

then shut in by high walls of grey rock you emerge amidst broken rocky heights and low swelling hills backed by bold carped and high towering mountains. The tunnels here are only second to those of Mount Cenis in Europe.

About Khandalla the shrubbery is scant and diminutive as to size, but green and leafy. By the roadside grows the "silk-cotton" tree, from which is woven the famous "Brahminical cord." The tree is leafless, but from the points of its naked branches hang pods which on bursting hang out tassels of pale yellow silk, in shape and appearance very like a huge thistle-blow which boys chase in the fields in Canada; the only difference being that these are larger, yellower, and silkier in appearance. Arrived at Lanowli, en route for the grove where my old friend the Fakhir of Hurchoor City in the North-west presides over a temple devoted to Mahadeo, I was met by a noisy rabble of young urchins all clamoring for Gospel leaflets. Each declared he could read, etc. I had disposed of my stock the day before, all but two I was keeping for the Fakhir. I told them I had none, but if they would be quiet I would read them a story. Down they went flop in the road to listen, but I objected to the place and proposed going into the woods to a nice, clean, cool place. Chattering like magpies, running now before, now behind, laughing and asking questions, they led me to a grand old mossy nook away in the shade, not a stone's throw from the Temple. There I read to them the story of the "Child Jesus" of Bethlehem. There were fourteen in all, some Hindus, some Marathi, some Mussulmans. Presently a smartly-dressed young Marathi man took up a position just outside the children's circle to listen. I was talking of the sin of worshipping idols and giving glory to them when God in Jesus had done so much and we gave him nothing and worse than nothing, for we did not give him his own. Should a boy's mother present him with a beautiful turban, should he go and make *sālām* to a tree in the garden, or the wooden bench on which are your garrahs of water? You would thank your mother. "Oh! yes," they all exclaimed. Then why, when God gives you all good and pleasant things, do you go and thank Mahadeo Krishna, etc.? Is that right? "No," they all exclaimed. The boys all heartily agreed with me, but the young Marathi man objected and began a very grand speech. Before I had time to say a word the boys turned on him, and in five minutes had fairly put him to rout. His downfall and sudden humility was laughable. Popular opinion was against him. He determined to go. I gave him a leaflet and he walked away reading it. I had observed the Fakhir several times approach the outer wall of his sanctum, and now he signalled me to approach. I accordingly bade the boys "Good-afternoon" for the present, and promising each one a leaflet all to himself next time I came, dismissed them. Quietly and politely making "*sālām*" they ran off to continue their sport, which was making swings of a magnificent creeper which had wound itself like a huge boa constrictor around and over a huge fig tree. The Fakhir welcomed me with evident pleasure. I read for him St. Paul's speech on Mars Hill and several other portions of Scripture bearing on the sin of idolatry. He listened quietly, then said, "How should I get my living if I gave up this Temple? I cannot work, and though it may be wrong to worship idols, yet everybody does it; it is the custom of this country." Several others now came forward, and after ascribing divine honors to the Fakhir—kneeling and kissing his feet—seated themselves. My friend now became restless—evidently he did not care to have his votaries listen to me, so I began to sing a "bhaden" or native metre hymn in Hindi. I explained its meaning. They all seemed well pleased. I always like to leave these people in good humor if possible. I now repaired to the station to come home by train, gave away a number of English leaflets to the engine-drivers, firemen, and half-caste waiters (Lanowli is a refreshment station). After I was seated in the car several came and asked for copies. Here I observed a native gentleman promenading. He was gorgeous in crimson silk trousers, embroidered vest of white muslin, white lawn coat, gilded sandals, and a turban of crimson silk adorned with a broad band of gold. Arrived at Khandalla station, I observe our gay native has arrived also. When I had been some time in the waiting-room I noticed him pacing slowly up and down, and gazing in every time he passed my door. I thought I would give him an opportunity of speaking. I fancied he desired a leaflet, but did not

like to ask, or speak first to an English lady. I was correct. He proved to be no less a personage than the Raja of Akalkote, from near Poonah. His young daughter was married a week or two before I left home to the Raja of Diwas at Indore, so we were soon acquainted. He has a house here and is up hill for a change of air. His wife is visiting her mother in Poonah. He promised to come and visit me at my house to-day, but yesterday he was summoned to Mattaran, as Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, and the court are there this season, but he expects to be back soon.

I have just got *such a good letter* from home. I must send you an extract, so that you may rejoice with us. Mr. Douglas writes: "Our meeting to-night was full to the door. The Prince drove up with all his outriders just at the hour, and along with him, in another carriage, his private secretary, Judge of the Durbar, and another gentleman whose name I did not get. The Zillar Judge was there *as usual*. They stood up book in hand and sang with us, and were very attentive the whole time. My subject was the 'Progress of Christianity among the nations.' Had a nice chat with them at the close of the meeting."

Oh, how glad and thankful I am! May the Spirit of our God be most abundantly poured out upon these dear waiting people! Pray for them. Pray fervently, dear friends in the home land, and the blessing is sure. With abounding love to all mankind at the present moment, and especially to Mrs. Harvie, I remain, very sincerely yours,

M. FAIRWEATHER.

PSALM AND HYMN TUNE BOOK.

MR. EDITOR,—I am glad to see a discussion arising in your paper regarding a new Psalm and Hymn Tune Book, to go along with the new Hymn Book to be compiled for the use of our churches. I was rather astonished to see from the reports that no member of the General Assembly in all its discussions ever once mentioned the necessity of such a thing, and I spoke of it to several in my neighborhood, remarking that if they chose hymns out of the four books now in use a precentor or choir might require the whole four books to get tunes suitable for the hymns to be found in the one book. And I think "Precentor," in your issue of the 12th ult., deserves our thanks for so ably calling attention to the subject. I agree with mostly all he says in his letter, and will add a few thoughts of my own. I don't know if the committee on Hymnology has sufficient knowledge of music to enable them to select tunes for the hymns they may choose, but if they have not that knowledge, and if they have power to add to their number (which I think they have, if my memory is good enough), they ought to call in the assistance of say five or six of the best musicians in the Church to assist them in that part of the work. I don't think that they ought to wait until the hymn book is compiled, as the musical part of the committee might work simultaneously with the others, and perhaps make some useful suggestions. I consider that there are a great many hymns that are perhaps not of very great merit in themselves which if set to good tunes are more apt to become popular and be more useful in the worship of God than others of much greater merit which have not that advantage, provided of course that they are sound and scriptural in tone, and I think they could both work together very advantageously in marking the expression and classifying the psalms and hymns as suggested by "Precentor." But I think I would prefer the system of marking expression adopted in the Free Church of Scotland psalm and hymn book, namely, mark the passages to be sung soft with a P, very soft PP, loud F, very loud FF, medium M, and cres. C, as it admits of much greater variety in expression, and I find from having used both styles that it is as easy to notice the one as the other, when one gets accustomed to them. The mark is placed at the beginning of a passage and continued until contradicted by another. And besides, the musical part of the committee could go on choosing music for the psalms, and I would like to make a few suggestions about the style of music that ought to be chosen for congregational praise. I think all repeating tunes ought to be discarded, such as "Devizes," "Pembroke," "New Cambridge," etc., etc., retaining only such repeating tunes as "Invocation," "Redemption" and perhaps "St. George's Edinburgh," which are suitable for certain passages in the psalms and hymns. Also discard nearly all those florid, pretentious tunes such as "University," "Gainsborough," "Liverpool," etc., and all milk and water

sort of tunes, such as "Glencairn," "Warburton," "Huntingtower," etc., etc.; and endeavor to cultivate a taste for the grand old tunes of our forefathers, "St. Paul's," "French," "York," "Dunfermline," "Evan," "Tallis," "Martyrdom," etc.; and in the minor mode "Coleshill," "Dundee," "Walsal," "St. Mary's," with such noble tunes as "Effingham," "Scarborough," and the like. For grand and triumphant passages I would not have the collection too large. I think about 100 C. M. tunes judiciously selected, with say fifteen or twenty each long and short metre, would be quite sufficient with the necessary hymn music. I would suggest also that a number of chants be inserted for the use of those congregations who may wish to use them. For my part, I would like to see chanting much more common in our churches than it is. There is very little doubt, chanting was the method of praising God in vogue in the time of Christ and the apostles, and it is a method more worthy of being revived. It is really the only way the Psalms can be sung with proper expression, and with a perfect understanding of what is being sung; and it would not be a bad idea to have some of the most popular psalms put into the book (the prose version, I mean), marked for chanting, after Curwen's system or some other equally good. I think there is nothing in music so grand as chanting when it is well done. Of course, the poetical version of the Psalms can also be chanted, and with very good effect. I would also have a number of Doxologies in the collection, words and music, so that all the people could join in one grand burst of praise before separating, in short, as Prof. McLaren says in his letter, "make the collection such as will do the Church for one hundred years to come." And now a word or two on the method of printing and getting up the book. I approve very highly of "Precentor's" recommendation to have cut leaves as in the "Scottish Psalmody," and to have the whole bound together, psalms, hymns, and music, but I don't think our congregations are well enough educated in music to adopt the short score in printing. The convenience of the few organists that require to play is hardly worthy of consideration beside the great mass of the people, more especially when almost any organist can play about as well from long score as from short; and I don't think Hamilton's notation would assist our singers much in short score, as I suppose three-fourths of them don't know anything of the Sol-fa system, and although I know a little of the Sol-fa method of reading music, and believe that it is much the best and easiest way for beginners to learn, I think there is nothing like the old notation for all purposes. Let us have the book printed in the old style—a separate line to each part—so that he that runneth may read. Apologizing for the length of this letter, I am, yours, etc.,

CHORISTER.

THE HYMN BOOK COMMITTEE.

MR. EDITOR,—In your last number a letter from "Presbyter" on "Committeeism," among general remarks contains a sentence personal to myself—"Surely it was a very uncalled for action, indeed a most gratuitous slight, to omit from the committee (on a hymn-book) the name of Mr. Laing, etc."

Allow me then to assure my respected brother that had he been present at the Assembly he would have known that my name was not put on that committee at my own earnest request; I was pressed to serve on the committee. But there is work before it; and as it was to be a *small* committee which could work without unnecessary expense, I much preferred to see others far better acquainted with hymns and hymn-books than I am, appointed to serve. I think we have a good committee; and I am glad to know that they are at work already. At the same time, I think we could have selected two or three committees equally good, or made it much larger with equally competent men, had that been thought proper. No committee could have been struck with more intelligence and care than that on preparing a hymn-book. I would just further state that I sympathize much with "Presbyter" in his remarks regarding the dropping of a most efficient member of the committee on distribution and substituting another apparently without reason. Still there may be some explanation; for I know the committee which appointed the standing committees was abundant in labours, and their work was mercilessly criticised in open court. I will add, for one I have confidence in the desire of brethren to do what on the whole seems best. I am, yours, etc.,

Dundas, August 3rd, 1878.

JOHN LAING.