

CHAP.
L

Low state
of religion
in Bom-
bay.

the number of female infants sacrificed amounted, at the very lowest computation, to *three thousand annually* in Cutch and Guzerat alone. The inhabitants defended the atrocity, on the ground of ancient custom and the alleged inferiority of women; but, after much discussion, they were prevailed upon to relinquish the murderous practice: and in January 1809 the Bombay Government congratulated the Court of Directors on their success.¹

6. Besides Mr. Duncan's reputation for humanity, he was a person of considerable talent, and very attentive to the general affairs of his Government. It is painful, however, to add of such a man, that he gave no encouragement to the religious improvement of society, even by his example, as he rarely attended Divine Service; and, up to this time and beyond, the state of Christianity at Bombay was very low indeed.²

(¹) The following is an extract from the Government Letter :—
“We congratulate your Honourable Court on the prospect thus afforded of extirpating from the Peninsula of Guzerat a custom so long prevalent, and so outrageous to humanity. This object will not be lost sight of; and, trusting to the aid of Divine Providence, we look with confidence to its gradual but certain accomplishment, to such a degree as may form an era in the history of Guzerat lastingly creditable to the British name and influence.”^a

(²) The Presidency of Bombay was at this time very small. Besides Bombay and Salsette, it consisted of the town of Surat and Fort Victoria, with a small tract of land round each; to which were added, soon after, the districts of Surat, Baroach, and Karia. At Baroach one of the public buildings was neatly fitted up as a Place of Worship. At Surat, also, there was, at one time, a small Chapel, but it was demolished before 1816, and the site on which it stood converted into a shot-yard. The oldest tomb in the Surat cemetery is dated 1660. These are all the traces of any respect for religion at this Presidency at that period.

(^a) Buchanan's Colonial Ecclesiastical Establishment, pp. 121. 123. Christian Researches, pp. 46—54.

This unnatural custom seems to have subsisted for more than two thousand years; for both Greek and Roman historians mention it, and refer to those very places (Barygaza or Baroach) where it was found by Colonel Walker to prevail.



This view is confirmed by the incidental observation of an intelligent lady who visited Bombay in 1809. "The only English Church," she remarked, "is in the fort: it is large, but neither well served nor attended." Again, after describing a Christian lady of her acquaintance, she adds—"Would that there were a few more such European women in the East, to redeem the character of our countrywomen, and to show the Hindoos what English Christian women are."³

Visit of
Henry
Martyn.

The next notice we have on this humiliating subject is in 1811, when the Rev. Henry Martyn visited Bombay, on his way to Shiraz. He was courteously accommodated with a room at the Government House, and received attention from the heads of society; but he met with very little to satisfy his devout mind in his intercourse with any of his countrymen. "I am here amongst men," he remarked, "who are indeed aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and without God in the world. I hear many of those amongst whom I live bring idle objections against religion, such as I have answered a hundred times. How insensible are men of the world to all that God is doing! How unconscious of His purposes concerning His Church! How incapable, seemingly, of comprehending the existence of it! I feel the meaning of St. Paul's words—'Hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, that He would gather in one all things in Christ'! Well, let us bless the Lord—'All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.'"⁴

(³) *Journal of a Residence in India*, by Maria Graham, pp. 13 and 115.

(⁴) *Memoir of H. Martyn*. Chap. viii. *Journals and Letters*. Vol. ii. p. 337.

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Profana-
tion of the
Sabbath
prevented.

8. Mr. Martyn spent five weeks at Bombay, during which he preached three times, notwithstanding the debilitated state of his health. Among the profanations of the place, he found that there was a party of Europeans in the habit of spending the Lord's Day in riding over the island of Bombay after the Pariah dogs, which was called the Bobbery Hunt. This infamous diversion was often numerously attended. The parties met at the Church door about the time that Public Worship commenced, and frequently the day was closed with dissipation. Hearing, one Saturday, that the members of the hunt intended to have a great race on the following day, he informed his host, the Governor, of it, and recommended the interference of the secular arm to prevent so glaring a violation of the Sabbath. Accordingly, Mr. Duncan sent to forbid it. The members were exceedingly exasperated: some came to Church, expecting to hear a sermon against hunting; but Mr. Martyn merely preached to them from Luke x. 40—42, on "the one thing needful." "Finding nothing to lay hold of," he said, "they had the race on Monday, and ran *Hypocrite* against *Martha* and *Mary*."¹

Favour-
able effect
of Mr.
Martyn's
visit.

9. The general impression, however, of Mr. Martyn's preaching and conversation was favourable. He went into society as much as his health would permit; and he saw many persons at the Government House with whom he entered into conversation on the doctrines and duties of religion. It was his practice to direct the attention of those near him, in a suitable and interesting manner, to the truths of the Gospel. Governor Duncan expressed himself much struck with the earnestness and sincerity of his addresses, and the holy consistency of his conduct; and this was the prevalent feeling

(¹) Martyn's Journals and Letters. Vol. ii. p. 342.



regarding him. People showed that they were both interested and gratified : whether the impression went deeper than this was known only to God and themselves. It might be some time before the seed which he had sown sprang up, and when it appeared, its origin might not be remembered.

10. His visit was also a season of refreshment and encouragement to some juniors in the service, of a more Christian character, who had not been long in the country. We have already remarked upon the general improvement in the society at home about this period, and several of these young men had enjoyed the privilege of a religious education ; but, on reaching Bombay, they found themselves cast upon a society altogether worldly, and quite of a character to choke and stifle the growth of any seed of the Word which had been sown in their hearts. Among the upper classes the general conversation was very licentious. Persons who abstained from oaths and blasphemy in their ordinary discourse were exceptions to the common practice. The Lord's Day was openly and notoriously disregarded. The number of those who made even an outward profession of religion was very small indeed. Loose and dissipated habits were very prevalent among some senior officers, in both the civil and military branches of the services ; but especially the latter, who formed the largest division. Several senior officers were notorious for actually leading on the juniors in the indulgence of all kinds of excesses ; and young men arriving under the influence of religious principles found it very hard indeed to maintain their ground. They met with but little help, even from the Chaplains ; and, under these circumstances, they hailed with joy the ministrations and discourse of Henry Martyn. In the midst of the moral darkness around he appeared to them as an angel of light. He thus

Contrast
between
Senior and
Junior
Civilians
and Officers.

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I.

H. Martyn's intercourse with learned Natives.

described one of his visits to these young men:—
“Dined at —— with a party of very amiable and well-behaved young men. What a remarkable difference between the old inhabitants of India and the new comers! This is owing to the number of religious families in England.” Then, to mark the contrast, two days after, on Sunday, he speaks of going with a clerical friend to dine with another gentleman, where they met the Chaplain and some others, who made the conversation so unprofitable that Martyn and his friend went away early, and retired to his room to read the Scriptures together.¹

11. While at Bombay he held several communications with other persons of respectability besides the English; but he does not seem to have made any impression upon them. At the Government House he met the Romish Bishop's secretary, Father Louis, whom he endeavoured to interest in the translation of the Scriptures; but in vain. He had, also, one or two long discussions with a disciple of Zoroaster, named Feeroz, the most intelligent Parsee in the place, who defended his religion with great spirit. A young Mussulman, likewise, Mahomed Jan, was not less zealous in maintaining the creed of the Korân. Although these, and others with whom he conversed, did not yield to the force of his arguments; yet they all looked up to him with respect as a man of extraordinary learning and piety.² Short as was his visit to Bombay, he left an impression behind which, no doubt, prepared the way for the improvement which was soon to follow.

Governor's death—Acting Governor's improved example.

12. Not long after his departure Governor Duncan died, when the senior Member of Council, Mr. Brown, occupied his place until the arrival of his

(¹) Martyn's Journals and Letters. Vol. ii. p. 343.

(²) Ibid. pp. 341—346. Memoir, ch. viii.



successor. Mr. Brown was a man of correct moral habits, and encouraged the outward observance of religious ordinances by the example of himself and his family, who regularly attended Church. Mrs. Brown, by her strict propriety of conduct, together with her amiable and engaging manners, tended considerably to raise the character of female society in the settlement. This was a great advance in their morals and general demeanour. It is true, all this external propriety of habits and manners might exist apart from the influence of religion on the heart, and there are no means of ascertaining the Scriptural standard of this amiable lady and her husband. If their principles approximated to those of the Gospel, it is easy to understand that the unfavourable atmosphere in which they moved may have prevented its shedding light around.

13. In August 1812 Sir Evan Nepean arrived as Governor. He was known to have attended, in England, to his religious duties with punctuality, and he maintained the same character in Bombay. He also showed himself at all times disposed to promote any object of a moral tendency; and in several instances he sought out those gentlemen who, he had reason to hope, were under the influence of religious principles, to be on his staff, or to fill important situations. He scrupulously attended Church twice on the Lord's Day; and this regularity had the effect of inducing the society generally to pay more strict attention to the observance of the Sabbath.

Arrival of
Sir Evan
Nepean as
Governor
—his reli-
gious ex-
ample.

14. At this time there were only three Chaplains allowed for the Presidency, one of whom was frequently absent. The senior Chaplain, though stationed at Bombay, had to make periodical tours to the Out-stations, once in two or three years, to baptize and perform Divine Service, together with any other clerical duty which might be required. The

Paucity of
Chaplains.

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I.Number
of Chap-
lains
doubled.

Stations to be visited were, the island of Salsette, Surat, Baroach, and Kaira, to the north; and on the south, the small fort of Victoria, at the entrance of the Bamcoot river, seventy-three miles from Bombay. Besides these places within the Company's territories, there were political stations at Goa, Poona, and Baroda, where there were military cantonments to be occasionally visited.

15. One of the first objects of Sir Evan Nepean was, to represent to the Court of Directors this great deficiency in the clerical establishment, and to enforce the urgent want of an increase in the number of clergymen. About the same time a coincidence happened which is worthy of record. In 1811 a lady arrived from England, who was distressed to observe the deplorable destitution of religious instruction at Bombay, and sent home to her friends a strong representation of the want of faithful ministers of the Gospel. Her family were well acquainted with the Chairman of the East-India Company, the late Charles Grant, Esq., and after some time they placed her letters in his hands. The two appeals arriving from Bombay almost simultaneously, they concurred to direct the Chairman's attention to the importance of providing for the more efficient instruction of the Christian inhabitants of Western India. Shortly after, three additional Chaplains were sent to Bombay, whose preaching and instructions soon produced a marked effect in directing the attention of several persons to the primary importance of religion. One of them established a Week-day Meeting for the religious instruction of the middle classes also, which was followed, in some instances, by the happiest results.

Establish-
ment of
Bombay
Bible So-
ciety.

16. On the 13th of June 1813 an Auxiliary Bible Society was established at Bombay, under the Governor's auspices, W. T. Money, Esq. being in the



chair.¹ It had for some time been contemplated, by some respectable members of this Presidency, to associate together for the purpose of taking a public and decided part in co-operating with the designs of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The accomplishment of this object was prevented by an opposition too obstinate to be convinced, and too strong to be over-ruled. Sir Evan Nepean, however, had been a member of the Parent Society almost from its commencement: he was, moreover, a Vice-President, and now cordially patronized the Bombay Auxiliary. Under his sanction, the establishment was countenanced by the Recorder, the principal Members of Council, and some of the most respectable gentlemen of the Presidency; and the language in which they expressed both their views and their design was particularly liberal and satisfactory. The Governor contributed one thousand rupees to the Society; and his example was liberally followed by other members.² Strong prejudices were at first excited in the minds of the Natives, who were led to fear that some measure of compulsion was intended for the introduction of Christianity amongst them; but no sooner were such motives disclaimed, and the real objects of the Society explained, than all apprehension vanished from their minds. Thus quietly was formed an institution which may be regarded as the first great step publicly taken to propagate Christianity on the western side of the Indian Peninsula.³

17. Among the friends who cherished the cause of religion in its infancy at Bombay, particular allusion may be made to one, from the peculiar circumstances which led to her conversion to the

Exertions
of a Native
Christian
lady.

(¹) At that time Captain William Taylor Money, Superintendent of the Bombay Marine, and subsequently a partner in the house of Messrs. Forbes and Co.

(²) History of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Vol. ii. pp. 461—465.

(³) Ibid. Vol. iii. p. 249.

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Christian faith. A gentleman of the medical establishment, Dr. White, a very benevolent man, took under his protection several orphan children, whom he brought up with great care, himself imparted to them a superior education, and added such accomplishments as the place afforded. How far their education partook of a religious character cannot now be ascertained; but they were instructed as Christians, and taught to read the Scriptures. Among these interesting objects of his bounty was a native Rajpootanee of Guzerat, who was rescued from famine in one of the seasons of dearth which occurred at the beginning of this century. She was either sold by her parents, as is customary with the Natives on such occasions, for some immediate supply of food, or presented by them to Dr. White, being themselves unable to support her. That gentleman educated her with the other little objects of his care, and, after a time, God was pleased to enlighten her mind with the saving knowledge of His Word. She was subsequently married to a gentleman like-minded with herself, and found pleasure in devoting a portion of her time to the instruction of the people around her in the truths of the Gospel. She took special interest in carrying on a Native Girls' School, which had been commenced by another lady who was obliged to relinquish it; and being herself a Native, she naturally expected to be more acceptable, both to the children and their parents, than a European.¹

Good effects of European example.

18. Another circumstance may be mentioned as illustrative of the good effect of a benevolent example upon one class of the native inhabitants. For

(¹) This Native Christian lady was still living in Bombay when this was written (in 1842); and the latter circumstances respecting her, recorded in the text, occurred subsequently to the period which we have reached in this History; but they could not be conveniently referred to again.



many years past an extensive distribution of alms had been made at the Church at an early hour every Sunday morning.¹ This was soon imitated by the Parsees, who hold alms-giving to be highly meritorious, and distribute large sums in this manner. On Sunday mornings a numerous body of paupers go the round of most of the wealthy Parsees' houses, where they receive copper money, rice, and other things.

Although this, and one or two other instances of attention to the claims of humanity, do not appear to have contributed toward the propagation of Christianity, yet the amount of human wretchedness was reduced thereby ; while every proof of the charitable disposition of European Christians must, at least, have made a favourable impression on the Native mind, and tended, as far as it went, to counteract the sad influence of their immoralities. In those dark times, when iniquity so generally abounded in Bombay, as well as other parts of India, one hails every circumstance which encourages the hope, that all who bore the Christian name had not quite forgotten their God and their religious duties.

19. But a brighter day now dawned on Western India. In 1814 the Rev. Dr. Barnes arrived, as first Archdeacon of Bombay, and soon set about remedying the deplorable evils which prevailed. Of the five² Chaplains attached to this Presidency, he found only one at Bombay equal to the full discharge of his functions, a deficiency which threw upon himself the duties of a Chaplain, in assisting at the

Arrival
and exer-
tions of
Arch-
deacon
Barnes.

(¹) This practice was afterwards modified, and an organized system adopted for the application of the sacramental collections to a District-Visiting Society and a Native Poor Asylum. But these institutions are comparatively of recent date.

(²) There must have been one vacancy at the time, as the number ought to have been six. Le Bas' Life of Bishop Middleton. Vol. i. p. 82.

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Presidency Church, and in attending the European regiments quartered in Bombay and its vicinity. Throughout the provinces subject to this Government there was but a single Church; and in consequence of this paucity of Ministers and Places of Worship, the Out-stations, military cantonments, and civil residences, were left destitute of the public ordinances and private ministrations of religion. In the absence of clergymen, marriages had been usually celebrated by military officers and civil servants; and under the plea of necessity, arising from the same cause, the sacrament of Baptism had also been administered by the hands of laymen. The Archdeacon was encouraged when he found that the English residents themselves lamented these irregularities, and that the Governor was anxious to see them remedied. He lost no time in representing them to the Bishop of Calcutta, who soon adopted the measures necessary to obtain a more efficient establishment of Chaplains and an increase of Churches—with what success will be shown in the sequel.

Bombay
Education
Society's
Report.

20. Mention has been made above of the Charity School established by Mr. Cobbe in connexion with the Church. This Institution now merged in a more extensive Society, established on the 29th of January 1815, entitled "THE BOMBAY SOCIETY FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE POOR." In its First Annual Report, at the commencement of the year 1816, it was stated that the attention of the Settlement was "called to this interesting subject by the Bombay Bible Society."¹

(¹) The following list of its officers will show how generally this important Institution was patronized. *The President*—Sir Evan Nepean, Governor of Bombay. *Patron*—the Bishop of Calcutta. *Vice-Presidents*—Lieutenant-General Sir Miles Nightingale, Commander-in-Chief, and Second Member of Council; George Brown, Esq. and John Elphinstone, Esq., Third and Fourth Members
of



At the first meeting a sum exceeding six thousand rupees² was contributed; which was increased, by the First Anniversary, held January 15th, to twenty-two thousand five hundred rupees³ Benefactions, and six thousand and twenty rupees⁴ Annual Subscriptions.

The following extracts from the Report will show how much these exertions of Christian Benevolence were needed in India, and with what force its claims were urged on the European residents—

“It is a remarkable circumstance, as indicative of the good which may be expected from the exertions of the Society, that, of the boys admitted into the School, it found that eleven, though the immediate children of Europeans, had never been baptized in any way: some were wandering through the streets as beggars; and one was actually supported by the charity of a Mussulman.”

Then, after describing the various classes of children, families of European soldiers by Native women, and others born in the country, who were similar to those in the Asylums at the other Presidencies, the Report proceeds to show that they were, from various causes, often left to the entire management of their mothers, and thus describes the consequences:—

“In many cases the children disappear altogether, and are associated among the Mussulmans, outcast Hindoos, or Portuguese, losing entirely the religion of their fathers; and few only, whose parents have

of Council; Sir Alexander Anstruther; The Recorder (*i. e.* Judge of H. M. Court in Bombay). Vice-Patron—Archdeacon Barnes. Twelve lay gentlemen, with all clergymen, were Directors of the Institution. The Female Branch was governed by a Patroness, Mrs. Brown (wife of Geo. Brown, Esq.), and nine ladies, Directresses. Superintendent—Rev. N. Wade, Senior Chaplain; Secretary—Rev. Henry Davies, Chaplain.

(²) About 750*l*.

(³) About 2800*l*.

(⁴) About 752*l*.

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been married to European women, or to Native Protestants (a class very few in number), or whose godfathers have happened to take a more friendly charge of them than usual, ever enter the walls of a Protestant Church;—a circumstance but little calculated to impress the Natives with a belief of the sincerity of the English in their religious observances.

“The Directors congratulate themselves, that, even in the course of one year, they have already, in some instances, rescued children who were on the point of sinking into the Mahomedan religion and Hindoo superstitions.

“The numerous applications from many quarters, in which the existence of children of European parents was not previously known, convince the Committee that the want of the means of instructing these children in the principles of Christianity, and of bringing them up to useful industry, has influenced the unhappy persons alluded to, in the neglect of their children’s interests, fully as much as a guilty indifference.”

Though the School laboured under many disadvantages, yet the Directors, in conclusion, thus congratulated the Subscribers on the success which appeared to have already attended the designs of the Society—

“Many poor children have not only been fed and clothed, but have been rescued from idleness, and the brink of vice and idolatry, and placed in a situation in which they have every prospect of being educated in industrious, sober, and religious habits.

“The progress of the children in their education is as satisfactory as the Committee could expect.”¹

21. This able Report puts on record the state of

State of the
Schools.

(¹) Missionary Register, 1816, pp. 289—291. Le Bas’ Life of Bishop Middleton. Vol. i. pp. 113, 114, 243, 244.



that class of society at Bombay at this period for whom the Schools were established, described by the parties best acquainted with it. The Schools were subsequently placed under efficient teachers from England; and in a few years the establishment maintained and educated more than one hundred boys, and a still greater number of girls. Considering the destitute state of this class of children, especially the girls, the benefit of these Charity Schools cannot be too highly appreciated. The scriptural instruction imparted, and the improvement wrought in the moral character of the children generally, among whom were sometimes to be observed decided instances of youthful piety, produced a reflex influence on their friends, and tended to raise the condition and character of those classes of society with which they formed connexions. Nothing in Bombay has done more, under the blessing of Almighty God, than this Institution, to raise the Christian name among the Natives, both by its direct measures, and also by its improvement of the conduct and habits of those with whom the inhabitants of the country come most in contact. But these results were the growth of some years later than the period at which we have arrived.

22. The formation of the District Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was for the present postponed; but supplies of Bibles and Testaments, of which there was a great dearth, were obtained from the Bombay Bible Society. The Second Report of this Society, published in 1816, contains much important information, and very judicious remarks respecting the moral and religious state of Western India, and the means of meliorating its condition. It is a document of great interest, and fully corroborates the description of the Europeans and other inhabitants of Western India which we have already given. The means

Second
Report of
the Bom-
bay Bible
Society.

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used and projected for the translation and circulation of the Scriptures in these parts were similar to those employed at Calcutta and Madras, and need not, therefore, be detailed here.¹

But there is one fact stated in this Report too singular to be omitted—the anxiety of Romanists, priests and laity, to receive the Bible. It is thus described :—

“The expectation held out by the Committee, in the First Report, of distributing the Scriptures in Portuguese to the Native Christians of that Church, has been realized with great success; and they have not only dispersed a considerable number on the islands of Bombay and Salsette, but have forwarded no less than 550 to Goa, at the particular request of the British Envoy, who describes the Natives, and even the Priests, as coming in crowds to receive them.”²

(¹) The entire Report may be seen in the *Missionary Register* for 1816. pp. 440—451.

(²) The following is the Letter of the Envoy, Mr. Schuyler, from Goa, conveying this intelligence. It is addressed to the Rev. Nicholas Wade, Senior Chaplain and Secretary of the Bombay Bible Society. It is published in the Appendix to that Report.

“I have the pleasure of acquainting you that the fifty copies of the New Testament which you sent me in the Portuguese Language have been all distributed. At first, the people here observed some degree of caution about taking them; perhaps under the impression that the work could not be a very proper one for them, coming from the hands of a HERETIC. However, these feelings are now removed; and which I consider may, in a very great degree, be attributed to the enlightened mind of the Vicar of the Church of Panjim, the Rev. Manoel Caetano Eslaciodes Noves: and the people of this place, within these few days, have come, in tens and fiftens, to ask me for them. I have therefore no doubt, if you send me 500 copies after the monsoon, I shall be able to distribute them in a very short time. Among those who came to solicit books, I observed a number of Roman-Catholic Priests; and so great is the request for them at this moment, that I was yesterday obliged to send fifteen or twenty persons away, having no more copies; but with the promise of procuring some for them from Bombay.”



“The Committee have also sent a few, in compliance with a wish expressed by the Portuguese Vicar at Cannanore; who, however, when he found that the translation had not the authority of the Censor of the Inquisition, refused to distribute them himself, but nevertheless allowed his Congregation to receive them from others; and the number sent was very soon called for.”

Then, after some very judicious remarks respecting the moral and religious state of India, and the means of meliorating its condition, the Report concludes: “We have no warrant, it has been observed, to look for a miracle under the finished dispensation of the Gospel: we must trust to those means which reason points out as the most promising, and experience approves as the most efficacious; though often, indeed, too slow for our wishes, and particularly for the wishes of those on whom the labour devolves.”³

23. Labours of this kind, pursued with diligence, and in devout and humble dependence on the Divine Blessing, could not fail of their ultimate effect, to the glory of Him who is the Giver of all good, and *who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the Truth.* The members of the Bombay Committee followed up the suggestions in their Report, by diligently using the means at their command, to supply the wants of those whose case they had so affectingly described. They began with their countrymen; and the Commander-in-Chief, cordially entering into their proposal, recommended to the Government, that the European soldiers should be provided with Bibles and Testaments, a certain number being assigned for the use of the patients in the different military hospitals, and maintained at

Local operations of the Bombay Bible Society.

(³) History of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Vol. ii. p. 450. Vol. iii. p. 226.

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Extended
operations
of the So-
ciety.

the public expense. The Governor-in-Council approving this recommendation, sanctioned the plan, and the Committee immediately took the necessary steps to carry it into effect. Convinced, by their inquiries, that the neglect of the Bible among all classes, especially the lower orders, had arisen more from the want of means and opportunity to procure it, than from any indifference to its sacred contents, the Committee opened a Depository for the sale, at reduced prices, of the Old and New Testament, in various Native and European languages. The languages specified were, English, Gaelic, Portuguese, French, Dutch, German, Spanish, Danish, and Italian; Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; Arabic, Syriac, Ethiopic, Armenian, Persian, Hindoostanee, Malay, and Chinese. This enumeration will serve to show the scale on which the Depository was constructed.¹

24. While the Society made the wants of the inhabitants of Bombay the primary object of its care, it was not inattentive to the necessities of other countries lying beyond the precincts of that Presidency, which preferred a natural claim to its benevolent consideration. Bombay was the resort of persons speaking most of the languages just enumerated; and they had now the opportunity of procuring at the Depository the Word of God, and

(¹) By the following census of the population of Bombay, taken about this time by the direction of Government, it will be seen that the inhabitants themselves were sufficiently diversified to require an extensive Depository.

British, not Military	1,840
Do. Military and Marine	2,460
Native Christians, Portuguese, and Armenians,	11,500
Jews	800
Mahomedans	28,000
Hindoos	103,800
Parsees	13,150
	<hr/> 161,550



carrying it to their several homes. But the Committee was not satisfied with merely making this provision; it extended its active operations to the Portuguese, the French, the Dutch, and the Syrians, on different parts of the Malabar coast. In another direction, its influence was extended to the distant shores of the Persian Gulf; and in those parts it distributed, chiefly through the means of the British Resident at Bussorah, many copies of the Arabic Bible.²

These details sufficiently mark the improvement which, under God, had been effected in many of the European inhabitants of Bombay during the short space of four years; and on the arrival of the Bishop of Calcutta there, in 1816, the public authorities were prepared, as will be seen, cordially to co-operate in all his Lordship's measures for the propagation of Christianity in Western India.

(²) Third Report of the Bombay Bible Society. Also, History of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Vol. iii. pp. 320—322.



CHAPTER II.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN WESTERN INDIA.
1807—1816.

London
Missionary
Society
project a
Mission at
Surat.

1. THE Presidency of Bombay had not hitherto become the scene of a Protestant Missionary's labours. The first attempt to establish a Mission there was made in 1807, by a Missionary of the London Missionary Society, whose attention was directed to this part of India as early as 1804. The Committee first determined to undertake a Mission to Surat, a large and populous town about one hundred and eighty miles north of Bombay. There was much to recommend this station for Missionary enterprise. It was said to contain between one and two hundred thousand inhabitants¹, to whose religious instruction no attention had hitherto been paid. Its situation and commercial connexions appeared to render it peculiarly favourable for the introduction of the Gospel. Religious sects of various descriptions were fully tolerated, affording free access to the Heathen; while there was every reason to expect the protection of the Government. Many of the inhabitants being acquainted with the English

(¹) In 1798 the population of this city was estimated at 800,000 persons. Subsequently, however, it was much decreased. In 1808 it was reckoned at 141,355; and in 1818, 157,195.—Hamilton.



language, it was thought probable that the Missionaries would be able to enter upon their labours immediately, so that no delay would be occasioned while they were acquiring the languages of the Natives. Should the Gospel, by the blessing of God, succeed at Surat, it might be extended thence through all the north-western parts of India, Cabul, Candahar, Persia, and Arabia.

2. For these reasons the Society were induced to undertake a Mission to this place; and two young men, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Loveless, were appointed to carry the design into effect. We have seen that the attention of Mr. Loveless was diverted to Madras, and that Dr. Taylor proceeded to Bengal², where he was detained, by a domestic affliction, sickness, and other causes, longer than he intended. While with the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore he made some progress in the study of Mahratta, Hindoostanee, and Persian; and the Brethren having no medical man among them, he endeavoured to repay, in his professional attention to their families, some of those obligations under which their hospitality and friendship had laid him.

Two Missionaries sent to India for the purpose.

3. At length he sailed for Bombay, where he arrived early in 1807. Dr. Kerr had given him a letter of introduction to the Chaplain, who received him courteously, and entertained him with hospitality; but he refrained from entering into conversation with his guest on the objects of his Mission. The subject was new at Bombay; and the authorities looked with too much suspicion on a Missionary, especially one not in connexion with the Church of England, for the Chaplain to commit himself while unacquainted with the intention of the authorities under whom he was placed.

One arrives at Bombay.

4. Dr. Taylor wrote to Dr. Kerr on the 8th of

His prospects.

(²) Book x. chap. v. Madras, s. 1.

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II.

February, and, after mentioning his arrival and reception, referred to the prospect before him in these discouraging terms:—"Although in this part of India, Surat and the Guzerat present a fine field for Missionary labours, I am afraid that the time for occupying it is somewhat distant. It is my intention, when writing to the Society by the ships which sail in about a fortnight, to request them to send out only two more Missionaries at present to Bombay, and to recommend them to direct their principal efforts towards Madras."

In the following June he wrote to the same kind friend and counsellor in a little better spirits—"My situation here is not so free and unincumbered as I could wish it to be, but I am not certain that it is so hopeless as you have heard. On my arrival there was certainly a very strong and general prejudice against Missionaries; and this may, in some measure, still continue; but Providence has raised up two friends, one especially, Sir James M'Intosh (the Recorder), whose rank and learning render his patronage very powerful; and through their means I have been introduced to others. Whatever may be the sentiments of some of them concerning the object on which I came to Bombay, I am convinced they would be extremely happy to serve me as an individual. This, when you consider the disadvantage under which a Missionary must appear when personal prejudices are unfavourable towards him, will be viewed as a matter of some consequence, and as a presage of more solid benefits to the Mission."

"The restraints imposed on me at present are attended with very little worse effect than that of discouraging the mind in contemplation of futurity." "I have but little apprehensions of being sent home. I think this is too bold a measure to be adopted without the strongest necessity; and I can scarcely imagine such a necessity to occur while



Missionaries act with prudence and circumspection."¹

5. For a time Dr. Taylor diligently studied the languages of the country—Sanskrit, Mahratta, Guzerattee, and Hindoostanee—with a view to engage in the translation of the Scriptures; but before he had acquired knowledge enough to commence the work, he was induced to relinquish the Mission, and accept a medical appointment under Government. This was a great disappointment to the Directors of his Society, who could not refrain from the expression of surprise at his taking such a situation “without the consent of his brethren,” “and without consulting, or even apprising” the Directors “of a measure so important, till long after it had taken place.” They had for some time been seeking a suitable colleague for him, in compliance with his earnest requests, and had at last accepted a young man for the Station; but he was so disappointed and discouraged by Dr. Taylor’s abandonment of the Mission, that he declined going to Bombay, and soon after relinquished the service of the Society.

He accepts
a medical
appoint-
ment.

6. These unfavourable circumstances led to the suspension of this Mission till the year 1815, when the Society made another attempt to accomplish their design for Western India. They sent out two young men, Mr. John Skinner and Mr. William Fyvie, with instructions to proceed to Surat as soon as practicable. They arrived at Bombay on the 9th of August 1815, and were received in the most friendly manner by the Governor, Sir Evan Nepean. Mr. Skinner proceeded in a few weeks to Surat, where he arrived on the 16th of September, and took up his abode with Mr. C. C. Aratoon, the Armenian convert associated with the Baptist Missio-

Mission
com-
menced at
Surat.

(¹) Transcribed from the original Letters.

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II.

Missionaries call
for aid.

naries of Serampore¹, who rejoiced to receive a fellow-labourer in the same arduous work. Mr. Fyvie followed shortly after. The Brethren lost no time in applying their minds to the study of the Guzerattee language, impatient to speak to the vast multitudes around them "the wonderful things of God." They also commenced two English Schools, one for Europeans and East-Indians, the other for Natives desirous of learning that language. Mrs. Fyvie also opened a School for English and East-Indian females, but was at a loss, for some time, for want of an assistant. Every Sunday morning the Missionaries preached publicly to the soldiers, and in the evening, in their own house, to all who were disposed to hear. The attendance on both occasions was considerable; and they soon had reason to believe that some of their auditors were seriously impressed by the Truth.

7. About a twelvemonth after their arrival the work had so increased on their hands, that they became anxious for more assistance. Besides the city of Surat, they had extended their views to Baroach and Narbudda on the north, and to Cambay, at the upper end of the gulf. As each of these places required two Missionaries, at least, the Directors of the London Society resolved to augment the number of labourers as soon as practicable; but they were not able to send any before the following year.²

(¹) Book xi. chap. ii. s. 18. C. C. Aratoon spake of a new sect of Hindoos at Surat, "which," he says, "sprang up about sixteen years ago, and is said to comprise 100,000 persons. They affirm, that every religion is equally acceptable to God. Another sect, called Baboojee, exists at Surat: it is not numerous: they sing hymns, far superior to the Heathen hymns: they equally oppose Idolatry and Mahomedanism."

(²) Society's Reports: 22d, p. 15. 23d, pp. 18, 19.



CHAPTER III.

AMERICAN MISSION. 1813—1816.

BOMBAY.

1. In the last Chapter of the Baptist Mission in Bengal, mention was made of the arrival of six Missionaries in Calcutta from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and also of the orders issued by the Bengal Government for their immediate departure from the country.³ Two of them, Messrs. Samuel Nott and Gordon Hall, after some difficulty, escaped to Bombay, where they arrived February 11, 1813. But a peremptory order followed them, commanding Sir Evan Nepean to send them off to England by the first opportunity. On receiving this intimation, they presented a Memorial to the Governor, setting forth the simple object of their Mission, and explaining the circumstances which had brought them to Bombay. This Memorial was kindly received and considered by the Governor, who permitted them to remain, pending a reference to Calcutta, assured them of his disposition to show them every favour in his power, and wrote to the Governor-General in their behalf. This communication appears to have satis-

Arrival of
two Mis-
sionaries.
Ordered
away.

(³) This Chapter is drawn up chiefly from the Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1811—1817. Also from the Memoir of the Rev. Gordon Hall, the founder of the Bombay Mission.

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fied the Governor-General's mind in regard to the character, motive, and proceedings of the two Missionaries; but intelligence of the war between Great Britain and the United States being at this time received, new difficulties arose. They were informed, that though Sir Evan Nepean cherished a high respect for their character and admiration of their object; yet it had now become his painful duty to execute the orders which he had received from the Bengal Government to send them to England. By the advice of Mr. Money and other friends, they once more, in August 1813, memorialized the Governor, showing that their Mission had no possible connexion with the war. Sir Evan again behaved towards them with great kindness; allowed them a few weeks to prepare for their departure; but could give them no hope of their being permitted to continue.

They
leave clandestinely,
and return
under
arrest.

2. At this juncture they received letters from the Rev. M. Thompson, of Madras, and from Mr. Newell, one of their companions from America, who was then on the island of Ceylon, whither he had repaired after the death of his wife at the Isle of France. These communications strongly urged their going to Ceylon, holding out very encouraging hopes of the protection of the Governor of that island, Sir Robert Brownrigg. After prayer for Divine guidance, and careful consideration of the proposal, they submitted their communications to the Governor, imploring his sanction of their removal to Ceylon. Sir Evan not only acceded to their request, but endeavoured to obtain for them a passage to the island. In this, however, he failed; and as nothing now remained for them but to prepare for their departure for England on board the ship assigned them by Government, which was to sail in a short time, they were induced clandestinely to leave Bombay in a coasting vessel, with a view to



make their way to Ceylon. Landing at Cochin, they were kindly received by the British Magistrate, who provided them with gratuitous accommodations. Here they remained about a month; but when on the eve of sailing for Ceylon, an order arrived from Bombay requiring their host, the Magistrate, to send them back under arrest. They testify, however, that this order was executed "with the utmost tenderness and respect." Indeed, upon reflection, they saw reason to doubt the propriety of their conduct. Sir Evan Nepean was responsible for their security, and their escape might have involved him in difficulty. Their flight was not, therefore, a grateful return for all the kindness which they had received at his hands. Their circumstances were very different from those of St. Paul at Damascus, to which they seem to have compared them. No one sought their lives. The authorities of the place were as favourable to them as they could be. The opinion, therefore, which one of them shortly after expressed, was doubtless more correct—"Perhaps we ought to have waited and trusted in the Lord to deliver us in His own way."¹ Instead, however, of disappointing their hopes, or visiting them with chastisement for their impatience and unbelief, God only defeated their present plan that He might enable them to accomplish their original design in His own time and manner. In this confidence they returned to Bombay, believing that He would overrule "their mistakes and ignorance to the furtherance of His own cause."²

The Governor was highly displeased at their departure; but it caused no abatement in the kindness of his feelings towards them. They wrote to him in explanation of their conduct, and

(¹) Memoir of Gordon Hall, p. 54.

(²) Ibid. p. 58.

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Hopes of
their
being
allowed to
remain.

their memorial was favourably received; but he did not think them free from blame. They were now directed to reside in the Admiralty House, not to leave the island without application to Government, and to hold themselves ready to sail for England in the next ship.

3. Meanwhile tidings of hope were on the way from Bengal. On the arrival of a new Governor-General, the Earl of Moira, in October 1813, their friends in Calcutta lost no time in entreating his Lordship's permission for them to reside quietly in the country.¹ Though their first earnest appeal was ineffectual, yet, on the 10th of December 1813, the Missionaries received a third letter from one of their Calcutta friends, Mr. Thomason, informing them "of a favourable intimation from Government, which granted all that they requested." This led to further communications between them and Sir Evan Nepean, who submitted their letters to his Council; and as no directions from the Supreme Government were received at the time expected, it was supposed that some delay had been occasioned; and it was finally resolved that the Missionaries might be allowed to remain, until fresh orders should arrive for their departure.

Court of
Directors
sanction
their con-
tinuance.

4. The Governor of Bombay followed up his exertions in the Missionaries' behalf by writing to the Court of Directors, recapitulating all that had transpired, and representing the business in as favourable a light as it would bear. The Honourable Court, however, taking the whole correspondence into consideration, were on the eve of sending out a despatch, censuring all their civil and ecclesiastical servants who had abetted these and other Missionaries, and requiring the removal of the Americans from India. At this juncture the vene-

(¹) Memoir of Rev. T. Thomason, pp. 210, 211.



rable Charles Grant, Chairman to the Court, with great pains prepared a written defence of their conduct, drawn up from their own documents then before the Court, which happily led to a contrary decision. Despatches were sent out to India, in which the Directors stated, that the communications from the Bombay Government were such as led them to believe that the object of the Missionaries was simply the promotion of religion; and that therefore the Governor was at liberty to allow them to continue if he chose, and that they should acquiesce in such a decision. Sir Evan, in communicating this intelligence to the Missionaries, added: "I can now assure you, that you have my entire permission to remain here, so long as you conduct yourselves in a manner agreeably to your office; and I heartily wish you success in your work."

This conclusion was as grateful to the Governor's feelings as to those of the Missionaries themselves; and the Committee in America, remarking upon the whole transaction, said: "Under Providence, grateful acknowledgments are due to the Right Hon. Sir Evan Nepean, for the candour, magnanimity, and kindness exhibited in his treatment of the Missionaries, so creditable to his character as a magistrate and a Christian." The formal permission which he gave them was more than they had ever expected; and more than any English Mission in India, they believed, at that time enjoyed: and while grateful to the Governor for the indulgence, they rendered special thanks to the Lord, who had so signally answered their prayers.²

5. These despatches were received in 1815, when the Missionaries had been effectually plying their undertaking nearly two years under the sufferance and protection of Government. Mr. Newell joined

Their studies and translations.

(²) Memoir of Gordon Hall, pp. 72—74.

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them from Ceylon soon after they had received permission to remain; and he and Mr. Hall worked diligently together, Mr. Nott having returned to America on account of his health. From his first arrival in Bombay, Mr. Hall applied himself, with great industry, to the acquisition of the various languages of the Natives, but chiefly the Mahrattah; and herein Mr. Newell followed his example. Mahrattah is one of the most important dialects of India, in respect, especially, to the number of Hindoos to whom it is vernacular, it being spoken by nearly twelve millions of people. Their progress in its acquisition was as quick as could be reasonably expected, considering their constant interruptions arising from the embarrassments detailed above. In the year 1815 they write: "We have made so much proficiency in the Mahrattah language as to be able to commence our great work of preaching the Gospel to the Heathen. We daily impart religious instruction to the people around us, in some form or other; and this we expect will be the great business of our lives from day to day. We have commenced the work of translating the Scriptures into the Mahrattah language. We both employ some part of our time almost every day in translating. These essays at translating we consider at present as very imperfect; and we have no expectation that we shall be able, in a year or two, to effect a complete and correct version of the Sacred Volume. Our situation affords many facilities for the prosecution of this work, the principal of which is, our living in the midst of the people for whom the translation is designed. We hand our translations round in manuscript, and read them to the people in our excursions; and in this way we are enabled to detect the errors at once, and to ascertain, to our perfect satisfaction, whether our version is intelligible and idiomatical, or not."



They translated, also, a Harmony of the Gospels, some small Tracts, and a short Catechism. They did not consider any of these translations perfect; but they were made for daily use in instructing the people¹, and were circulated in manuscript.

6. In the month of May Mr. Hall wrote: "From about half-past four to eight in the evening I spend daily among the Heathen, in attempting to give them some knowledge of Christ. I speak sometimes to one: sometimes to five, ten, fifteen, or twenty: sometimes in the streets, sometimes in their houses, and sometimes at their temples and other holy places. Last Sabbath I sat upon the floor in a native hut and read something like a sermon to about fifteen persons." It was the practice of them both daily to itinerate among the people, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel. An extract from Mr. Hall's Journals, in the month of November this year, will give some notion of their exertions and feelings on these occasions:—"This day addressed about seventy persons; and in the course of the past week have spoken to about eight hundred. Blessed be God for the privilege! I have noticed a few persons, who seemed desirous to hear all I had to say; so much so, that they have been constant at the stated place, to which I have daily repaired; and some have even followed me from one place to another. But, alas! when I fix my eyes only on the people, all is dark as night; but whenever, by faith, I am enabled to look to the Sun of Righteousness, all is light as noon. How great, how precious are the promises! Blessed is he that can trust in them." Again, in a letter to a friend about the same time, he says: "I can now speak the Mahrattah language with considerable ease, and daily spend about three

Their intercourse with the Natives.

(¹) Memoir of Gordon Hall, pp. 108, 109. Society's Seventh Report.

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hours in preaching Christ to Heathen, Jews, Mahomedans, and Papists. I enjoy perfect health, and am able to labour hard about sixteen hours out of the twenty-four."¹ On another occasion, in the same month, he mentions the varied effects produced on his audience: "As I proceeded, some agitation arose among the people; and one or two cried out, 'Come away from him; come away!' But the greater part were disposed to remain and listen to the Word. Something like this has taken place for two or three days past, when I have been at the temples. I view it as an encouragement—as a proof that they understand me, and feel some disquietude in their consciences. One, blustering up, said to me, 'How many months have you been preaching to these people, and nobody has regarded you?'"

Heathen
liberality
contrasted
with Chris-
tians' parsimony.

7. In mentioning, at a later period, the liberality of the Heathen in support of their idolatries, he justly and feelingly contrasts it with the parsimony of Christians in the cause of the Gospel. "Many a poor man and woman, who have laboured hard all day for eight pice each, will give half a pice to the idol as they return from the toils of the day to their hungry families. The amount contributed by the Hindoos in money, cloth, and various products of the soil to their idols is probably three times greater than any portion of the Christian world give for the various purposes of religion. No Hindoo, male or female, but expects to make an offering of some sort nearly or quite every day. They never murmur at this, any more than they do at the expense of supporting their families. All these offerings of the people go to the support of the temples, and their numerous and indolent priests. Hence it may be seen what a motive is presented to the

(¹) Memoir of Gordon Hall, pp. 111—117.



priests to sustain and render popular their system of image-worship. As many of the temples are private property of the priests, it is easy to see a reason why the owners should use every means in their power to render their gods popular."² It can be no matter of surprise, therefore, that he and his colleague encountered opposition from these interested Brahmins. The astonishment is that they were not more violently resisted in their invasion of the Natives' superstitions.

8. Besides thus preaching to the Heathen, wherever and whenever they could find an opportunity, the Brethren had certain regular exercises, steadily attended. On Sabbath Morning they held a Meeting for poor Europeans and East-Indians, whose situations rendered them objects of particular compassion, and to whom they imparted religious instruction. Regularly also on the Sabbath they had Public Worship, in English, at their own house; and once a month they celebrated the Lord's Supper.

Their ministrations in English and Mah-rattah.

On the last day of the year 1815 they commenced the public reading of the Scriptures at one of the School-rooms. The reading was in the language of the country; and, upon the portions read, expository remarks were made. At these exercises, which appeared to have been held twice a week, from the time of their commencement, a considerable number of Pagans and some Jews attended.

Although, for the present, the Missionaries saw that they must continue to "go out into the streets and lanes of the city," and preach as they could find opportunity; yet they were strongly impressed with the importance of having soon a house for Public Worship, where people of all classes, disposed to attend, might be accommodated. "It would be needless," they said, "to adduce argu-

(*) Memoir of Gordon Hall, pp. 149, 150.

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III.Their
Schools.

ments to evince the expediency of a measure, so universally sanctioned and enforced by the example of all Christian Missionaries."

9. Besides preaching to the Natives, as soon as they felt secure in their position they attended to the establishment of Schools for the different classes of the inhabitants. At the close of 1816 they had under their care an English School, consisting of about forty pupils. This, upon the accession of females to the Mission, by the marriage of the Missionaries, they hoped to enlarge, upon a plan similar to the Mission School at Serampore, and in such a manner as would render it a source of emolument to the general establishment.

But their hearts were much more ardently engaged in Free Schools for the instruction of the native youth and children in their own language. Of these they had three for heathen children, containing, in all, about three hundred pupils. The Masters were heathen, and they required attentive watching to keep them from instructing their pupils in the rites of idolatry.

Jewish
Auditors,
Scholars,
and
Teachers.

10. At the stated meetings for the public reading and exposition of the Scriptures, several Jews attended; and in one of the Free Schools for heathen children, there had been, for some time, more than twenty Jewish scholars; and the Brethren considered it desirable, for several reasons, that there should be a School specially for these children. "The Jews themselves," they wrote, "have solicited it. They are very poor; and but few of their children are at present taught to read and write. In such a School, the boys could be taught, without any scruple, in the Scriptures of the Old Testament at least. A number of heathen boys would belong to the School; who, of course, would be instructed, free from idolatry, in the knowledge of the true God. It would also lead to such an intercourse



with the Jews, as would be favourable to their instruction in the knowledge of Christ." Under these impressions, they resolved on establishing such a School, as soon as they could engage a suitable Teacher. About this time a Jew, of considerable attainments, and well acquainted with the language of the country, offered himself for the service. The School was accordingly established, and it soon contained about forty Jewish scholars, who were instructed to read and write both Hebrew and Mahrattah. The Brethren were greatly interested in this establishment, and indulged the hope that it would, under God, be the means of bringing these ignorant, wandering Israelites into the fold of Christ. These people were from the colony of Black Jews at Cochin. They had a small synagogue at Bombay, where they met for worship every seventh day. With reference to their comparative qualifications as Teachers in the Schools, the Missionaries thought them decidedly preferable to any other class of Natives; for though they had no affection for the worshippers of Christ, yet the veneration which Christians have for the patriarchs and prophets, the pious kings and fathers of ancient Israel, and their familiar acquaintance with the Old Testament, of which these Jews were very ignorant, and also of the whole history of their nation, compelled them irresistibly to acknowledge believers in Christ to be of nearer kin to them than any other people on earth; and this predilection inspired them with respect for the Missionaries. The portions of the Old Testament contained in the School-books were exceedingly interesting to them, as they related so much to the history of their own nation. They were, therefore, more inclined than the Hindoos to read the Missionaries' books; for those books throughout contradicted and stamped with sin and infamy almost every thing that the Hindoo deems

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Arrival of
a Mission-
ary—in-
creased
exertions.

sacred; while they taught many things contained in the Hebrew Scriptures, which require the Jew to execrate every appearance of idolatry; and far more do they forbid him to teach it, as the Hindoo is expected to do, and will do, unless the greatest care is taken to prevent it. For these and other reasons the Missionaries thought the Jews were to be preferred as Schoolmasters, and they soon had six in their employ.¹

11. In November 1816 the Mission was joined by Mr. and Mrs. Bardwell, and their prospects were now brightening daily. They felt great encouragement to go forward with increasing zeal, putting their trust for the time to come in the same infinitely wise and gracious God who had hitherto guided and blessed them. They applied themselves, accordingly, with increasing assiduity, to the several branches of their work, which were—preaching, translating, printing, and establishing and superintending Schools. It was now about two years since the Brethren Hall and Newell had been able to preach with facility in Mahrattah; and in their private journals they gave some specimens of the manner in which they employed and acquitted themselves in this department of their work. From these, it appeared that they had little difficulty, at any time, in finding people collected, or in collecting them, in considerable numbers; that favourable opportunities were frequently afforded them for exposing the absurdities and enormities of heathenism, and for displaying, in contrast with them, the excellencies of Christianity; and that they were often heard with attention, and not without manifest impression.²

(¹) Memoir of G. Hall, pp. 170, 171.

(²) These discourses were similar to those of other Missionaries in various parts of India, several specimens of which we have already given.



12. Hitherto they had circulated their translations in manuscript ; but they now commenced printing. Having, by the aid of Mr. Thomason, obtained from Calcutta a press, with a fount of Nagree types, and Mr. Bardwell being acquainted with the art of printing, no time was lost in preparing to get the press into operation. Various difficulties, however, occurred. In their fount, several types were wanting ; others were untrimmed ; and considerable alteration was found necessary in their press. But their resolute perseverance prevailed ; and in a short time they finished the printing of fifteen hundred copies of a Scripture Tract of eight octavo pages. "Almost the whole of the work," they say, "from the beginning to the end, has been done with our own hands. Difficulties of various kinds, and such as could not well be described, have occurred ; but we have been able so far to overcome them, that the first production of our press has greatly encouraged us. We now commend this little portion of God's Word to His gracious disposal, beseeching Him to make it the means of salvation to many of the Heathen, and imploring His kind direction and assistance in all our future attempts to serve Him in the work of this Mission."

Operations
of the
Press.

In another communication they add : "After so many discouragements as our Mission has experienced, you will, we doubt not, rejoice with us, in our being enabled at length, through Divine goodness, to commence the delightful work of printing the Word of God in the language of a numerous heathen people. We expect to put the Gospel of Matthew to press in a few days, but shall not probably have it ready for distribution under three months."

Thus was established the first Indian Mission of the American Board, and the first Mission at Bombay. Considering the difficulties with which the



CSL

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Missionaries had for some time to struggle, we must regard their success as great. The manifest blessing from above which rested on the several branches of their operations tended to encourage others to enter upon the same field of labour, and, in some measure, prepared their way. The powerful appeals of the Missionaries for more help, and the accounts of their progress which they sent home, served to keep alive and extend, in America, and even in England, the principle and spirit of Missions to the Heathen, which led, in a few years, to the diffusion of the Gospel from the western world to all parts of the globe, and gave promise of abounding more and more, until the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.



CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANITY IN CEYLON FROM 1796 TO 1816.

1. WE have seen that when the Dutch first invaded Ceylon, they were assisted by the native powers against the Portuguese, who had rendered themselves obnoxious by their imperious conduct.¹ The Dutch committed a similar mistake within a few years after they had expelled the Portuguese, and were firmly seated in their acquisitions. An historian of their own, Francis Valentyn, in the year 1725, animadverted on their severity towards the Natives; gave an account of the unfriendly position of their affairs with the sovereign of the interior of the island, Raja Singa, in 1664; and urged upon them the necessity of greater moderation in their public measures, lest they should goad the inhabitants to rise up against them, as they did against the Portuguese.² This appears to have been the character of the Dutch Government through the eighteenth century; and, no doubt, their unpopularity in the island which it naturally caused, materially contributed to the success of the English invasion in 1796, when the Dutch surrendered all their settlements in Ceylon

Capture of
Ceylon by
the British
—religious
establish-
ments sus-
pended.

(¹) B. vi. c. 1. s. 5.

(²) Keurlyke Veschi, &c. Ch. 15.

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IV.

Revised
under Go-
vernors
North.

to the British arms.¹ For nearly three years after they were taken possession of, the religious establishments of the Natives occupied no part of the attention of their new Governors. The Dutch clergy became prisoners of war. The Catechists and Schoolmasters no longer received their salaries. The duties of Public Worship, and the education of the youth, began either to be feebly discharged or entirely neglected; and memorials, presented by the inhabitants on these subjects, were considered by a military commander, either as objects in which he had no concern, or matters which he had not power to redress.

2. Towards the end of the year 1798 the Honourable Frederic North arrived at Columbo, the first Civil Governor of the island appointed by the British Government. He, following the instructions of an enlightened Ministry, and prompted by his own principles to promote the happiness of the people committed to his charge, studied with minute attention every subject in which their interest was concerned. In adopting measures for the proper maintenance of the Ecclesiastical orders, he carefully avoided all the errors which prevailed under the Dutch system. The dues formerly paid on the marriages of Native Christians were abolished, being a tax which had proved unfavourable to the morals and the comfort of an indigent people. A register of such marriages, however, continued to be kept in each School, for the prevention of bigamy, and the regular transmission of inheritance. All the Schoolmasters were examined as to their qualifications and principles, and inquiries were made concerning the amount of salary which might be suf-

(¹) Description of Ceylon, by Rev. James Cordiner, late Chaplain at Columbo. Vol. i. pp. 159—165.



ficient to stimulate their zeal, and attach them to their employment. The monthly sum of eight rix-dollars of Ceylon currency, or sixteen shilling sterling, was settled on each School; and an allowance of fifteen rix-dollars per month was granted to each Catechist. Every individual employed received a written appointment to that effect, and at the same time took the oath of allegiance to his Britannic Majesty. The Dutch Clergymen were directed to resume the visitation of their different flocks, and their travelling expenses were paid by Government. Several preachers of the Gospel were educated in the island, and licensed by the proper authority: others, still better qualified, were brought over from the coast of Coromandel, where they had been instructed in their profession by the Danish Missionaries at Tranquebar. One of these was established as an officiating Clergyman to the Natives at each of the principal stations in the Island.²

This preacher performed Divine Service in one of the Churches within his province every Sunday; administered the Sacrament of Baptism; solemnized marriages; visited all the Schools committed to his care at least three times in the year; examined particularly the conduct and ability of the Catechist and Schoolmaster; and informed his Principal minutely of whatever occurred.

3. Besides these institutions, in 1799 there was established at Columbo a very flourishing academy, called the High Seminary, composed of three distinct classes of young men, Cingalese, Tamulians, and European. Twenty-four Cingalese and twelve Tamul boys were chosen from the first classes of the Natives, and instructed, lodged, and boarded at the

High Seminary for Teachers founded at Columbo.

(²) The Stations were:—Columbo, Negombo, Chilauw, Putlam, Manaar, Jaffnapatam, Molletivoe, Trincomalee, Batticaloe, Mattura, Point de Galle, and Coltura.

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expense of Government: they were all taught English, as well as other languages, by experienced masters, and are described as very industrious and docile, and manifesting a strong ambition to acquire learning. Every branch of instruction was received by them with delight; and they read the books put into their hands with great attention. Many of them were able to converse fluently in English, to write it well, and to translate very accurately from the Cingalese. The Bible was the chief model of their compositions. They are said to have been well acquainted with the principles of Christianity, and sincerely attached to its Divine Author; and there was every reason to hope that, when dispersed abroad amongst their countrymen, their influence and example would produce the most happy consequences. The British interests in the island already experienced essential benefits from the labours of this academy, which for a long time supplied the place of a translators' office, and likewise furnished confidential interpreters to the various departments of Government. The state of improvement at which some of the Cingalese youths had already arrived, afforded an interesting specimen of the great advantages which would result to Ceylon from a proper attention to the education of the rising generation. The happiness of the people is, at all times, an important object in the eyes of a liberal administration; and when that object involves in it the deepest interest of the governing power, a steady regard to it is enforced by irresistible arguments.

Good effect
of this re-
vival.

4. In this manner were the Dutch Ecclesiastical establishment and Schools received and improved, under the benevolent directions of Mr. North. Christianity once more began to wear an improving aspect. The inhabitants were fully sensible of the attention which the Government paid both to their spiritual and temporal interests. The whole country



resounded with expressions of loyalty, and every countenance denoted happiness and contentment.

5. "The only addition which appears to be wanting," remarked the historian², "to complete their ecclesiastical establishment of Ceylon, is a few Clergymen, of pious zeal and ability, from England." There were required at least, he observed, one in each of the larger provinces, whose employment should be, to visit the Native Schools, to study the language and dispositions of the people, to gain a thorough knowledge of the Preachers, Catechists, and Schoolmasters, to improve their professional attainments by sound instruction, and, by good example, to encourage them in the prosecution of their labours. No doubt a few only of such Clergymen would have been a blessing to Ceylon at this time; but some years elapsed before this desideratum was supplied.

Need of
English
Clergy-
men.

6. In the year 1801 the number of Parish Schools flourishing on the island amounted to one hundred and seventy; and the number of Native Protestant Christians exceeded three hundred and forty-two thousand. The Christians professing the religion of the Church of Rome were supposed to be still more numerous. At Columbo the highest ranks of Natives professed Christianity; and such of them as had received the benefit of a good education were more conscientious and respectable than their heathen neighbours.

Christian
inhabi-
tants of
Ceylon in
1801.

7. The state of the Hindoo religion in Ceylon was very different from that of any country on the Continent of India. Here the ancient form of worship was almost totally forgotten; and the inhabitants lived in uninstructed ignorance, perfectly free both from prejudice and bigotry. They had so long wandered in darkness, that they are said to have gladly followed the least glimmerings of light; that

State of
Religion
in the
island.

(²) Cordiner. Vol. i. p. 162.

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the first openings of religious knowledge were received by them with transport¹; and that they looked up with adoration to any person who bestowed pains in endeavouring to teach them. Under these circumstances, the arguments which have been advanced against attempting to introduce Christianity amongst the more polished nations of the East would be entirely void, it was thought, when applied to the uncultivated people of this island. No doubt whatever was entertained, that if ever the Government of England paid attention to this subject, the religion of Christ would become as clearly understood and as well practised at Ceylon as in any part of the British dominions. Upon a closer investigation, however, this view of the Cingalese, and of their readiness to receive the Gospel, did not accord with the Missionaries' experience. They found the human heart as hostile in this island as elsewhere to the holiness of Scripture Truth.²

Dr. John's
report of
the pro-
spect in
Ceylon.

8. The Rev. Dr. John, in a letter dated at Tranquebar, February 1, 1802³, expresses his hopes that the kind disposition of many gentlemen of rank and influence, and of the Governor of Ceylon, the Hon. Frederick North, to protect and forward the Christian religion, the sciences, and the welfare of the Natives, would become more general; and that they who had it in their power to be instrumental to this glorious work would gradually be convinced that there was no instruction suited to the wants of all men equal to that which Christianity furnishes. The harvest in India he described to be now great,

(¹) Some of these expressions (they are Cordiner's, Vol. i. p. 164.) appear rather strong, when compared with the state in which Missionaries afterwards found the people.

(²) See, especially, remarks on the state of Ceylon by some of the early English Missionaries of the nineteenth century, in the *Missionary Register*, 1815, pp. 89, *et seq.*

(³) Christian-Knowledge Society's Report, 1803, pp. 140—143.



and wanting nothing but a greater degree of encouragement from the rulers of the country, who could not but profit by the inculcation of that beneficent rule of the Gospel upon the minds of their numberless subjects—"Fear God and honour the King." Latterly he had sent a number of English and Tamul books to Jaffna, where Christian David, a Native, who was brought up in the Tranquebar School, and had been a Catechist at Tanjore, was now established as a Catechist, by the Governor, under the general direction of the Rev. J. Cordiner, Garrison Chaplain at Columbo. One hundred and thirty-six thousand Christians, and thirty-six Churches and Schools, in that province alone, he says, were in need of provision, and Heathens were every year baptized. More Catechists and Schoolmasters had been desired from Tranquebar than they could furnish, as the Tamul and Portuguese Schoolboys, who had learned to speak and to write an European language, were snatched away from them as soon as they had been admitted to the Lord's Supper at the age of fourteen or fifteen years.

9. It was, probably, in consequence of the Governor's report of this necessity, that, early in the following year (1803), instructions, in the name of the King of Great Britain, were received at Columbo, directing that fifteen hundred pounds a year should be expended on the Schools in the island. This sum, however, was very inadequate, being not more than sufficient to support the different asylums of European orphans, and the academies for instructing the Natives in the English language. The salaries, therefore, of all the country Schoolmasters and Catechists were once more suppressed.

The Governor was well disposed to carry out these instructions; and during the remaining two years of his residence in Ceylon he neglected no

Mr.
North's
patronage
of bene-
volent in-
stitutions.

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Sir A.
Johnstone
favourable
to the Na-
tives' im-
provement.

opportunity to benefit the Natives to the extent of the means at his disposal. In July 1805 he quitted the Government; and in the Address presented to him on his departure by the civil, judicial, and military officers resident at Columbo, they refer in terms of admiration to his exertions for the moral and religious improvement of the inhabitants of the island, and for the alleviation of their sufferings.¹

10. After the departure of Mr. North, General Maitland succeeded to the Government, and was likewise become favourable to the instruction of the inhabitants. Another gentleman, of high station and influence in Ceylon at this time, proved, by various exertions in their behalf, a rich benefactor to all classes of Natives. This was Alexander Johnstone, Esq., Judge of the Supreme Court.² In 1806, when Dr. Buchanan first visited the island, he met this gentleman, who was on his circuit, at Jaffnapatam, and described him as "a man of large and liberal views, the friend of learning, and of Christianity. He is well acquainted," said Dr. Buchanan, "with the language of the country, and with the history of the island, and his professional pursuits afford him a particular knowledge of its present state; so that his communications are truly valuable."³

(¹) The following paragraph expresses their sentiments on these topics:—

"The Natives under your Government will long remember your Excellency with reverence and gratitude, as the founder of seminaries for their improvement in religion and knowledge, and of various institutions of charity for the relief of their sick and poor; and most particularly for the incalculable blessings you have brought upon the island by the successful introduction and rapid extension of vaccination." *Cordiner's Ceylon*, p. 85.

(²) Subsequently Sir Alexander Johnstone, Chief Justice of Ceylon.

(³) *Buchanan's Christian Researches*, pp. 90, 91.

It cannot but be interesting to remark, that in the year 1796 Sir A. Johnstone, then a boy residing with his father in the neighbourhood of Tanjore, became a pupil of the Missionary Swartz, whom



11. It will be remembered that this province was the scene of the successful labours of Baldæus, the first Protestant Minister who attended to the religious instruction of the Natives of Ceylon.⁴ In 1806, after the lapse of nearly one hundred and forty years, Dr. Buchanan thus describes the desolate state of this once flourishing Mission :—" It will be scarcely believed in England that there are here Protestant Churches, under the King's government, which are without Ministers. In the time of Baldæus, the Dutch preacher and historian, there were thirty-two Christian Churches in the province of Jaffna alone: at this time there is not one Protestant European Minister in the whole province.⁵ Most of those handsome Churches, of which views are given in the plates of Baldæus's history, are now in ruins. Even in the town and fort of Jaffna, where there is a spacious edifice for Divine Worship, and a respectable society of English and Dutch inhabitants, no Clergyman has been yet appointed. The only Protestant preacher in the town of Jaffna is Christian David, a Hindoo Catechist, sent over by the Missionaries of Tranquebar. His chief ministrations are in the Tamul tongue; but he sometimes preaches in the English language, which he speaks with tolerable propriety, and the Dutch and English resort to hear him. I went with the

Dr. Buchanan's account of religion in Ceylon.

whom, some years after, he thus described :—" I well remember his peculiarly venerable and impressive appearance, the tall and erect figure, the head white with years, the features on which I loved to look, the mingled dignity and amenity of his demeanour. To his pupils he was more like a parent than a preceptor." (Swartz's *Memoirs*. Vol. ii. p. 329.) It is not improbable that the lively interest which this gentleman has ever evinced in all that relates to the welfare of the British empire in the East is to be attributed to the lessons and the early impressions received under a preceptor so beloved.

(⁴) Book vii. c. 2. ss. 13. *et seq.*

(⁵) He excepts a solitary German Missionary, Mr. Palm, only recently arrived from the London Missionary Society.

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rest to his Church, when he delivered, extempore, a very excellent discourse. And this Hindoo supports the interests of the English Church in the province of Jaffna. The Dutch Ministers, who formerly officiated here, have gone to Batavia or to Europe. The whole district is now in the hands of Romish Priests from the College of Goa; who, perceiving the indifference of the English nation to their own religion, have assumed quiet and undisturbed possession of the land. But whenever our Church shall direct her attention to the promotion of Christianity in the East, I know of no place which is more worthy of her labour than the old Protestant vineyard of Jaffna-patam."

Dr. Buchanan, on his second visit to Ceylon, in March 1808, found the south side of the island in the same state of destitution, as to religious instruction, with the north. There were but two English Clergymen in the island. "What wonder," said a Romish Priest to him, "that your nation should be so little interested about the conversion of the Pagans to Christianity, when it even does not give teachers to its own subjects who are already Christians?" Numbers of the Native Protestants, every year, apostatized, he was informed, to Budhoo. Governor Maitland expressed his conviction that this state of things ought to be remedied, and that some ecclesiastical establishment should be given to Ceylon.

Proposal
for a Cin-
galese
translation
of the
Scriptures.

12. The senior Chaplain at Columbo, the Hon. and Rev. T. J. Twistleton, concurred with the Governor and Sir A. Johnstone in every sentiment relating to the state of Christianity in the island, and was prepared to co-operate in every prudent endeavour to revive and extend the Protestant religion among the inhabitants. Dr. Buchanan drew the special attention of these gentlemen to the importance of translating the Bible into Cingalese. The whole



of the New Testament had been rendered into that language, and three books of the Old, and he endeavoured to procure its completion; but at present there were difficulties in the way, and the work was unavoidably postponed.

13. In 1809 Sir Alexander Johnstone visited England for the purpose of securing to the various descriptions of Natives within the jurisdiction of his Court, the benefit of Trial by Jury. This is one of the greatest advantages of the British Constitution: it gives security, protection, and freedom, to the least subject as well as to the greatest. No measure could tend more to civilize any people, and raise them in the scale of morals. Sir A. Johnstone succeeded in his object, and lived to have the satisfaction of seeing the peaceable fruits of his exertions.

Sir A. Johnstone's exertions, in England, for the inhabitants.

But this was not the only purpose of this benevolent individual's visit to England. While procuring for the Cingalese this civil privilege of British subjects, he also drew attention to their state of spiritual destitution, with a view to bring that people more fully under the influence of Christian principles. His information and suggestions were brought to the notice of several Missionary Societies. He had likewise frequent interviews with the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in which both parties mutually improved that acquaintance which afterwards ripened into effectual and permanent co-operation. When he left England, in 1811, the Society consigned to his care a large number of English, Dutch, and Portuguese Bibles and Testaments, together with more than five hundred reams of paper to be applied to the printing of the Scriptures, for the use of the Native Christians in the island.¹

(¹) History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Vol. ii. pp. 267, 268.

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IV.Auxiliary
Bible So-
ciety esta-
blished at
Columbo.

14. In the Spring of 1811 Sir Alexander embarked again for India; and on his arrival at Columbo he took the earliest opportunity to concert measures for establishing an Auxiliary Bible Society. The experience which he had of the feelings and prejudices of the Natives convinced him that such a Society would not have the degree of influence in Ceylon which, to secure success to its proceedings, it ought to command, unless the Governor, as well as the gentlemen at the head of the subordinate departments of the service, would give the fullest support to the measures of the Society, not only as a matter of private and individual inclination; but as an object of public and general importance. He therefore suggested to the Governor, Sir Robert Brownrigg, who succeeded to General Maitland, the propriety, not merely of establishing a Bible Society; but also of the Governor himself becoming the President, and all the Members of Council Vice-Presidents. The Governor concurring in this opinion, a meeting took place at the King's House, Columbo, on the 1st of August 1812, in which Sir Robert presided; and a Society was established under the designation of "The Columbo Auxiliary Bible Society." The Governor accepted the office of President; all the Members of Council were appointed Vice-Presidents; and the Committee were to consist of the President, Vice-Presidents, the Heads of the Protestant and Romish Churches, and some of the principal persons in the different departments of Government. The Rev. George Bisset, Chaplain, and brother-in-law to the Governor, acted as Secretary.¹

The ob-
jects of the
Society.

15. The immediate objects of the Society were, to ascertain the number of persons in Ceylon professing the Christian Religion, and the languages

(¹) History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Vol. ii. pp. 268—271.



most familiar to them, in order to form a judgment of the number of Bibles and Testaments in the several languages which would be necessary to supply their wants. It was a further object, to procure a more accurate version of the Scriptures into Cingalese, and a translation of them into the Pali language.²

(²) Pali is the classical language of Ceylon, and it differs but little from the Sanscrit. The use of the Pali in this island furnishes an interesting confirmation of the view taken of the antiquity and universality of that language, in the following remarks which appeared in the *Times* about two years ago:—"Cabul, as the name of a place, occurs in the Book of Joshua, chap. xix. ver. 27, and Mr. Masson remarks, that many localities in Affghanistan bear scriptural names. He notices Zoar, Shinar, Gaza, Sheva, Sidim, Tabar, Amân, Kergha, and concludes that these names were borne by the localities when they became first known to the Israelites, and that they were not conferred by them. The question instantly occurs, what names, then, are they? Mr. Masson replies, Pâli names, given by the Pâli settlers in the region called Pâlistan, the land of the Pâli—our Palestine. We will pause to remark, that evidences of the existence of this ancient people are scattered over the globe, and to that most important of uses might the collection of these indications be consecrated, namely, to the elucidation of the early history of mankind, and the confirmation of the Biblical narrative of the origin and progression of the human race. In Tyre we have Pâli tûr, the Pâli tower or fort. The Palatine Hill of Rome is that Pâltan, the Pâli town over the ruins of which Rome was built. The Pâli spread themselves over ancient Scythia. Recent discoveries in India and Central Asia have proved that the language of those countries at the period of the Macedonian conquests was Pâli; the language of Persia was Pâli; Phœnician is Pâli; Pâli words occur in the vocabulary of the savages of Western Australia, as we noticed in our review of the travels of Captain Grey; and traces of the same ancient tongue are discernible in the language of the Red Man of North America. The common origin of the Tartar, the North-American Indian, and the Australian aborigines, may thus be traced, and a ready refutation given to the scepticism of Humboldt and the French physiologists on that point. An industrious reader will find throughout Mr. Masson's volumes many valuable notices to serve for the illustration of the theory we have taken so many occasions to inculcate, which perhaps it would be more correct not to designate a theory, but a confirmation, by existing evidence, of the facts recorded in the Sacred Scriptures.

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The accounts of the number of Christians in Ceylon, published about this time, differ materially from each other. It appeared, however, on the investigation now made, that the Native Protestants were about one hundred and fifty thousand,¹ and the Romanists about fifty thousand. Of these, the great majority spake Cingalese, and the rest Tamul.

An attempt was made to correct an old Cingalese version of the New Testament, in order to have five thousand copies printed for immediate use; but it was found very imperfect, and it was determined to procure an entirely new translation. In the meantime the Calcutta Bible Society put to press, at Serampore, an edition of two thousand copies of the old version, for present use. The new translation was undertaken by W. Tolfrey, Esq., a gentleman skilled in the Cingalese, Pali, and Sanscrit, who had been engaged for some time in the compilation of a Cingalese Dictionary. Dr. Buchanan had endeavoured to prevail upon him to execute this work; but being at the head of one of the Civil Departments of the Service, he objected to accede to the proposal without the express sanction of Government. His difficulties were happily now removed, and he cheerfully undertook the task. A translation of the Scriptures into Pali was soon begun by Don M. de Thomas Mohandriam, of the Governor's Gate, two priests of Budhoo readily affording him their assistance.

The Society resolved, also, to circulate familiar

(¹) This report of numbers fell far short of former statements; nor could it be doubted that multitudes of the inhabitants had of late years relapsed into idolatry: for in the time of the Dutch Government there were only between three and four hundred temples within their territories dedicated to pagan deities: in the year 1807 they amounted to twelve hundred. In 1663 the Christians in the district of Jaffna alone were sixty-five thousand: by the last returns it appeared that there were not five thousand.



Essays and Dialogues illustrative of the Scriptures, the same reasons not existing in Ceylon, as in many other places, for the exclusive circulation of the Bible by such institutions. It was observed that, "next to the fervent zeal and indefatigable labour of the venerable Swartz, the conversion of so many thousands in Tanjore was owing to the circulation of familiar Dialogues and short easy Treatises upon the subject of Christianity."²

16. We have now to relate another of those instances of piety and talent in the humbler walks of life, which we have occasionally had to record in the course of the present History. It has been seen, that when an untutored mind has become filled with the grandeur of the Missionary object, its powers have been developed by its pursuit. The present case was Mr. Andrew Armour, who entered the army as a private in 1787, and, when in Ireland, became a member of the Wesleyan Society. In 1792 he went to Gibraltar, where he established a religious association among his comrades, which continued long after his departure. In 1800 he arrived in Ceylon; and his good conduct and abilities bringing him to the notice of the Governor, in the beginning of 1801 he was appointed to the head mastership of the High School at Columbo. Here he attended to the improvement of his mind, in order to qualify himself more perfectly for his new situation, and also to preach the Gospel to those around him, a work on which his heart was bent. For this purpose he made himself master of Cingalese, and obtained also a colloquial knowledge of Portuguese and Dutch. The Rev. T. J. Twistleton, the senior Chaplain, having become acquainted with his character and talents, obtained his discharge from the army, and employed him, among other

History of
Mr. A. Ar-
mour.

(²) First Report of the Columbo Bible Society.

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IV.

services, as his Clerk in the Fort Church. Many circumstances had combined to thwart his wishes to preach to the people until 1810, when Divine Providence began to open his way before him; and ultimately, in 1812, by the death of the last surviving Dutch Clergyman on the island, every obstacle was removed. He was now licensed by the Government to preach in Cingalese. Having mastered the difficulties of that language, he was able to address the Natives with fluency and precision. He had likewise translated the English Liturgy into Cingalese, and always conducted his ministrations in strict conformity with the services and doctrines of the Established Church. He preached to the Portuguese also, and literally did the work of an Evangelist. Thus he continued to labour with assiduity and ability for several years, and was one of the principal agents in the revival of religion, which, under God, took place in Ceylon about this period.¹

Character
of the
King of
Kandy.

17. Hitherto the British territories were confined to the maritime provinces of Ceylon, forming a complete belt to the island. The interior, or kingdom of Kandy, had long been under the dominion of a despotic and barbarous race of princes. The country is very mountainous and woody, and the greatest vigilance was observed to prevent the intrusion of strangers. The Dutch, by means of obsequious flattery, contrived to conciliate this proud king, and thereby obtained, in general, quiet possession of the country which they held. At times, however, he unexpectedly made inroads upon their provinces, and did them considerable damage.²

(¹) *Monthly Notices* of the Wesleyan Society, 1816. Vol. i. p. 15. Harvard's Narrative of the Wesleyan Mission to Ceylon, &c., pp. 349, &c. Le Bas' Life of Bishop Middleton. Vol. ii. pp. 212, 213.

(²) Knox's Account of the King and Government of Kandy in the



But the British would not endure this. Desiring, however, to live at peace with their neighbours, in the year 1800 they sent an embassy from Columbo to the Court of Kandy, with a view to enter into an amicable alliance with that Government. Two treaties were projected ; but, after long discussions upon their terms, neither of them could be agreed upon, and the ambassador, General Macdowall, requested of his Kandian Majesty an audience of leave. They parted with mutual expressions of friendship ; but there was afterwards very little communication kept up between the two countries³, except by native merchants, who travelled into the interior with their wares.

18. In 1814 some Missionaries proposed to visit the Kandian territories ; but the Governor of Ceylon considered the friendly relations with that country too insecure to sanction the attempt. Often, however, as in the present case, the weapons of war have opened a passage for the Gospel of peace. At this time the throne of Kandy was occupied by a sanguinary tyrant, whose cruelties were of a character to which few parallels can be found in the history of mankind, except in the persecutions of Christians, formerly by pagan, and latterly by papal Rome. Displeased with his first Adikar, or prime minister, this man, knowing what awaited him, resorted to arms in self-defence ; and being defeated by the King's troops, he fled for refuge into the British territories. His name was Eheylapola. Enraged at his escape, the tyrant, hurried along by a spirit of revenge, and lost to every tender feeling, resolved to punish the fugitive minister in the persons of his family who still

His cruelties disgust and alarm his subjects.

the year 1681. Cordiner's Description of Ceylon. Second Part. Chapter vii.

(³) Cordiner. Ibid. Chapter vi.

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IV.

remained in his power. The chief's wife and children, with his brother and his wife, he sentenced to death; the brother and children to be beheaded, and the women to be drowned.¹ These and other

(¹) Though harrowing to every feeling of humanity, we will give Dr. Davy's description of this instance of the tyrant's barbarous injustice:—

"In front of the queen's palace, and between two celebrated temples, as if to shock and insult the gods as well as the sex, the wife of Eheylapola and his children were brought from prison, where they had been in charge of female jailors, and delivered over to the executioners. The lady, with great resolution, maintained hers and her children's innocence, and her lord's; at the same time submitting to the King's pleasure, and offering up her own and her offspring's lives, with the fervent hope that her husband would be benefited by the sacrifice. Having uttered these sentiments aloud, she desired her eldest boy to submit to his fate: the poor boy, who was eleven years old, clung to his mother, terrified and crying. Her second son, nine years old, heroically stepped forward. He bade his brother not to be afraid; he would show him the way to die. By one blow of the sword the head of this noble child was severed from his body. Streaming with blood, and hardly inanimate, it was thrown into a rice mortar: the pestle was put into the mother's hand, and she was ordered to pound it, or be *disgracefully tortured*. To avoid the disgrace the wretched woman did lift up the pestle and let it fall. One by one the heads of all her children were cut off; and one by one the poor mother. . . . But the circumstance is too dreadful to be dwelt on. One of the children was a girl; and to wound a female is considered by the Cingalese a most monstrous crime. Another was a sucking infant; and it was plucked from its mother's breast to be beheaded. When the head was severed from the body the milk it had drawn in ran out mingled with its blood.

"During this tragical scene, the crowd who had assembled to witness it wept and sobbed aloud, unable to suppress their feelings of grief and horror. Palihassane Dissave (an officer) was so affected that he fainted, and was expelled his office for showing such tender sensibility. During two days the whole of Kandy, with the exception of the tyrant's Court, was as one house of mourning and lamentation; and so deep was the grief, that not a fire, it is said, was kindled, no food was dressed, and a general fast was held. After the execution of her children the sufferings of the mother were speedily relieved. She and her sister-in-law, and the wife and sister of Pusilla Dissave, were led to the little tank in the immediate neighbourhood of Kandy, called Bogambarawave, and



executions, together with the barbarities attending them, disgusted and terrified the chiefs and people, who were ripe for revolt, and only waited the approach of a British force to throw off their allegiance.

19. The Governor of Ceylon, acquainted with what was going on in the interior, could not be unconcerned at this state of public feeling. Hostilities appeared to be inevitable; and he prepared for the encounter, stationing a force near the frontier, and holding himself in readiness to act at a moment's notice, and invade the Kandian territories, should occasion arise.

Conquest
of Kandy,
and cap-
ture of the
King.

The Kandians soon gave him cause to declare war. Several native merchants, British subjects, who, in the way of trade, had gone into the interior, were treated as spies, and sent back shockingly mutilated²; and very soon after a party of Kandians passed the boundary, and set fire to a village within the British territory. The declaration of war against the King of Kandy immediately followed this outrage: it was made on the 10th of January 1815, and on the day following the British troops invaded his country. They found most of the King's forces in a state of revolt, and they were

and drowned. Such are the prominent features of this period of terror, which, even now, no Kandian thinks of without dread, and few describe without weeping. Executions at this time were almost unceasing: the numbers put to death cannot be calculated: no one was perfectly secure, not even a priest, not even a chief priest; for the high priest of Kandy, a man of great learning and good character, fell a victim, about this time, to the tyrant's rage."—Dr. Davy's Travels, pp. 321—325. Harvard's Narrative, pp. 325—327.

(²) "Ten were thus treated:—their noses were cut off, and some were also deprived of an arm; others of their ears. Two only of these unfortunate men survived to reach Columbo, presenting a most miserable spectacle, the amputated parts hanging suspended from their necks. The other eight died on the road.—Ibid.

CHAP.
IV.Description of the
Kandian
country.

soon joined by many of the principal chiefs. The British troops reached the capital almost without opposition: on the 14th of February their headquarters were established there; and on the 18th the King was taken prisoner. Forsaken by his officers, on the approach of the army he fled into the mountainous district of Doombura, accompanied only by a very few attendants. Driven by heavy rain from a mountain where he concealed himself during the day, he descended and took shelter in a solitary house in the neighbourhood of Meddahmahaneura, not aware that there was a force at hand lying in wait for him. The party was a zealous one, composed of natives of Saffragam, headed by a staunch adherent of Eheylapola. As soon as intimation was given of the King's hiding-place the house was surrounded, and the monarch seized. He was sent to Columbo, and from thence to Vellore, where he was placed in confinement.¹

20. Though this conquest of the interior opened a new and extensive field for Christian enterprise; yet the state of the country would require, on the Missionary's part, much self-denial and zeal. It was remarked—

“Every European traveller must be carried by coolies, and his provisions must accompany him. Between many villages he must not only occasionally submit to go on foot, but expose himself to the necessity of wading through nullahs, traversing swamps, encountering rugged heights and declivities, exposed, also, to the annoyance of insects and reptiles, and after all, perhaps, no comfortable place to rest his head. The broad canopy of heaven will not suffice: the heavy dews of night are agents of disease: the umbrageous tree will not defy the

(¹) Dr. Davy's Travels. Harvard's Narrative.



heavy rains. There are serious difficulties in travelling in the interior. No clean and pleasing cottages are scattered in the romantic scenery to invite the European traveller; no cheerful casement and no airy lattice to admit the beams of light into the house; no homely table whereon to spread his food; no chair to rest his limbs. Instead of this are scattered, in wide intervals, the miserable huts (resembling beehives) frowning on the light of day, dismal and unprovided."²

21. Meanwhile the Columbo Bible Society was diligently preparing the Scriptures for diffusion through these dark and inhospitable regions. Early in 1815 they commenced the active distribution of Bibles and Testaments in Tamul, Portuguese, Dutch and English, with which their Depository was successively replenished by the Bible Society, both from England and Calcutta. They had received, also, two thousand copies of the Cingalese Testament from the Calcutta Society, which they now began to distribute for present use; but their principal attention was directed towards the completion of the new version of the Testament into this language by Mr. Tolfrey and his Native Assistants. That nothing might be omitted which could ensure the excellence of this translation, two hundred copies of St. Matthew and St. Mark were printed off, and circulated among the respectable classes of Natives at Columbo who were the best skilled in Cingalese; several were sent to Galle and Matura, where the language was spoken in the greatest purity; and pains were taken to obtain a fair and candid opinion of the new

Operations
of the
Columbo
Bible
Society.

(²) Sermon by the Hon. and Rev. T. J. Twistleton, preached at the second anniversary of the Columbo Bible Society. This country was also for some time in a disturbed state, which induced the Governor to dissuade the Wesleyan Missionaries from attempting to visit it until more tranquillized.—Harvard's Narrative, p. 296.

CHAP.
IV.Brighten-
ing pro-
spect for
the diffu-
sion of
Chris-
tianity.

work. From the decision of numerous and competent judges, to whom it was referred, it was satisfactory to learn that the language and style of this extensive specimen were deemed not only pure and suitable to the dignity of the subject, but plain and intelligible.”¹

22. On the whole, the Columbo Bible Society, in its Second Report, gave a very promising view of their prospects. After describing in satisfactory terms the state of the High Seminary at Columbo and the other Government Schools, as well as the several objects which it embraced, it is devoutly remarked—

“The future result of every human attempt is removed from our sight, and depends upon the ordinances of a wise and beneficent Providence; but as far as your Committee may be permitted to judge, they see many strong grounds of hope—no just reasons for despondence. Whether they confine their views to this island, or expand them to the wide extent of the surrounding Indian empire, they are struck with many circumstances powerfully encouraging them to confide in the success of their efforts towards the propagation of the Gospel of Christ.

“The Roman-Catholic Priesthood, remarkable for their spiritual authority over their congregations, have been won, by the persuasive influence of moderation and liberality, to acquiesce in a free circulation of the Scriptures among their disciples, to which they have been ever averse; and the native inhabitants have begun to show their respect for a religion, which they must observe, from so many unequivocal proofs, to be held in reverence and honour.”

(¹) History of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Vol. iii. pp. 120, 121.



23. The next measure of sufficient public importance to be mentioned here was the abolition of Slavery in Ceylon, which directly tended to the melioration of society, and prepared the Natives for the reception of the Gospel. For this boon they were indebted, under God, to the unwearied exertions of the Chief Justice, Sir Alexander Johnstone. He had endeavoured, for several years, to prevail upon the principal proprietors of slaves on the island to fix a day after which all children born of their slaves should be free. On the 10th of July 1816 he addressed a letter on the subject to a respectable portion of them, about one hundred and thirty in number, who were on the list of special jurymen of the province, and were therefore personally known to him. Sir Alexander's letter was accompanied by the Eighth and Ninth Reports of the African Institution, to the details of which, on the particular subject, he called the attention of the Dutch gentlemen. His proposal was well received; and a letter was addressed to him in reply, on the 14th of July, signed by seventy-three of the jurors.²

(²) An extract from this Letter will speak for itself—

"We sincerely beg leave to assure your Lordship, that the proposal conveyed by your Lordship's letter is gratifying to our feelings; and it is our earnest desire, if possible, to disencumber ourselves of that unnatural character of being proprietors of human beings; but we feel regret in adding, that the circumstances of every individual of us do not allow a sudden and total abolition of Slavery, without subjecting both the proprietors and the slaves themselves to material and serious injuries.

"We take the liberty to add, that the slaves of the Dutch inhabitants are generally emancipated at their death; as will appear to your Lordship on reference to their wills deposited in the records of the Supreme Court; and we are confident that those who are still in a state of slavery have likewise the same chance of obtaining their freedom.

"We have, therefore, in following the magnanimous example of those alluded to in the aforementioned Reports of the African

CHAP.
IV.

A meeting was held the next day for framing Resolutions for the more effectual accomplishment of the design; the principal object of which Resolutions was, to make provision that the children, born free after the 12th of August 1816 should be duly taken care of by the masters of their parents until the age of fourteen; it being supposed that, after that age, they would be able to provide for themselves.

Besides the Dutch special jurymen, there were, in Columbo, jurymen of all the different castes among the Natives; such as Vellales, Fishermen, men of the Mahabadde or Cinnamon department, Chittees, and Mahomedans. The moment the jurymen of these castes heard of the Resolutions which had been come to by the Dutch special jurymen, they were so much struck with the example which they had set them, that they also immediately addressed the Chief Justice in the same manner as the Dutch had done, announcing their acquiescence in the measure which had been adopted by the Dutch, and their unanimous determination to consider as free all children that might be born of their slaves after the 12th of August.

The example of the jurymen at Columbo would be followed, it was expected, by all the jurymen on the island.

"The state of Domestic Slavery," Sir Alexander observed, "which has prevailed in Ceylon for three

Institution, come to a Resolution, as our voluntary act, to declare, that all children who may be born slaves from and after the 12th of August 1816 inclusive, shall be considered free, and under such provisions and conditions as contained in a Resolution which we shall agree upon, and which we shall have the honour of submitting to your Lordship, for the extinction of a traffic avowedly repugnant to every moral and religious virtue."

The 12th of August was fixed upon, in compliment to the birthday of the Prince Regent.



centuries, may now be considered at an end." "This measure," he also remarked, "must produce a great and most favourable change in the moral habits and sentiments of many different classes of society in the island; and generations yet unborn will reflect with gratitude on the names of those persons to whose humanity they will owe the numerous blessings which attend a state of freedom."¹

24. The preparation of the public mind for this important event was mainly attributed to the establishment of trial by jury; to the progress of education in the Government Schools; and to the exertions of the several Missionary Societies, which, a short time before, commenced their work in the island. Sir Alexander Johnstone was very solicitous for the Christian education of these emancipated children, which he urged upon the consideration of the London Missionary Society in these appropriate terms:—"It becomes the duty of every one who may feel an interest in the cause to take care that the children who may be born free in consequence of this measure should be educated in such a manner as to be able to make a proper use of their freedom; and it is to your Society, as well as to other Missionary Societies, to which the Natives are already so much indebted, that I look with confidence for the education and religious instruction of all those children."²

25. The Chief Justice had long taken a lively interest in the education of all classes of the inhabitants; and in the history of the several Missionary Societies in Ceylon we shall have frequent occasion to mention the encouragement which he afforded them in their operations. Lady Johnstone also supported a Native School for girls near her residence

Christian
education
for the
emanci-
pated chil-
dren.

The Chief
Justice de-
parts from
Ceylon.

(¹) Missionary Register, 1817, pp. 126, 127.

(²) London Society's Twenty-third Report, p. 13.

CHAP.
IV.

at Colpetty, to which, while able, she gave her personal superintendence. Her loss was therefore doubly felt, when, in consequence of her declining health, Sir Alexander, in the following year, returned with her to Europe. But they left a blessing behind. Sir Alexander expressed the most decided opinion, that if the Missionaries in the island met with the support which they deserved in England and Ceylon, they would realize, ere long, the hopes of those who were the most sanguine in their expectations of the ultimate success of the cause of Christianity in Asia.¹

We now proceed to detail the exertions of the Missionaries to whom the Chief Justice here alludes.

(¹) Harvard's Narrative, pp. 394—398. The following were Sir Alexander's observations:—

“A very long residence in this island, and a very attentive consideration of the different prejudices which prevail among the people, convinced me, many years ago, that the surest method which His Majesty's Government could adopt for improving the moral character of the inhabitants would be, to encourage a sufficient number of zealous Missionaries to establish themselves in different parts of the island, whose sole object it should be to instruct the Natives in the REAL principles of Christianity, and to superintend their religious conduct.”



CHAPTER V.

LONDON MISSION IN CEYLON, 1804—1816.

1. IN the year 1804 the London Missionary Society sent out three Missionaries², the Rev. Messrs. Vos, Ehrhardt, and Palm, to establish a Mission in Ceylon. Vos and Ehrhardt sailed with Messrs. Ringeltaube, Des Granges, and Cran, for the Indian Continent. Mr. Vos had formerly ministered in the Dutch Church near the Cape of Good Hope: his experience, therefore, induced the Society to appoint him superintendent of the Mission. His two companions were natives of Germany, and educated at the Seminary at Berlin. Messrs. Vos and Ehrhardt arrived, with their brethren, at Tranquebar in December 1804, where Mrs. Vos died in the faith and hope of the Gospel. Mr. Vos had brought with him a young man, Mr. William Read, from the Cape of Good Hope, whom he now took to Ceylon, whither they proceeded, together with Mr. Ehrhardt, and anchored off Columbo on the 4th of February. They immediately went on shore, and waited upon the Chaplain, the Hon. and Rev. T. J. Twistleton, who gave them a kind reception, and introduced them to the Governor, the Hon. Frederick North. The

Three Missionaries arrive.

(²) See the Society's Reports from the Tenth to the Twenty-third inclusive. Also, *Vie de Michel-Chrétien Vos*. *Lettres* 15, 16, 17.

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V.

Governor approved of their credentials, and made arrangements for their useful employment. Messrs. Vos and Read he stationed at Galle, and Mr. Ehrhardt at Matura. Not long after their arrival they were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Palm, who were received with equal kindness, and were appointed to reside at Jaffnapatam. They were thankful to Divine Providence for having placed over the island a Governor whose enlightened mind discerned the beneficial influence of the Christian Religion, and prompted him to extend his powerful influence and fostering care over those who had devoted themselves to its interests. The liberality of his Government provided in part for the support of each of the Missionaries, whereby the funds of the Society were greatly relieved. It was no less cause for gratitude to God that Columbo was at the same time blessed with a Chaplain, Mr. Twistleton, who appreciated their character and object, and manifested towards them a Christian affection and liberal countenance, which proved of great importance both to their comfort and success. They were soon actively engaged at their several stations in acquiring the languages of the island, in preaching to those who understood Dutch, and in teaching their children. Finding that their labours required further aid, they soon called upon their Society for additional Missionaries.

Mr. Vos is
banished
the island.

2. In the same year Mr. Vos, who had been appointed Minister of the Dutch Church at Galle, was removed to Columbo, where he preached to a few Dutch who attended the Church, and to a greater number in his own house: he preached, also, at two or three other private houses on the weekdays, and took pains to catechize the children. But his fidelity in proclaiming the Truth soon roused the enmity of the carnal mind; and at the instigation of some of the Dutch Consistory, whom his zeal had



offended, he was removed from the Church in which he had been placed. But as many pious people, deeply affected with his preaching, attended him at his house, and farther proposed to build a Church for him, his opponents were irritated beyond all bounds, and nothing but the *expulsion* of this pious and industrious Missionary could satisfy them. Governor North had called him to Columbo. From the present Governor, also, General Maitland, he had received much personal kindness; and though the General thought it right to yield to the angry solicitations of the Dutch Consistory, it was with considerable regret that he ordered him to quit the island, and he continued his salary for three months after his departure. The aged Missionary retired to Negapatam, where he officiated for some months in the Dutch Church, and his ministrations were very acceptable to the inhabitants. In 1809 he assisted Mr. Loveless at Madras for a short time. After this he visited Vizagapatam; and thence returned, in the same year, to the Cape of Good Hope, to spend the residue of his days and ministry among his countrymen and friends.

3. Mr. Ehrhardt, who in 1807 came to Columbo to obtain assistance in the acquisition of the Cingalese language, was soon ordered to return to Matura. After reaching home he received a second order not to interfere with any of the Dutch; but to confine his Mission and instructions to the Cingalese. All this intolerance, like that against Mr. Vos, was raised at the instigation of the Dutch Consistory.

Mr. Ehrhardt's difficulties.

After his return to Matura he found himself encompassed by difficulties. The religion of the Gospel was hated and opposed by nominal Christians. Many of the Malays and Cingalese, who had been baptized by the Dutch Ministers when the island was in their possession, had relapsed into gross idolatry; and the blind attachment of the Natives in general to their superstitions, together

CHAP.
V.Low character of
Native
Christians.

with the difficulty of acquiring the Cingalese language, and the very limited number of Missionaries, all combined to hinder the progress of Christianity in this populous colony of the British empire.

4. The principal object of his care was the Christian congregation of the place; and in a letter dated September 25, 1808, he thus describes the character of this people:—"You can form no idea of the deplorable state of the Christians in this island. Most of them live worse than the Heathen, who still have some reverence for their idols, and conscientiously offer them their sacrifices; but most of the Christians seem to have cast off all regard for the true and living God, despise His Word, and profane His Sabbaths. Did I not feel myself in duty bound to obey the warrant of the Governor, I should at once leave the Christians and turn to the Heathen. But the Christians stand as much, if not more, in need of instruction as the Heathen; for they must first *become genuine Christians*, in order to prove burning and shining lights among the Heathen. But now our holy religion is rendered contemptible and odious by their profaneness and vices." This was the general character of the Native Christians. They are everywhere described as in a "miserable" condition, thousands of them being actually worshippers of Budhoo.

The Dutch congregation at Matura consisted of forty-five members, of whom only six partook of the Lord's Supper. Yet, discouraging as his circumstances were, he concluded—"I will not cast away my confidence, but cheerfully hope that God will mercifully regard my cry, and make me an useful instrument for the promotion of His glory, and the salvation of souls. I do once more solicit an interest in your prayers."

Mr. Palm
at Tillipally.

5. Mr. Palm, who resided at Tillipally, near Jaffnapatam, was occupied in the study of Tamul, the language spoken in that province. His trials



were great, though differing from those of Mr. Ehrhardt, as he was surrounded by a people notoriously vicious and turbulent; but by patience, diligence, humility, and devotedness to his work, he succeeded in quieting some unruly spirits, and made good progress in the study of their language. In labouring to instruct these idolaters he was much assisted by his wife, who made as great progress in the language as himself, and was active in the instruction of the native women and children. She was a woman of a truly Missionary spirit, who cheerfully shared all the fatigues and privations of this arduous service. Mr. Palm took possession of the old Protestant Church of Tillipally, in which Baldaeus preached to two thousand Natives.¹

6. Mr. Read, at Point de Galle, was diligently employed in various ways. He preached to the English soldiers, and visited them when confined in the hospital. Being able to address the Dutch in their own language, he met those who were inclined to join for religious worship and instruction in the house of a friend. He studied the Cingalese with diligence and success, and kept a School for teaching Cingalese and Portuguese boys the English language, on which he engrafted religious instruction, and obtained the translation of two Catechisms into Dutch, Portuguese, and Cingalese, for the use of his pupils. He endeavoured to procure Bibles, Prayer-Books, Hymn-Books, and other religious works, for his School; and remarked, that he had no doubt that much good might be done by faithful Missionaries who could speak the Cingalese language, notwithstanding the deplorable darkness of that people, which, like Mr. Ehrhardt, he described and lamented in affecting terms.

Mr. Read
at Point
de Galle.

7. In common with every other person interested

Importance of
Christian
example.

(¹) Dr. Buchanan's Christian Researches, p. 91.

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V.

in the progress of religion in the island, he felt the importance of Christian example in Europeans to the propagation of Christianity among the Natives. This had been well described a short time before, by the Chaplain of Columbo, in the following terms:—
“The most effectual means of disseminating the blessings of the Gospel throughout the East would be for the Christians who go to those parts to live in a manner worthy of their profession. Had all the Europeans who have visited India been sincere and enlightened Christians, more numerous converts would have been made, without force or solicitation. The native servants never fail warmly to love a master who leads a Christian life. They receive every lesson of religious instruction, which is offered to them by such a person, with delight and gratitude; and they naturally feel a desire to embrace a system of faith and practice, of the beneficial tendency of which they enjoy so comfortable and impressive an example.”¹

Missionaries
directed to
attend to
the Na-
tives.

8. A few years after, the justice of these remarks, and the obligation which they implied, began to be generally acknowledged by the respectable portion of the British inhabitants of Ceylon. Sir Alexander Johnstone took an active part in the measures adopted to obtain from England Christian teachers, for the instruction both of Europeans and Natives. In 1809, when in England, he conferred with the London Missionary Society, as well as other institutions, on this important subject. Impressed with a generous concern for the melioration of the condition of the people, he urged upon the Society the necessity of sending Christian teachers to superintend the Schools already established, and expressed his opinion, that if their Missionaries were directed to leave the coast towns, which were inha-

(¹) Cordiner. Vol. i. pp. 165, 166.



bited chiefly by Europeans, and to reside more in the interior among the Natives, the fostering hand of Government would, in all probability, co-operate in forwarding the benevolent views of the Society for the instruction of those whom Divine Providence had placed under their care. Accordingly, the Directors of the Society instructed their Missionaries to this effect, and desired them to embrace the opportunity which now offered of prosecuting the work of their Mission, by going to such parts of the interior as the Governor in Council might be pleased to appoint; so that, by a residence among the people, they might be able more speedily to acquire the language; and that by the instruction, particularly, of the children, in the pure principles of the doctrine of Christ, a foundation might be laid whereon to raise Christian Churches among the Native Cingalese.

9. Sir A. Johnstone returned to Ceylon in 1811, and the hopes which he had raised soon began to be realized. By his exertions, together with those of the Governor, Chaplain, and other friends of religion, the care of the Schools was revived. Mr. Ehrhardt was appointed to visit those in the district of Matura, and inquire into the character and conduct of the Schoolmasters, many of whom he found in great disorder, and he exerted himself to promote their better management for the future. In his various journeys he took every opportunity to preach, and to instruct both adults and children. In accounting for the reluctance of many Romanists to receive his instructions, he said that they were exceedingly addicted to the worship of images, before which they fell prostrate on the ground and prayed; and this attachment to idolatry explained, in his opinion, the success of the Romish Missionaries in making proselytes among them, while the religion of the Protestants appeared to them too

Revival of
the Go-
vernment
Schools.*

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V.Missionaries re-
moved to
Columbo.State of
Schools
and Native
Christians
at Point
de Galle.

simple, and was called by them "the Religion of the Company."

10. Mr. Palm met with equal encouragement among the Heathen, and, under the auspices of the same authorities, was successful in establishing additional Schools for the various classes of inhabitants. He and Mr. Ehrhardt were, in 1812, appointed to two of the Dutch Churches in Columbo, and were so provided for, that the Society was relieved from the expense of their support. But this did not wholly divert them from their work for the Natives, and in some respects they had better opportunities to serve the Missionary cause than before. The members of the Dutch Consistory were now more friendly than heretofore to their design, and co-operated with them in opening Schools at Columbo for the poorer classes of children. Mr. Ehrhardt returned in a short time to Matura.¹

11. Mr. Read, who resided at Amlamgoddy, near Point de Galle, was now appointed to superintend the Government Schools in that district, in number about twenty-eight. He found them in a deplorable condition; but they soon began to improve; and they wanted only an increase of able and devout Missionaries for the brightening prospects of Ceylon to be realized. But here also the nominal Christians, whether baptized by the Dutch or Portuguese, were the most unpromising portion of the inhabitants. In March 1813 Mr. Read gave a deplorable proof of the prostration of their minds. About that time, when multitudes were dying of famine, they could not be dissuaded from worshipping devils to appease their wrath, pretending that God was too good a Being to inflict punishment for sin. Such was the too general character of these people.

(¹) Mr. Ehrhardt subsequently left the London Missionary Society, and obtained an appointment in India.



Lord Molesworth, the Commandant at Point de Galle, was an active promoter of Schools and other means for the improvement of the Natives. He took a special interest in the distribution of the Scriptures, Tamul and Cingalese, and also in the establishment of a Military School for every corps, in compliance with a regulation recently received from England. He obtained a supply of books, with whatever else was required for the scholars; and a thousand Common-Prayer Books for the Christians were procured by the Chaplain, Mr. Twistleton.

12. Nothing, indeed, we must again remark, seemed now to be wanting but an adequate supply of Missionaries. The hopes encouraged by the various openings presented for the moral and religious cultivation of the island, were clouded, in the Christian's view, by conscious inability to occupy the ground which invited him. The Committee of the Columbo Bible Society, while engaged in dispersing the Holy Scriptures in English, Dutch, Portuguese, Cingalese, and Tamul, expressed their regret at the very small number of teachers competent to smooth the way to a general introduction of the Sacred Writings by the impressive aid of oral instruction. This aid was in some measure, ere long, afforded by several Missionary Societies; and the Directors of the London Society, who had not been backward according to their means, expressed their hope that they would "be able to supply their quota to the much-needed assistance of this great and interesting island."

The want
of Mission-
aries de-
plored.



CHAPTER VI.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY, CEYLON, 1812—1816.

Mr. Chater
com-
mences the
Mission.

1. IN the year 1812 the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore turned their attention to Ceylon, and sent one of their brethren, Mr. Chater, after his return from Burmah, with a view to establish a Mission on this island.¹ He was well received by the British authorities at Columbo, and soon commenced the study of Portuguese and Cingalese. He was permitted to preach to the troops in English, and met with no molestation in the exercise of his ministry. Here, with the assistance of his wife, he established a Boarding School for their support; but as it did not succeed, he relinquished it, and that without regret, for he found that it took him too much from his Missionary work. He purchased some premises in the Pettah², which he fitted up for Public Worship, and was greatly encouraged by the attendance of the various classes of inhabitants.³

Mr. Siers
joins him.

2. In 1814 a young man named Siers⁴, a member of the Dutch Church, joined him, and soon became a valuable coadjutor among the Natives. In the

(¹) Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society. Vol. iv. pp. 402—405. Vol. v. pp. 141, 142.

(²) Native town in the vicinity of a fort.

(³) Periodical Accounts of Baptist Missionary Society. Vol. v. pp. 168—171. 274—276.

(⁴) Sometimes spelled Sierce.



same year Mr. Chater had acquired a sufficient knowledge of Portuguese to preach in that language; and at first this service was so crowded, that he began to think of enlarging his Chapel; but the numbers were soon reduced again within the capabilities of the building.

3. In the following year he began to preach to the Cingalese through an interpreter. He was diligent, however, in the study of the language, being anxious to dispense with this aid; and in its acquisition he found his knowledge of Burmese materially assist him, in consequence of its affinity with the Cingalese. In the meantime, finding that he could by this means communicate with the Natives, though imperfectly, he, accompanied by Mr. Siers, visited some of the strongholds of idolatry in the interior, where they boldly preached the Word of God, and were sometimes listened to with attention. At other times the people, unaccustomed to the appearance of Europeans, fled from them with alarm.⁵

Mr. Chater
preaches
by an inter-
preter.

4. The attendance on his English preaching fluctuated at different seasons, chiefly owing to the removal of the troops. This year it was better than usual, and he was much encouraged by the steadiness and piety of some non-commissioned officers and privates. But he remarks, "We expect to lose the greater part of our little Church very shortly. Of those in the regiment, some are going to England, and some to Trincomallee. Our congregations are, in general, very small; but the Lord seems not to have forsaken us. One after another is reclaimed from a life of sin; and, so far as we can judge, they appear to become new creatures in Christ Jesus. When we recollect what a glorious change this is, both in its cause and consequences,

State of
his con-
gregation.

(⁵) Periodical Accounts. Vol. v. pp. 483, 484. 603—605. Vol. vi. pp. 144—147.

CHAP.
VI.

Opens a
School for
Natives.

Transla-
tions into
Cingalese
and Por-
tuguese.

how can we think of it but with joy and unfeigned gratitude? Two of our members, who appear to me to be Christians of the right stamp, lately left this place for England. They both found the pearl of great price while in Columbo." He then mentions several others who proposed to join his congregation; but they seem to have been chiefly Europeans. One native Portuguese, and a native of Dutch extraction, a Doctor by profession, were converted under his instruction.¹

5. Of the Cingalese at Columbo he seems to have entertained so very little hope, that he was sometimes induced to wish himself away, dwelling and labouring among the inhabitants up the country. He opened a School, however, for the Natives, which soon contained more than sixty boys; "many of whom," he remarked, "have learned a number of Watts's Songs, and you would be pleased to hear how they sing them. Last week two young Kandians were committed to my charge to educate. I inquired of their father if he would wish them to be instructed in the Christian religion. He said, 'I have delivered them to you, and you may sell them, or kill them, or do what you like with them.'"²

6. Mr. Chater also composed and published a Cingalese Grammar, and undertook the translation of portions of the Scriptures into the same language, which he was able to write with facility. He published several useful works in Cingalese and Portuguese, which were well received by the Natives, and promised, with the Divine blessing, to rouse them from that lamentable indifference to religion of which he bitterly complained.

Such was the state of this Mission at the close of

(1) Periodical Accounts, pp. 54 &c. 147. 150. 221 &c.

(2) Ibid. pp. 284, 285.



1816.³ These were small beginnings, indeed, but they were made in faith; and we should remember that it was the fruit of less than four years' work. Neither must we judge of the labours of Mr. Chater and his colleague by their immediate results. They were sowing seed for a future harvest, in dependence upon the Lord to give the increase.

(³) In 1817 the Rev. Thomas Griffith joined this Mission. His talents for acquiring languages are described as of no common order; and he was soon familiar with the Cingalese. But, after repeated attacks of the cholera, he was under the painful necessity of leaving the little flock which he had gathered at Point de Galle, and of returning to his native land.—*Periodical Accounts*. Vol. vi. p. 318. *Harvard's Narrative*, p. 285.

CHAPTER VII.¹

WESLEYAN MISSION IN CEYLON, 1814—1816.

Reasons
for under-
taking the
Mission.

1. THIS Mission seems to have been undertaken on the recommendation of Sir A. Johnstone during his visit to England, so frequently mentioned in the foregoing pages. Some temporary difficulties conspired to prevent its immediate adoption; but the impression produced upon the Methodist Conference by the appeals of that generous advocate on behalf of Ceylon, led, no doubt, to the establishment of their Eastern Mission. Dr. Coke, a leading member of the Wesleyan body, had long set his heart upon sending or carrying the Gospel to India, and he hailed the present proposal as an important advance toward the attainment of his fondest desire. Dr. Coke, like his friend John Wesley, was educated at Oxford, and ordained in the Church of England; but for some years past he had been in connexion with the Wesleyan Methodists. As soon as it was agreed to undertake the Mission, he, though advanced in years, determined to embark in it; and, being possessed of considerable property, he proposed, not only to introduce and establish the present Mission, but also to advance whatever money might be required for the outfit and settlement of the Missionaries;—a rare instance of individual

(¹) This Chapter is drawn up chiefly from W. M. Harvard's Narrative of the Wesleyan Mission to Ceylon and India. Also from the Wesleyan Missionary Notices. Vol. i.



generosity, and of devotion to the cause of Missions. The Conference, however, did not accept his generous proposal without making themselves responsible for the reimbursement of whatever he might expend. After some discussion, it was finally agreed that six Missionaries for Ceylon, and one for the Cape of Good Hope, should sail with Dr. Coke. Those for Ceylon were, Messrs. William Ault, James Lynch, George Erskine, William Martin Harvard, Thomas Hall Squance, and Benjamin Clough. Two of the party, Harvard and Squance, were acquainted with the management of the printing-press, which subsequently proved of great service to the Mission.

2. The party embarked on two ships, and sailed from Spithead on the 31st of December 1813; but Dr. Coke was not preserved to lay the foundation of the Mission, having died at sea May the 3d, 1814. The Missionaries were thrown by this calamity into a state of painful apprehension: they had not only lost their counsellor and guide; but they were left, also, without immediate pecuniary support in the land of strangers to which they were hastening. The whole enterprise had rested so entirely on their departed friend, that they did not know whether any provision had been made for the event which they had to deplore. The loss, however, of the human arm on which they had leaned, produced in them, under the Holy Spirit's influence, a more entire dependence on the Providence of God—a dependence so essential to the work in which they were embarked; and it did not fail them.

3. On the 21st of May they arrived at Bombay, and the letters of introduction which they had brought to several persons of distinction at that Presidency obtained for them a kind reception. Their pecuniary difficulties were soon removed by W. T. Money, Esq., a principal agent at Bombay, and the well-known friend of the Missionary cause of

Missionaries sail.
Dr. Coke
dies at sea.

Missionaries arrive at
Bombay.



whom we have before spoken. They brought a letter of introduction to this gentleman from Dr. Buchanan; and he relieved their anxiety, by assuring them that he should be happy to advance them any money on the credit of their Society at home. The Governor, Sir Evan Nepean, to whom, likewise, they had letters, showed them all the kindness which their circumstances required, and had a house of his own prepared for their accommodation. His Christian kindness almost overwhelmed them; but the courtesy of his manner soon removed their embarrassment, for they perceived that he was happy in helping them. They were strangers, and he took them in.¹

Their arrival and reception in Ceylon.

4. On the 20th of June the Mission family, with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. Harvard—domestic circumstances rendering it desirable for them to remain behind for the present—sailed from Bombay, and landed at Point de Galle after a voyage of nine days. Nearing the shore, they were surprised to find that the boats which they saw approaching were sent off to receive them and their baggage; but the mystery was soon explained. Their generous friend, Mr. Money, had written to Mr. Gibson, the Master-Attendant of Galle, informing him of the probable time of their arrival, and describing the signal which the Captain would make on coming in sight of land. In consequence, he had been looking out for the ship, and paid them all the attention they required. This proof of the lively interest which Mr. Money took in their affairs filled them with gratitude to him, and excited their thankfulness to God. But greatly were these emotions increased, mingled with surprise, when they learned that Sir Evan Nepean, also, had taken the trouble of writing favourably concerning them to the Go-

(¹) Matt. xxv. 35.



vernor of Ceylon, Sir Robert Brownrigg; who had, in consequence, immediately written to Lord Molesworth, Commandant of Galle, directing that the Government House in the fort should be prepared for their reception. Lord Molesworth executed these instructions, not with mere official punctuality, but, though an entire stranger to them, with all the feelings of personal friendship. The kindness which they received from all these parties could not have been surpassed by their most attached friends in England. It was equal—it could not exceed—the attention paid them at Bombay. This mention of the favours they received may be thought too particular for the page of History; but we cannot consent to regard these as private acts of beneficence. They were rendered to the individuals for the sake of the cause in which they were embarked; and they serve to mark the rapid transition now going on in the public mind towards Missionaries and their objects. If it was not unworthy of the sacred historian to record the courtesy with which Julius entreated his prisoner Paul¹, why should it be deemed unsuitable for these humbler pages to relate the courtesies of the noble-minded men who so liberally encouraged the Missionary in his adventurous undertaking? They have set the world an example which must not be lost.

5. A few days after their arrival, the Rev. George Bisset, Chaplain at Columbo, paid them a visit, in the Governor's name, for the purpose of bidding them welcome to the island, and of making himself acquainted with the plan on which they intended to conduct their Missionary labours. After giving him an account of their Society, and explaining the circumstances which led to their present under-

The Governor approves of their design.

(¹) Acts xxvii. 3.

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A proposal
from Go-
vernment
accepted.

taking, they stated that their immediate object in Ceylon would be to commence the study of the native languages, in order to qualify themselves for labouring among the Cingalese. Meanwhile they expressed themselves ready to instruct and preach to such persons as might be disposed to hear them in their own language. Mr. Bisset was satisfied with this statement, and assured them that they might expect every encouragement.

6. At a second interview, he stated to them that the Governor, with himself and other gentlemen at Columbo, not knowing what funds they had, nor how they were to be supported, had been consulting on some means of assisting them, in case it should be needful; and that the only way which occurred to them was, to offer each Missionary a monthly allowance for teaching English to the children of the principal Natives, in a few of the most important towns. It was proposed that they should undertake the superintendence of Schools at the several stations which were to be appointed for them. As this arrangement would make them acquainted with the most respectable inhabitants, procure for them considerable influence, and, at the same time, afford them great facilities for acquiring the native language, it appeared to them likely to subserve the design of their Mission, and they willingly accepted the proposal. In a few days Mr. Bisset informed them that the Governor, entirely approving of their design and disposition, proposed to allow fifty rix-dollars a month for each School; and stated, that he considered Jaffna, Manaar, Batticaloa, Galle, and Matura, as the most eligible places for such establishments. At the same time he informed them that this was only the Governor's opinion, and that they were at liberty to choose for themselves such stations as might appear to them, after careful inquiry, to be the most desirable.



After mature deliberation and fervent prayer, it appeared to them advisable to occupy only four stations for the present, namely, Jaffna and Batticaloa, for the Tamul division of the island, and Galle and Matura for the Cingalese; and they finally agreed that Messrs. Lynch and Squance should go to Jaffna, Mr. Ault to Batticaloa, Mr. Erskine to Matura, and that Mr. Clough should remain at Galle.

7. The promptitude with which they now addressed themselves to their work is not less worthy of admiration, than their piety and simplicity, mutual confidence and affection, in making these arrangements. In a few days, after celebrating the Lord's Supper together, in which Lord Molesworth requested permission to join them, Messrs. Lynch and Squance set out for Jaffna. On their arrival at Columbo they were hospitably entertained by Mr. Twistleton, and much refreshed in spirit by their intercourse with other friends. Sir Robert and Lady Brownrigg, Sir Alexander and Lady Johnstone, gave them a cordial welcome, and encouraged them to proceed. Mr. Armour received them as brethren, and Mr. Chater, the Baptist Missionary, was no less kind, and invited them to preach in his Chapel, where the military of the garrison attended.

Two Missionaries proceed to Columbo.

8. They mention a singular case of conversion from Mahomedanism to Christianity which had recently occurred in Columbo. The convert was baptized in the Fort Church, by the name of Daniel Theophilus, and it was stated to have been the first conversion from Islamism which had been known in Ceylon. Such conversions are rare in all parts of India. The subject of this change was a man of strong mind, and of considerable learning; and hopes were entertained that his public renunciation of his former faith, and his open acknowledgment of Christianity, would have an extensive effect on

A Mahomedan Convert.

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Missionaries' arrival at Jaffna.

others, and be productive of similar results. The change in his religious profession had called down upon him the indignation of his relatives and former connexions, some of whom were fully bent upon his destruction. He was, in consequence, taken under the immediate protection of the Government, who committed him to the care of Messrs. Lynch and Squance, that he might accompany them to Jaffnapatam, and there be further instructed in the doctrines and duties of Christianity.

9. On the 1st of August they set out with this interesting companion; and, on their arrival at Jaffna, the Sub-Collector, Mr. Mooyart, received them as friends whom he had long expected, rather than as strangers from a distant land; and the religious effect upon his mind of their subsequent intercourse with him he ever considered more than an equivalent for the kindness which they received at his hands. Here they were welcomed by Christian David also, the Tamul preacher from Tranquebar, of whom we have already spoken, who presided over the Tamul Christians in the province. He told Mr. Lynch that he had for more than ten years prayed that some Missionaries might be sent to Ceylon, and that he regarded their arrival as an answer to his prayers. While he was able to afford them considerable aid in furthering the objects of their Mission, they, in their turn, greatly assisted him in the way of religious instruction.

Commencement of their labours.

10. They had now a gratifying proof of the liberal intentions of Government towards them in the proposal for the endowment of English Schools to be placed under their care. Since Jaffna was to be the residence of two Missionaries, they found that the stipulated allowance for each School was, in their case, doubled. At the request of the European residents, who were without the means of public instruction, they performed Divine Service



in English, alternately reading the Church prayers and preaching; and they were much encouraged by the apparent effect of their ministrations. On the whole, they had reason to be thankful to God for the very auspicious circumstances under which this station was commenced.

11. The other Missionaries joined their Stations about the same time, and met with similar aid in the prosecution of their work. Matura, to which Mr. Erskine was appointed, was about thirty miles from Galle. The civil authorities afforded him every facility he required in the opening of the proposed English School, which the children of the higher classes of Natives attended with manifest pleasure. He soon commenced his English ministrations also, in the Dutch Church in the fort; but his congregation was small, the European garrison consisting of few troops. The native population was considerable, and the district was found to be one of the strongholds of their superstition: he lost no time, therefore, in beginning the study of Cingalese, that he might attack the enemy in his quarters. Here he found the German Missionary, Mr. Ehrhardt, with whom he formed an intimate friendship; but he was not the companion in labour that he wanted. The district extended about forty miles by thirty, and he greatly felt the need of a colleague. Nevertheless, though labouring in comparative solitude, he found a sacred pleasure while engaged in the work to which he was devoted, and was encouraged to indulge expectations of ultimate success.

Matura
Station.

12. Batticaloa, Mr. Ault's Station, was above one hundred and fifty miles beyond Matura. It is a small island, containing a fort, with a few houses; but the district to which it gives name is of importance in a Missionary point of view, carrying on a constant trade with the interior, and containing a

Batticaloa
Station.

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large population. Mr. Ault was induced to proceed thither in a native dhoney, a kind of sailing barge, which was expected to make the passage in three days; but it took more than eight to reach the destined port. As he had not provided for so long a passage, his sufferings and privations by the way, added to his affliction from the recent loss of his wife, so shook his constitution, that he was ill suited to enter upon his arduous duties. There was no habitation vacant for him; but the Collector, Mr. Sawers, and the Magistrate, Mr. Atkinson, received him into their houses, and showed him every attention that was calculated to soothe him in his distress, and he was soon sufficiently recovered to open the English School. On Sunday Mornings he performed Divine Service for the civilians and military, when his congregation was seldom less than one hundred and fifty, the soldiers being marched to Church. He had an Evening Service also, at which their attendance was optional; and the numbers that came were sufficient to encourage him to believe that they were sincerely desirous to hear the Word of God; while a few applied to him at an early period, under serious concern for their salvation. The Station was crowded with sick; they saw their comrades dying daily; and it made the Missionary happy to be the means of improving the solemn season to their souls. Though encouraged, however, in his labours among his own countrymen, he did not suffer his attention to be diverted from the Natives. He laboured hard at the Tamul language, and soon began to itinerate among the huts in the neighbouring country.

Galle
Station.

13. At Galle, Mr. Clough performed the English Service in the Dutch Church every Sunday; and a private house in the fort was fitted up, by some of his hearers, for preaching on an evening during the week, and for religious conversation with those