of his misfortunes stands as a beacon to Christians in every situation, and especially to future Missionaries, to shun the entanglements of wealth and the allurements of the world. Our hearts deceive us if we flatter ourselves that we may be trusted with great wealth, or that we are sufficiently fortified with religious principle to venture uncalled into the society of irreligious men. If God leave us, we are sure to fall, like Kiernander; and the more eminent our past services and reputation, the deeper will be our shame.³

4. But the Lord did not forsake the Mission in this calamity. He raised up one servant to recover the Church, and another to supply its ministrations. The late Charles Grant, Esq., stepped forward, and

Committee
of Manage-
ment for
the Mis-
sion.

(²) Asiaticus, p. 27. Memoirs of Rev. D. Brown, p. 284.

(³) Asiaticus, pp. 27—29. Swartz's Memoirs. Vol. i. pp. 335, &c. Rev. D. Brown's Memoirs, pp. 284, &c. Dr. Brown's History of Christianity among the Heathen. Vol. i. pp. 213, &c.

CHAP.
I.

paid down ten thousand rupees, the sum at which the building was appraised; and the Rev. David Brown, the Chaplain mentioned above, undertook to perform gratuitously the English Services, so far as they might be compatible with his official duty. These two gentlemen, together with William Chambers, Esq., then formed themselves into a Committee of Management for the Mission, when the whole of the property was made over to them in trust for the Christian-Knowledge Society. They lost no time in acquainting the Society with these arrangements, tendering their services in any way that they could be made available; but at the same time they represented, in urgent terms, the necessity of a Missionary being sent out without delay to take charge of the Mission. This application was seconded by an appeal from another Chaplain, Rev. John Owen, who took a lively interest in the progress of Christianity in Bengal.

Rev. A. T. Clarke sails for Calcutta.

5. In acknowledging these communications, the Society expressed its entire approval of all that the Committee had done, and announced the appointment of Rev. Abraham Thomas Clarke as their Missionary to Calcutta. This was the first English Clergyman that went out as a Missionary to India. After taking leave of the Committee of the Society, in whose presence he received a solemn charge, to which he returned an appropriate reply¹, he sailed for India in the month of April 1789 on one of the Company's ships.

Rev. D. Brown's attention to the Mission.

6. In the meantime Mr. Brown was diligently preparing the ground for the expected Missionary. Though Chaplain to the Government and the Orphan Asylum, his heart yearned over the prostrate myriads in darkness around him. He possessed, in the most large and elevated sense, the spirit of a

(¹) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1789.



Missionary, whose office he had chosen, while young in years, as both the reasonable service and the gratification of his whole life. While his heart's cares and pains were for the Ministry, and for the real conversion of souls to God among his countrymen in India, his mind was perpetually busied about the Heathen, whom he longed to see members of that Lord whose cross was his own hope. With these feelings, ever since his arrival in the country he had diligently inquired into the state of all the Society's Missions, maintaining a correspondence with the Missionaries on the coast.²

7. Though deeply affected by the ignorance and superstition of the people, the arduous work of their instruction animated rather than discouraged him. He began by establishing a School for Hindoo children, about four years of age, who were forsaken by their relations in times of dearth. Some of them were orphans. To these he became a father, regarding them as his own family; and he had promises of support from a few pious persons, which encouraged him to persevere. He purchased some land for his scholars to cultivate, intending to support them partly by their own industry when old enough to work. While thankful to God for the fair prospect with which he was permitted to sow the first seed on the low ground of a Native School, he looked forward with animated hope, projected other plans, and invited his few devout friends in Calcutta to join with him in prayer for the Divine blessing upon his endeavours. They met once a month for this purpose, when they united their solemn supplications for the spreading of the Gospel in all the world, and especially in the provinces of Bengal. Mr. Chambers commenced a translation of the New Testament in Bengalee for

Estab-
lishes a
School for
Native
Orphans.

(²) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1789.

CHAP.
I.

Conversion of a
Teacher.

Mr. Brown
quits the
Asylum
for the
Mission.

the use of the School; but he made little progress in the work, in consequence of his numerous public avocations; nor did he live to complete this important task.¹

8. Not long after Mr. Brown had commenced his labours at the Mission Church he was further encouraged by the change wrought in the character of one of the Teachers under him, on whose mind the Gospel seemed to have produced a gradual and an abiding effect. This beginning of success made him the more urgent with his college friends and others at home, either to join him or to send him help.²

9. But his attention to Missionary objects soon awakened opposition on the part of some persons, who raised evil reports against him. The Managers of the Orphan Asylum, also, were not satisfied with his giving so much of his time to the Mission Church. Though he was careful not to let it interfere with his duties to this Institution; yet the Managers could not think the efficient discharge of both engagements compatible with each other. Not that they were hostile to his exertions for the Natives; quite the contrary: for in their correspondence with him on the subject, they declared themselves to be "impressed with a just sense of the laudable motives which influenced him in forming his engagements to officiate in the ministry of the Mission Church."³ Nevertheless, they deemed it their duty to the Asylum to insist on his either quitting the Mission, or immediately separating from his engagement with them. With the unanimous advice of his religious friends he chose the latter alternative, and left the Asylum in August 1788, thereby giving a noble example of disinter-

(¹) Brown's Memoirs, pp. 224, 231, 233, 235, 240, 241.

(²) Ibid. pp. 226, &c.

(³) Ibid. p. 47.



ested zeal in the Missionary cause; for he threw up a lucrative appointment, and relinquished the comfortable habitation provided for him at the Asylum, rather than see the Mission Church shut up, and the congregation dispersed; and he continued to perform these duties, without remuneration, until the Missionary arrived. This change in his affairs obliged him for the present to suspend his Native School, which had depended chiefly upon his own resources.⁴ He retained possession, however, of the ground whereon it stood, hoping that at some future time it might be found useful for some Missionary purpose.⁵

10. Amid the fluctuations of circumstances, Mr. Brown never suspended his thoughts for India's redemption. Intent on this object, he drew up "*A Proposal for establishing a Protestant Mission in Bengal and Bahar*,"⁶ in which he urged, with great force and energy, the claims of the Natives upon the

His proposal for a Mission in Bengal and Bahar.

(⁴) Brown's Memoirs, pp. 47, 242, 253. (⁵) Ibid. p. 63.

(⁶) In this document he considered, What sort of men were to be chosen; how they were to be supported; and the plan they were to pursue. The acquisition of Sanscrit was to be made a primary object; as it is the basis of Bengalee and the other eastern tongues, and it contains the mythology, laws, history, and literature of the Hindoos. The knowledge of this language he stated to be indispensable for giving a pure translation of the Scriptures; and such is the poverty of the Bengalee, that he thought it would be difficult to preach the Gospel with becoming dignity without the use of Sanscrit. He therefore proposed that two young Clergymen should be sent as Missionaries direct to Bengal; and after spending a few months at Calcutta, in order to become in some measure acquainted with the customs of the country, they were to proceed to Benares, the celebrated seat of Hindoo learning, where they were to spend about three years in the acquisition of the eastern languages. Besides zeal and grace, which he considered of fundamental importance, they were to possess all the qualifications necessary to a character in which the pious student and prudent Missionary were to be united. Another part of his plan was the establishment of Native Schools throughout the country, similar to those designed by Mr. Sullivan for South India.

CHAP.
I.

British Government, and the duty of imparting to them the privileges which the English enjoyed, as well in a religious as in a civil point of view. He recommended the measure of translating the Scriptures into the different languages of the East, and of sending forth Missionaries to instruct them, "fit men," he remarked, "of free minds, disinterested, zealous, and patient of labour, who would accept of an invitation, and aspire to the arduous office of a Missionary."¹

Governor-General declines to sanction it.

11. The Rev. Messrs. Blanshard and Owen, the Presidency Chaplains, cordially approved of this proposal; but in those days no plan, whether of a civil or religious character, could succeed in Bengal without the sanction of Government. It was therefore determined to mention the subject to the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis. His lordship looked over the plan; but was not disposed to promote it. He offered no opposition, indeed; but having, he said, no faith in such schemes, and thinking that they must prove ineffectual, he declined taking any part in them. He had no objection, however, that others should make the attempt, and promised not to be inimical.²

Circulated in India and England.

12. The proposal was next circulated in India, and also sent home to several of the Bishops and leading persons in England, who were known to take an interest in the promotion of Christianity in the East: and though the Christian-Knowledge Society were not then in circumstances to undertake a design of this magnitude; yet the proposal prepared the public mind to entertain it in more propitious times. It is interesting, also, to observe, in this conception of one devout man's mind, the germ of those vast operations which in less than fifty years were to

(¹) Brown's Memoirs. Preface, p. xiii.

(²) Ibid. p. 248.



diffuse throughout British India the blessings of science and Christian knowledge.

13. On the 27th of September 1789 the Rev. A. T. Clarke arrived at Calcutta, where he was welcomed by the Society's correspondents with much cordiality and affection. The Governor-General also showed him particular attention; and throughout the Presidency a favourable opinion was entertained of his principles and character. He took immediate charge of the Mission, and commenced his labours in the English congregation with general acceptance. He also began a Sunday-Evening Lecture for the convenience of the lower classes of Europeans, who were unable to walk to Church in the heat of the day.³ He commenced the study of Portuguese for the purpose of ministering to the native congregations, most of whom, as we have seen, spake that language. The delicacy of his health prevented his close application to study; but he hoped to accomplish this object in the course of a twelvemonth. He also contemplated the study of Sanscrit, with a view to become more generally useful among the Natives; and so wide and fair was the prospect before him, that he wrote to the Society in pressing terms to send him a colleague, "one who should be superior to every view but that of being useful to the best interests of mankind, to take an equal part with him in the labours of his important Mission. Such a one he would receive as a brother, and gladly endeavour to promote his satisfaction and comfort."

Rev. A. T. Clarke arrives, and begins his work.

14. In January 1790 Mr. Clarke was invited by the Governors of the Free-School Society to accept the office of Superintending Master to that Institution, which had been established the year before. It was proposed to allow him a commodious habitation contiguous to the Mission Church, and three hundred

He is appointed Superintendent of the Free School.

(³) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1790.

CHAP.
I.Another
Mission-
ary re-
quired.

Sicca rupees a month. As this School appeared to embrace one important object of his Mission, the education of the young, and the two senior Chaplains were among the Governors who offered him the situation, he ventured to accept it; and the Society confirmed the appointment, having reason to believe that its duties would be compatible with his Missionary engagements; for it appeared that the interests of religion, and consequently the benefit of the community, were likely to be promoted by this establishment.

15. The local subscriptions to the Mission Church now amounted monthly to more than two hundred Sicca rupees, besides other contributions obtained in the country. The management of the Mission fund was committed to three trustees. The congregations had so increased since Mr. Clarke's arrival¹, that a further enlargement of the Church was projected, by the addition of a chancel, which would admit a freer circulation of air, and increase the accommodation. As Mr. Clarke's health continued delicate, Mr. Brown assisted him in his ministrations. At the same time he was urgent with the Society to send out another Missionary, not merely to co-operate with Mr. Clarke in the English department; but also to cultivate those branches of the Mission which were now unavoidably neglected. The only Portuguese Teacher mentioned at this period was a M. Frangel, of whom we have little more account than that he was able to keep the native congregation together. But this did not satisfy the zeal of Mr. Brown and the other correspondents of the Society. They saw that M. Frangel was too far advanced in years to carry out their plan for the

(¹) No returns of this increase, nor indeed any Notitia of the Mission, appear to have been sent home after Kiernander's retirement.



extension of the Mission, which was to have the native population everywhere addressed in their own language, as they were on the Coromandel coast; and hence their importunity for one Missionary at least, if not more, to be sent out with all practicable speed. In hopes of the Society being able to comply with their request, they began to project increased accommodation on the Mission premises, and two thousand rupees were immediately contributed for the purpose. When these proposals reached England they awakened a kindred spirit in the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, who passed a resolution to send out another Clergyman to Calcutta, as soon as one could be found willing to go and competent to the charge.²

16. But all these brightening hopes were soon to be dimmed by another dark cloud. In November of this year Mr. Clarke accepted a Company's Chaplaincy, and threw up his Mission without any warning. The first that the Society heard of it was from himself, actually informing them that he had left both the Mission Church and his station as Superintending Master of the Free School, and had removed from Calcutta to Chunar, by order of the Commander-in-Chief. He proposed, indeed, to repay all the expenses incurred for his equipment and passage to India; but this was a poor compensation to the Society for the loss of his services to a Mission so destitute as theirs at Calcutta.

Mr. Clarke
accepts a
Chaplaincy, and
quits Calcutta.

17. But there was one on the spot to whom St. Paul's rebuke did not apply—*All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.*³ Mr. Brown's heart was thoroughly in the work. We have seen that he had already sacrificed his own interests for

Mr. Brown
re-occupies the
Mission
Church.

(²) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1791.

(³) Phil. ii. 21.

CHAP.
I.

those of the Mission, and he at once resumed the charge. We admired his conduct before; but it was now greatly enhanced by the contrast it presented to that of Mr. Clarke.¹ The Church, thus deserted by its Missionary, must again have been shut up but for the assistance which he immediately rendered. He undertook the regular performance of Divine Service to a numerous and increasing congregation. The Society expressed their obligations for these kind and Christian services in strong terms²; and they immediately endeavoured to obtain a successor to Mr. Clarke, voting some additional pecuniary encouragement to any who should offer themselves for the work at Calcutta. Notwithstanding their present difficulty, they entertained and expressed the most sanguine hopes that the work would still be carried on by competent agents, to the glory of God and the welfare of men's souls.³

(¹) In justice to the memory of Mr. Clarke, we will state, that he did not relinquish, with his Mission, all interest in the conversion of the Heathen. Being appointed shortly after to accompany the British forces to Malacca, besides opening an English School for the soldiers' children, he attended to the instruction of the Natives, and for this purpose studied the language, the Malay, and held frequent conferences with their chiefs on religious subjects. There he found the entire Bible in Malay, translated by the Dutch Clergy, as mentioned above. (Book vii. c. 2. s. 5.) This information of his proceedings was given to M. Gerické, at Madras, by an English officer, who returned from Malacca, with a friendly message from Mr. Clarke, and a request that he would furnish him with some books for the use of the garrison and School. Gerické was rejoiced to hear that he still retained an affection for the Missionary work; and the Christian-Knowledge Society now entertained hopes, that the object of his Mission to India might in some degree be accomplished, though he had formerly disappointed them. M. Gerické was able to supply him with the English books that he wanted out of the Society's stores.—Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Reports, 1799, pp. 135—138. 1800, p. 144.

(²) Memoirs of Rev. D. Brown, pp. 289, 290.

(³) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1792.



18. In this confidence the Society's correspondents at Calcutta participated ; and they prepared for the accommodation of two Missionaries, out of a considerable sum generously contributed by Mr. Charles Grant and Mr. Udney⁴, of the Civil Service, and subsequently a Member in Council. Divine Service in the Mission Church was not once omitted, Mr. Brown being occasionally assisted by the Chaplains, Messrs. Blanshard and Owen. The English congregation was so much increased that it was found necessary again to extend the accommodations in the Church ; and this, together with the improvements in the interior, and the enlargement of the dwelling-house, cost not less than ten thousand rupees. The work was finished on the 29th of December 1793, when M. Kiernander, who, even in his poverty, retained the respect of all who knew him, was invited to open the new chancel. The aged Missionary was glad to obey the call. He administered the Sacrament on the occasion, "and was extremely happy to see the Church so much improved, and so well attended." In transmitting this report to the Society, Mr. Brown subjoined, that he could not but lament Kiernander's destitution in the eighty-fourth year of his age. In consequence of this kind intimation of his depressed circumstances, the Society presented him with a handsome gratuity, in consideration of his long and faithful services.⁵

Enlargement
of the
Church.

19. It will hardly be thought out of place here to give the testimony borne at the time to the two gentlemen just mentioned, Messrs. Chambers and Grant, to whom the cause of Christianity in Bengal was so greatly indebted. On the death of Mr. Chambers this year, Mr. Brown wrote, that he was

Testimonies to
Messrs.
Chambers
and Grant.

(⁴) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1793.

(⁵) Ibid. 1795. Asiaticus, p. 28. Brown's Memoirs, p. 286.

CHAP.
I.

"the great friend and ornament of the Mission, to whose zeal, prudence, and upright character, in that settlement, it owed its best support:" and "that his death was to the Society a very serious loss." Another writer remarked, that he "did not live to see the new chancel opened: he was hailed to superior worlds the preceding August. In this gentleman, whose character is beyond eulogium, the Mission lost a sincere friend, and one of its brightest ornaments. To his piety, talents, and industry we are indebted for a translation into the Persian language of Christ's Sermon on the Mount." He was long the confidential friend of Swartz; and the estimate which that devout Missionary formed of his character and services in the cause of Christ shows that he also thought him "beyond eulogium."

Of the other gentleman, Mr. Grant, who returned to Europe about the same time, a similar account was given. We have seen how greatly the Mission was indebted to him, also, from the time that he repurchased the Church for the Society to his liberal contributions towards its enlargement. On quitting India he left a further sum of money for servants, lights, and other necessary disbursements in carrying on Divine Service in the Mission Church. One writer, just mentioned¹, after describing the completion of the present improvements, remarks, "Mr. Grant, prior to this, left India, but still lives to support the Mission. As I pronounce his name my soul turns to England, where I behold him exercising some of the first and fairest duties of humanity." With what honour and ability he afterwards filled a place in the Direction of the East-India Company, to its highest office, need not be

(¹) Asiaticus. See also Swartz's Memoirs. Vol. ii. pp. 260—266.



recorded here ; but it will not be irrelevant to remark, that, when Chairman of the Court, he was most careful and conscientious in the appointment of Chaplains to the Company. Their ecclesiastical patronage was principally in his hands ; and in its disposal he considered the advancement of Christianity in India rather than the appeals of private interest : and with this view he generally applied to the Rev. Charles Simeon, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, to select suitable men for the office.

20. While the friends of India were regretting the removal of these esteemed friends², Divine Providence was raising up others to take their place. The most distinguished of these was Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, who arrived at Calcutta in 1793 as Governor-General. As long as he remained in India he continued to patronize the Mission ; and under his auspices Mr. Brown wanted nothing that it was in his power to bestow to promote the interests of Christianity in

Mr. Brown
appointed
to the Go-
vernment
Church.

(²) In the following year the society of Calcutta lost another valued member, Sir William Jones, whose private example and public services materially contributed to enhance the European character in the estimation of the Natives. He was one of the Judges of Bengal ; and, in his relaxation from official duties, he found time to collect materials for a digest of Hindoo and Mahomedan law, though he did not live to complete this useful undertaking. He also composed a work entitled the "Ordinances of Menu," which contains an extensive collection of moral, civil, and religious precepts. Besides these professional works, he paid great attention to the general literature of the East ; and in order to promote its cultivation he projected an institution similar to the Royal Society in London. The "Asiatic Researches" contain several valuable productions from his pen. These works are frequently referred to in this History. (Book vii. chap. 1.) He died in 1794.—Lord Teignmouth's Memoirs of Sir William Jones. The death of this distinguished scholar and upright judge was lamented in India by none more deeply than Mr. Brown, who has given an interesting account of his last days.—Brown's Memoirs, pp. 272—277.

CHAP.
 I.

Bengal. In the following year he appointed Mr. Brown to St. John's, the principal Church at Calcutta, whose erection we shall record in the sequel of this chapter. Hitherto the attendance on Divine Service there had been very thin¹; but it was now so greatly increased, that the churchyard, and even the streets adjoining, were regularly thronged with the palanquins and other equipages of the congregation, where, at one time, scarcely more than half a dozen had usually appeared. These were the observations of a British merchant at the time; and of the improvement in the character, as well as the number of the congregation, Mr. Brown remarked, that, on Christmas-day in the following year, an unusual number of persons took the Sacrament, and near a thousand rupees were collected at the Offertory. This was indeed an improvement that filled his heart with gratitude to God, and encouraged him to increased diligence. When he first arrived in Bengal, in 1786, notwithstanding the dissolute character of society in general, he found a small body of pious Christians; and a few years after he had the happiness of discovering, that, in hidden and unexplored retreats, there were unthought-of individuals who lived the life of faith in the Son of God, and walked in the path of His commandments; and some who, in the utmost privacy, had exerted themselves to stem the torrent of surrounding evil, by

(¹) In Mr. Brown's papers the following memorandum occurs:—
 "Lord Cornwallis observed to me to-day, of the new Church, St. John's, a drawing of which hangs in his room, that 'he thought it a pretty Church, but it had many critics.' I might have answered that there were, on Sundays, not many."—15th July 1788. Memoirs, p. 23.

In the Memoir, of the Life and Correspondence of John Lord Teignmouth, by his son, Lord Teignmouth, may be seen the lively interest which that nobleman took in the cause of Christianity in India, and the countenance he gave to Mr. Brown and others engaged in promoting it.—Vol. i. pp. 290, *et seq.*



their own religious example in their families, and by maintaining and superintending Schools for the instruction of Heathen children.² Surely these were the salt of the land. Mr. Brown watched the progress of this leaven with a vigilant eye, in painstaking exertion and prayer; and he now blessed the Lord for the results which he saw beginning to smile around his path.

21. The improvement in the congregation at the Mission Church also was equally encouraging. During the first six or seven years Mr. Brown had diligently laboured there among a very small and inconsiderable people; but his meekness and faith never left him to feel discouraged at the fewness of their number or unimportance of their rank. He thought of those with whom his Divine Master associated; he recollected the congregations to whom a Brainerd or an Elliot had ministered in America; and by their example he was kept from harbouring sentiments of indifference toward the flock collected around him, the bulk of whom, with few exceptions, were of the order denominated in Bengal "low Europeans," East-Indians, and Natives; either descendants of Portuguese, or of Hindoo origin, but speaking that language³. He had the consolation of knowing that his labours among these various classes were not fruitless. By the blessing of God, good had been done: some were reclaimed from vicious courses, and he had the comfort of seeing them die in peace: others were still living to adorn their Christian profession by a truly pious and virtuous life, which he considered as the best encouragement he could have to labour on, until he should be relieved.⁴

Improve-
ment in
the Mis-
sion con-
gregation.

(²) Brown's Memoirs, p. 113.

(³) Ibid. p. 50.

(⁴) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Report, 1795.

CHAP.

I.

Mr. Brown over-worked, without hope of relief from home.

He protests against all compliance with Hindoo superstitions.

22. But he was overworked, and he felt that his exertions at both Churches were more than he could hope long to sustain. On the occasion above alluded to, at Christmas 1795, he remarked, "I had not recovered from the excessive fatigue, before I was called to the Mission Church Service. I feel some serious effects from my exertions, on my health, which never can hold out as it has done; but I do not see how I can lessen my labours without doing wrong."¹ This was written some months after he had heard from home that there was yet no hope of the Society's being able to promise him relief—so great continued the indifference in England to this sacred cause! The Secretary² wrote to him, "It is extraordinary that no fit person has yet been found willing to engage in the service of the Mission. We still persevere in the hope, however, that a suitable Missionary will be, ere long, discovered. In the meanwhile, may God give you a continuance of strength and ability to the service, and abundantly bless your labours!"³ The Society most highly appreciated his "continued pious attention to the concerns of" their Mission; and, with the expression of their thanks, sent him, from time to time, valuable packages of books, the only recompense that he would consent to receive.

23. In 1796, probably in consequence of the disposition manifested at Madras the year before to connect the Government of that Presidency with the superstitions of the country⁴, Mr. Brown thought it right to guard the English at Calcutta against showing respect to those abominations; a practice which was, he was concerned to see, becoming very prevalent among the junior members of the service.

(¹) Brown's Memoirs, p. 24.

(²) Rev. Dr. George Gaskin.

(³) Memoirs, p. 291.

(⁴) See Tanjore Mission, Dec. 2. ss. 34, 35.



In the beginning of his career in India he had made himself well acquainted with the customs and prejudices of the Natives, for the purpose of exposing the errors of their system, and bringing the Christian Religion under their observation. But this he did in no uncourteous and offensive manner. Though utter disgust, intermingled with deepest pity, seems to have been the result in his mind of all that he learned of the obscene, frivolous, and sanguinary rights of this debased superstition, and of its baneful influence on the principles and morals of its votaries, yet he at all times treated the people with urbanity and respect; and they, in return, conducted themselves toward him with uniform deference; but he never would endure that they should, unchecked, obtrude their abominations on the notice of Europeans, or assume any undue license under the protection of the British laws and Government. At the great festivals of the Hindoos he took occasion to admonish his flock from the pulpit not to show any unbecoming respect to the idolatrous rites then going on, whether through an overstrained complaisance to individuals, or in unseemly curiosity. One of these *Nautches*, as the festivals in question are called, occurred on the evening of the Lord's Day, when, too frequently, the congregation of the Church was thinned to increase the company attendant on the idol; and some, with still greater inconsistency, heedlessly proceeded to these exhibitions from the very doors of the sanctuary, where they had been professing to worship the only True God, who came into the world and died upon the Cross; that He might redeem mankind from such lying vanities. Nevertheless, though their faithful pastor could not withhold all from these forbidden paths, there can be little doubt that his uncompromising protests against them tended to preserve the Bengal Government from those

CHAP.
I.

Erection
of St.
John's
Church,
Calcutta.

unhallowed compliances which, to the disgrace of the Christian name, were made at Madras.¹

24. We will conclude this Decade with an account of several public institutions, beginning with the erection of St. John's Church. When, about the year 1770, Calcutta began to enjoy repose from the troubles occasioned by the Mahomedan powers, she arose, with almost the rapidity of magic, into a city of palaces. But it was too long unadorned by a suitable temple for the worship of the Almighty Being to whom the British owed their prosperity. The Council, indeed, had often issued directions for the plan of a Church to be submitted for their inspection; and the model of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, London, being the most approved, two draughts of it were executed by experienced engineer officers.² In the meantime, a temporary Place of Worship was raised within the walls of the battered garrison, and denominated *The Chapel of the Old Fort*.

For several years the English appear to have been satisfied with this *little Chapel*; for while their city was fast attaining the pinnacle of splendour, and many of them were amassing princely fortunes, their proposal to erect a sanctuary to the honour of Jehovah slumbered till the year 1782.³ At this time, under the auspices of the munificent WARREN HASTINGS, they awoke to the serious contemplation of this religious duty, and resolved to build an edifice for the celebration of Public Worship, "adapted," as it was expressed, "to the exercise of the ministerial functions, and to such a numerous

(¹) Brown's Memoirs, pp. 71—74.

(²) Colonels Polier and Fortnam. The Church of St. Stephen's, though small, is generally considered one of the most finished compositions of SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN.

(³) There may have been some reasonable cause for this delay; but as the ecclesiastical records were lost, a third time, in 1783, through the carelessness of the person to whom they were entrusted, there are no means of accounting for it.—Asiaticus, p. 6.



auditory as might be expected in the capital of British India."

A Committee had been appointed to superintend the building, which met, for the first time, on the 18th of December 1783. Liberal contributions were immediately raised; the Maha Rajah NOBKISSEN presented a spacious piece of land⁴, adjoining the old burial-ground; and every thing conspired to favour the execution of the design. On the morning of April 6th, 1784, Mr. Wheeler, Acting President, in the absence of the Governor-General, proceeded to the ground where the sacred edifice was to be raised, attended by the great officers of state and the principal inhabitants of Calcutta, and there laid the first stone⁵, with the usual ceremonies, an appropriate prayer being offered on the occasion by the senior Chaplain, the Rev. William Johnson.

As soon as the first stone was laid, all descriptions of persons co-operated in accelerating the progress of the building. Gentlemen up the country, whose local situations enabled them to search out and speedily procure materials, acquiesced in every requisition made to them by the Church-building Committee, and rendered their services with alacrity.

(⁴) This ground is said to have been valued at the time at above 30,000 rûpees.—*Asiaticus*, p. 10.

(⁵) On a plate of copper, grooved in the stone, is the following inscription—

The first stone of this sacred Building,
Raised by the Liberal and Voluntary
Subscription of BRITISH SUBJECTS
and OTHERS,

Was laid under the auspices of
The Honourable WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.
Governor-General of India,

On the 6th day of April 1784,
And in the 13th year of his Government.

N.B. It will give an idea of the little progress which the arts had made at that era in Bengal, to mention that the mere engraving of this plate cost 25*l.* sterling.

CHAP.
I.

Special mention is made of a Letter received from Mr. Charles Grant, then residing at Maulda, who proposed to collect a quantity of stones from the ruins of Gour¹ for the pavement of the Church. He also described some huge masses of blue marble, highly polished, and a number of smaller stones, polished and ornamented with sculptures of flowers, fret-work, and other devices, and a few free-stones of great length, which he thought would be useful, and worthy to be preserved in the sacred building. These were a great acquisition, though their removal to Calcutta was attended with much trouble and expense. The public watched the rising edifice with great interest. No money or attention was spared to render it an ornament to the city, as well as durable and commodious.² It was finished in about three years; and opened and consecrated on the 24th of June 1787, being dedicated to St. John. The service was performed by the Chaplains, Rev. W.

(¹) In the reign of the Emperor Akbar, in 1556, the city of Gour was thus described by *Manuel de Faria y Sousa*, in his *History of Portuguese Asia*, written in Spanish:—"Gour, the principal city in Bengal, is seated on the banks of the Ganges, three leagues in length, containing 1,200,000 families, and well fortified. Along the streets, which are wide and straight, rows of trees shade the people, who are so numerous, that sometimes many are trod to death." Before the expiration of 228 years, not a trace of this magnificent capital was remaining, except the ruins which are mentioned by Mr. Grant. The site of Gour, like that of ancient Babylon, has long been the habitation of reptiles and wild beasts. What an example of the uncertainty of human greatness! And what an admonition for the British, to ponder the obligations involved in the magnitude of their eastern empire, lest their "city of palaces," too, become, like Gour, a pile of ruins, wherewith to build and adorn the temples of some more faithful people that shall come after them!

(²) The floor of the Church formed a square of seventy feet. The superficial contents of the roof was ten thousand seven hundred square feet. A very handsome painting, representing "The Last Supper," was executed by Sir John Zoffany, an eminent artist then at Calcutta, who presented it to the Church, to be placed over the Communion Table.



Johnson and Rev. Thomas Blanshard. The Governor-General, Earl Cornwallis, who had succeeded Warren Hastings, attended, with all the officers of state, and the building was crowded with the British inhabitants.

Thus, at the expense of nearly two lacks of rupees³, was erected the Church of St. John. About another lack was expended on the improvements and embellishments which were subsequently made; and the whole of this sum, between thirty-five and thirty-six thousand pounds, with the exception of twelve hundred pounds contributed by the Court of Directors⁴, was raised by the voluntary contributions of a liberal people.

A few weeks after the opening of the Church, the Select Vestry, with the Earl Cornwallis in the Chair, appointed two Churchwardens. As Calcutta was not constituted a parish, those gentlemen could not be legally invested with authority to exercise all the functions of their office; yet they were "considered to act with the consent of the inhabitants for whose advantage and good they performed the duty."⁵

25. In the year 1789, in consequence of the inadequacy of the old Charity School to meet the growing demands for education, another Institution was formed for the purpose, called the Free-School Society, under the auspices of the Governor-General.

Establishment of Public Institutions.

In 1794 the Native Hospital was opened, under the liberal patronage of the Government and the public, for the benefit of all classes. A Native

(³) About 24,000*l.* sterling.

(⁴) This contribution of the East-India Company was not made towards the building, but to provide, as was expressly stated, "communion plate, an organ, a clock, bells, and velvet furniture for the pulpit, desk, and communion table."

(⁵) Minutes of the Select Vestry, 28th of June 1787. The account here given of the erection of St. John's Church is drawn up from the details published by ASIATICUS, pp. 6—14.

CHAP.
I.

Lunatic Asylum, also, was established about the same time.

In 1780 Warren Hastings had founded a Mahomedan College, called the Madrissa, for the study of the Arabic and Persian languages, and of Mahomedan law ; and in 1794 a similar seminary was endowed at Benares, for the cultivation of Hindoo literature.¹

Although these Institutions are not immediately connected with the Calcutta Mission, yet they serve to indicate the growth of intelligence and humane feeling, perhaps we might say, Christian principle, among the Europeans in Bengal. This brief notice of them will not, therefore, be thought irrelevant in this place.

FIFTH.
DECADE.

1797 to
1806.

M. Ringletaube's
arrival at
Calcutta.

1. We have already mentioned the appointment of Rev. W. T. Ringletaube to this Mission.² In October 1797, reporting to the Society his safe arrival at Calcutta, he acknowledged his very kind reception by the Rev. D. Brown, whom he described in the highest terms, declared that he felt bound to him by the tie of Christian affection, as well as by gratitude, and that he meant to commit himself to the guidance of this kind and judicious friend. Mr. Brown made over to him the charge of the Mission ; and M. Gerické, of Madras, to whom he had written for assistance, sent him a supply of Portuguese books, with some instructions how to conduct his varied operations. Amongst other things, he advised him to study Bengalee, besides Portuguese, with a view to the diffusion of Christianity among the Heathen Natives.

Return of
Kiernander to
Calcutta.

2. At this time Kiernander was at Calcutta. He had officiated as Chaplain to the Dutch at Chin-

(¹) Asiaticus, pp. 15—19. 33—37. C. Lushington's History of Calcutta Institutions, pp. 135, 294, 302, *et. seq.* Appendix, No. 8, pp. xxxiv. *et. seq.*

(²) Madras Mission. Decade 8. s. 1.