

the interior as overrun by mutineers and plunderers. "The Nagpore Mission which is the next to Bancoorah, has been completely destroyed. The missionaries, twelve in number, have been obliged to come down to Calcutta, having lost all their property, and many of the native christians at that station have been killed. Bancoorah is in a state of great confusion and alarm."

By persons the most competent to give an opinion, Mr. Stevenson was assured, that two or more years must elapse before he could re-establish his mission in the interior of the Bengal Presidency; and he felt unwilling to pass so long a time in Calcutta, at the expense of the Canadian Church. He submitted his difficulty to Dr. Duff, and to Mr. Lacroix, the oldest missionary in Calcutta, and also took the opinion of Dr. Cheek, of Bancoorah, who has spent forty years in India. The advice he received was to return to Scotland, and this advice he has followed, having taken passage to Liverpool in a ship to sail from Calcutta on the 10th September: He writes as one deeply grieved in spirit at the sudden close of his mission, and the disappointment it must occasion in Canada. Dr. Duff has kindly written also on this subject, and his letter is given below.

One or two thoughts we beg to present to the friends of our Foreign Mission.

There is much ground for thankfulness that one missionary was sent out, since the work was so soon to be violently stopped; that the missionary sent out did not repair to Lucknow (as at one time proposed,) where he would have suffered great hardships in the siege of Nana Sahib; that he has escaped with life, and with a part, at least of his moveable property; and that the Church is not involved in any debt by what has occurred—the missionary fund in hand having covered all expenses.

There is no reason to renounce the idea of a Foreign Mission, though there is reason to reconsider the locality where it should be planted, and the plan on which it may best be conducted. The Synod is pledged to a Foreign as well as a Domestic Mission, and the pledge is approved and supported by our most intelligent and zealous people. But, while this resolve should not be lightly changed, it is a very proper subject of inquiry—whether the stroke of Providence which has baffled our plans in regard to India, should not teach us to choose our missionary ground in some country nearer to our own shores, and involving a less expenditure of money in proportion to the labour performed.

It may be added that one among many practical benefits of the contemplated union with the United Presbyterian Synod, would be the promotion of a Foreign Mission with augmented earnestness and strength. If there is a reasonable prospect of such a union being formed within one or even two years, it may be the best course to postpone till after that time, all determination in regard to future Missionary operations on the foreign field.

Montreal, 12th Nov., 1857.

D. F.

DR. DUFF'S LETTER.

CALCUTTA, 21st August, 1857.

MY DEAR MR. FRAZER,—

You will have learned from the public journals to what an extent rebellion has been raging in this distracted land. The mighty wave has been slowly but surely rolling down upon Bengal, and has now reached it along its whole frontier. And every station in Bengal itself that is unprotected by British soldiers—every station, especially where there is a treasury, and a society of Europeans—has become more or less insecure. Some of these have become already deserted. Bancoorah has been so threatened that all ladies had to leave it long ago; and latterly some of the gentlemen, while the others were holding themselves in readiness to "bolt," as the phrase goes, at a moment's notice. Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson had to leave some time ago since, apart from personal insecurity, evangelizing labours among the natives had obviously become impracticable.

In these circumstances, it has become a deeply ominous question to Mr. Stevenson, what was the path of duty?

Mr. S. being a prayerful, conscientious man, with his heart much engaged in the work, he has been consulting christian friends on the subject; and he will doubtless write to you very fully himself respecting it. I shall therefore, very briefly, only, indicate a few things.

1. We understood that the Canadian Church wished to plant a mission of its own—small it might be, but strong enough to stand out on its own basis. For this end, two or three labourers at least, from home, would be necessary. It was in such a prospect as this that my friend Mr. Wylie and myself did not hesitate to recommend Bancoorah, which was wholly unprovided for, and allowed ample scope for such a mission. Mr. S. has now learnt that there is no immediate hope of his being joined by one or two fellow-labourers from home. This circumstance, even if he had not been obliged to leave Bancoorah, would have been discouraging. Still, had this deplorable rebellion not arisen so unexpectedly, he would have been contented to labour on in hope.

2. But, by the overrulings of Providence, Mr. S. has not been allowed to continue at his chosen post, the door there has, for the present, been manifestly shut against him. And in Bengal, until affairs become settled, no other door is open to him. And when affairs may be so settled as to admit of the re-establishment of a mission at Bancoorah, it is utterly impossible for any one to say. All now seem to feel that it cannot be soon. But, whether it may be a year or more, during that time Mr. S. would be lying by on his oars—engaged in simply endeavoring to master the language. Had he been a younger man than he is, this, probably, is the course which all here would recommend to him. But at his advanced period of life, and with no immediate prospect of being joined by younger men, it does not appear to me that this course could be advantageously adopted.

3. Mr. S.'s case is very different from that of any other Missionary in this quarter. Every other is connected with a mission that has taken root more or less in the soil—having buildings, and schools, and converts, and infant churches, &c., with out spreading branches and a centre to fall back upon in Calcutta. Mr. S. stood isolated and alone, with no fixture in the soil, no buildings, converts or infant church, and no centre to fall back on. In the case of others if driven from one out-station, they might escape to another, or to the central station in the metropolis; but in Mr. S.'s case, when driven from his only station, where he wished to plant a new mission, he had none other to flee

to or labour in, i. e., no other branch or centre connected with the church that sent him out and supported him.

4. The Canadian Mission being an incipient one, and the fund still small, Mr. S. has felt a scruple of conscience, (in which he must be honored,) as to wasting it, while sitting still here, may be a year or two, doing nothing but attempting to master the vernacular; while by returning home, the money might be husbanded, and allowed to accumulate, until the Church was in a condition to plant a more vigorous mission. Already has one of the American Missionaries, from Allahabad, acted on this principle. Rather than remain a year or two idle here, until the North-west was settled, he deemed it best to return for a season, to his native land, and others similarly circumstanced, seem likely to follow the example.

5. From these and other considerations, which it is needless for me now to enumerate, I have been led—in common with one or two other friends, who have given their minds to study the subject—to the conclusion, that, under a conjoint view of all the circumstances of the case, I would not advise Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson to remain here now. It is a sorrowful conclusion to arrive at; and pre-eminently sorrowful the chief cause which has led to it.—But who can help it? It has pleased God to pour forth his judgment, on us, as a people and nation. And until his smiting arm be restrained, all things are disjoined and in confusion.

6. One circumstance has weighed heavily with me, and I am sure it has, with Mr. Stevenson, viz., the discouraging effect which his early and unexpected return home may have on the Missionary spirit of the Canadian Church. I do fondly trust, however, that the faith of the Church will rise buoyant over the disappointment. Most Churches and Societies that have been honored of God, to be useful in his vineyard among the heathen, have been variously tried with disappointments and disasters at the outset of their missionary enterprises. Examples will readily occur to any one at all acquainted with the history of modern missions. If Mr. Stevenson had been wrecked on his way out as some missionaries have been; or, if after being a few weeks or months in the field he had been driven from it by deadly disease as others have been; in these or any other similar cases, I am sure the faith of the Canadian Church would only be burnished all the brighter by the manifestly providential trial; and rising up, purer and stronger than ever, would prompt to more prayer, augmented liberality, deeper humility, and re-doubled energy and effort. And now, when, by an utterly unanticipated calamity, Mr. Stevenson has been driven from the sphere of his labour, I cannot but confidently hope, that the Canadian Church will perceive in this, only a new though severe trial of her faith—that she will not get depressed or dispirited by the event, but only see in it a new call from her Great Head, to come forth more bounteously and energetically than ever "to the help of the Lord—to the help of the Lord against the mighty mighty land."

By the unexpected stroke, the great adversary may have designed to damp, crush or extinguish the evangelistic spirit in your church; let the Church then arise, and in the triumph of faith, gloriously defeat his subtle and malignant policy. May it not be put into the hearts of one, two, or more of the fine young men—residents of the Toronto College—whose beaming countenances are still before my mind's eye—to dedicate themselves to labour in this foreign field where Satan has for ages held undisturbed dominion? And will not Congregations and the Church at large, bid them "God-speed" in their errand of mercy to the dark