

THE GOSPEL MISSIONARY.

MISSION AT FORTEAU BAY, LABRADOR.

Labrador is a cold, bleak country, on the north-east shore of British North America. Scarcely any trees or plants will grow there, owing to the intense cold. The natives of the country are the Esquimaux; and far away to the north of Forteau Bay are the Mission-stations of the Moravians, who have been labouring for these hundred years to convert the heathen Esquimaux to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. About Forteau Bay, which is not many miles from the opposite shore of Newfoundland, live many hundreds of English subjects; and in summer time thousands more come hither with their fishing-vessels to engage in the cod-fishery. Among these people, the Bishop of Newfoundland has stationed two Missionaries. One of them is to live at Forteau Bay, in the house which you see on the left-hand side of the church represented in the engraving. The house on the right-hand, is to be the school for children. The church is not yet finished; but we hope that, with the Divine blessing, it may be got ready before the end of this year, and the poor fishermen of Labrador will come over the rough sea, and through the snow, and meet together to worship God, and to partake of Holy Communion there.

The ground and the houses were bought for them last year by the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*. The poor people themselves are trying by their own labour and by the help of friends to build their church. I will mention a circumstance which occurred last summer, which will show how grateful they are for what has been done for them, and what interest they take in a work which they know is for the good of their own souls.

The Rev. A. Gifford, the Missionary, who lives among them, one day called together as many as possible of his scattered flock, told them in plain words how much had been done for them by friends in England, and inquired, "Can we not now do something for ourselves?" Now, the poor people in those parts have little to do with money. The fish which they catch during their short summer, they exchange with merchants for the necessities of life,—their winter supply of provisions. Yet they were not discouraged by having no money at command, but said, they would willingly give the produce of one day's fishing to help in building their church, and were sorry they could do no more. The day fixed upon, was the 6th of August; it turned out fine, though there was less fish than was often the case. The clergyman happened, upon that day, to be returning from a distant part of his Mission in his boat (lately presented to him by very kind friends in England, some known, some unknown to him). He was delighted upon opening to view Forteau Bay, as he sailed along the rugged shores of his parish, to see the good fishermen fulfilling their promise. The masts of their little boats were decked with flying colours, or, in place of proper flags, with pocket-handkerchiefs. Their pastor steered his boat through the group of fishermen, and they exchanged cheerful greetings. The proceeds of the day's fishing were valued £8 10s. On the same day, some of the settlers in other parts of the Mission were engaged in fishing for the repair of the house intended for the Clergymen to live in.

In another part of the same Mission, where it is hoped to build a chapel, a single individual zealously collected, from his neighbours and from visiting strangers—chiefly from the latter—the sum of £6 9s., which by the Clergyman's direction, he sent by the master of a trading schooner to Halifax to be returned in the spring of the year in the shape of timber for building the proposed chapel.

The Rev. A. Gifford has come over to England, and hopes to return to Labrador next Easter; and he will be glad to take back with him any contributions* which may be sent for the special benefit of his Mission. Perhaps, the former contributions of some of my readers may have helped already to provide for the people of Forteau the services of a Missionary, and the ground to build their church on. It is very cheering and encouraging to us in England, to see them thus receiving the Word of God with gladness. Let us all remember them sometimes in our prayers, that that holy Word may indeed, be sown in their hearts, and may bring forth fruit, thirty, sixty, or an hundred fold, to the glory of God, and to the everlasting salvation of their souls.

GREGORY OF NAZIANZEN AND JULIAN.

"At Athens, Gregory formed an acquaintance of a very remarkable character, and one which subsequently gave him no pleasure, with the nephew of the Emperor Constantius, the Prince Julian who afterwards succeeded to the throne, and played a short but extraordinary part in the drama of the world's history. This prince was then (A.D. 355) resident there, by the permission of his jealous uncle, for the purpose of pursuing his studies. A singular predilection for paganism and pagan mysteries, which flourished particularly in that city, already displayed itself in Julian. He was as

strongly attached to the rhetorical and philosophical advocates of heathenism, as they in their turn, as well as all the admirers of the old religion, directed their attention, with hopeful expectation, to the young and distinguished member of the imperial family. Gregory, therefore, who acknowledges that he by no means possessed a quick sightedness in discerning character, had yet no difficulty in anticipating the very worst in Julian. He calls upon those who were with him at that time at Athens to testify, that soon after he had become acquainted with Julian, he had uttered those words,—'How great an evil is the Roman empire here training up!' What it was which caused Gregory to judge so severely of the young man, he has himself informed us, in a perhaps somewhat exaggerated picture of Julian's demeanor and external appearance:—'I was led to become a prophet,' he says, 'by the restlessness of his behaviour, and the extravagant tone of his animation. It also appeared to me no good sign, that his neck was not firmly set on his shoulders; that those shoulders often moved convulsively; that his eye frequently glanced round timidly, and rolled as if in frenzy; and that his feet were never in a state of repose. As little was I pleased with his nose, which breathed pride and contempt; with the ridiculous distortions of his face, which yet indicated the same pride; his loud, immoderate laughter; the nodding and shaking of his head, without any reason; his hesitating speech, interrupted by the act of breathing; his abrupt, unmeaning questions and his answers not at all better, but often self-contradictory, and given without any scientific arrangement.' If we deduct the effect of a strong personal dislike upon the pen of this delineator, we have still remaining the picture of a restless, fiery-tempered man, of a mind incessantly active and excited; of one who was haughty in the conscious feeling of power, but yet externally practising dissimulation, while there was wanting to his great natural abilities that judicious education which would have regulated and directed them to the right object."—*Ullman's Life*.—(*Westminster Review*.)

ACCOUNT OF ABRAHAM,

A Hindoo Christian belonging to the district of Edeyengoody, in Tinnevely, who died on the 8th of May, 1850. By the Rev. R. CALDWELL, Missionary of the Society at Edeyengoody.

Abraham, the subject of this notice, was a native of Overy, a village in this district; by birth a Shanar, by the new birth a member of a sacred caste. He was one of the few Native Christians I have met with whose character would bear examination, and who appeared to better advantage the more intimately you knew him. The style of thought and character for which he was remarkable is rarely found, even in Europe, among persons following his occupation, and belonging to his humble station in life; but considering his position and connexions as a Hindoo of an inferior caste, his employment—as earning his subsistence by the cultivation of a little plot of ground—his disadvantages, as born and educated in Heathenism and surrounded by the densest darkness and an almost savage rudeness,—he was, unquestionably, a burning and shining light in his generation, and well deserving of a passing notice.

Even as a heathen he was well reported of for purity of life and mildness of manners; and, though his course as a Christian was but short, (for I baptized him only five years ago,) I have not known his equal among persons of his caste in Tinnevely, (nor is there in my district any person of any occupation or caste, equal to him or like him,) in thirst for information, freedom from covetousness and litigiousness, and zeal for Christianity.

He had received in his youth an unusually good education, for a Shanar, was well versed in Hindoo books, and being naturally of an inquiring disposition had, for some years before he became a Christian, been accustomed to inquire into and compare the claims of various religions. In the village in which he lived there was a small congregation and a school, under the care of a Catechist; and all that he heard and saw tended to weaken the hold of Heathenism on his mind, and dispose him towards the reception of Christianity.

Some months before I became acquainted with him, a marriage took place in his village. Abraham was invited to the marriage, and several Christians were among the guests. One of the party, a young Christian girl from a neighbouring district, had brought with her a copy of the Gospels, and was reading it to the assembled guests. Abraham's attention was arrested. He asked for the book and began to read aloud. A deep impression was produced in his mind, and when he laid down the book he said to a friend of his, (one who ever since has almost been persuaded to be a Christian,) "This book is the truth. This is the way of light. You and I have lost our way and are walking in darkness. This is the straight path, and we ought to walk in it." From that time he sought for opportunities of becoming better acquainted with Christianity, and became more and more convinced of the necessity of embracing it.

My first interview with Abraham took place one evening, incidentally, whilst taking a walk. On

entering into conversation with him, his remarks and manner impressed me favourably. His tone of mind seemed to be that of one who was not far from the kingdom of God. I had not heard anything of him as yet, but I felt an interest in him; and when we parted I told him that there seemed to be something incongruous in his remaining a Heathen; that, as the Scripture said, "he that doeth truth cometh to the light," so one, who appeared to be so virtuously disposed and truth-loving, was under peculiar obligations to become a Christian. On his return home he borrowed from the Catechist of the village a copy of the Prayer-book and Bower's Theological Dictionary, and compared the former with the analysis of Hindooism and the specimens of Hindoo prayers contained in the latter. Being thereupon fully persuaded of the excellence of Christianity, devotionally as well as doctrinally, he placed himself formally under Christian instruction, and began to attend Church.

Not long afterwards, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, I had the pleasure of receiving him by baptism into the Christian fold, with his wife and three children; and as his character rapidly developed itself, I soon discovered what a valuable acquisition he was, and how much good was likely to be effected by the influence of his character.

He was singularly free from the covetousness and selfishness so prevalent among persons of his country and caste; and he always scrupulously kept aloof from the disputes and litigations by which he was surrounded. In these respects, among all the Native Christians I have known in Tinnevely, though otherwise they might be estimable, he stood alone; nor less did he differ from and surpass all the members of his caste I have met with, whatever were their employments or advantages, in his taste for reading, his habits of inquiry and reflection, his love of knowledge for its own sake, and his general enlightenment of mind. Naturally his intellect was not equal to that of many Shanars whom I know; but its defects were compensated for by his love of truth; by which the powers of his mind were quickened into incessant exercise, and directed uniformly to the worthiest objects. He had read, I think, every Christian book published in the Tamil language, some of them many times over; nor did he read anything superficial. Every difficulty he met with in his reading, he used to reserve till I visited the village where he lived; and when my visits occurred, I have often been kept occupied almost from morning till night in replying to his questions and resolving his difficulties.

He would sometimes pay a visit to Edeyengoody, in search of information about some knotty point; and in returning from the weekly market, would occasionally call in upon me as he passed. In too many cases, a Native Christian visits his Missionary only when he has a favour to ask, or a complaint to make: but when I saw Abraham coming, I was always well assured that no sordid motive prompted his visit. Nothing would be asked but news of the progress of the Gospel, or questions respecting Theology and the Bible, or, it might be news from Europe about France or Rome, or about recent discoveries.

Amongst his own people, Abraham's zeal for Christianity was considered his most distinguishing feature. He took advantage of every opportunity, and sought out opportunities of exposing the wickedness and folly of heathenism, and recommending the claims of Christianity. He is universally reported to have defended the truth in all companies, and on all occasions. But so mildly withal did he argue, and so respectful was his address, that I am not aware that his zeal ever made him an enemy. Against Popery his zeal was almost if not quite as ardent as against Paganism, of which to his mind Popery seemed only a variety; and this induced him not only to enter into frequent arguments with the inhabitants of a neighbouring Romish village, but even sometimes to dispute with the French Jesuits on their occasional visits. His zeal was also exemplified in the Church itself, in endeavours to give free development in private and social life to the reforming tendencies of Christianity. With regard to caste, that grand obstacle to the Spirit of power and of love, I have not any person in my district, and I do not know of any person of his caste in Tinnevely, by whom it has been renounced so spontaneously or so completely. On many occasions in Edeyengoody, he had eaten with Pariars, without solicitation, food cooked by them,—(in the caste question the cooking of the food is the point on which all hinges,)—but one day some of the wealthier heathen inhabitants of his village said they did not believe he had done this, and challenged him to eat food cooked by Pariars in their presence, then and there. He consented, and the whole party went to a Pariar village hard by, where they got a meal prepared for him by a Pariar woman in a pot in which beef had been boiled,—an additional abomination to a Hindoo. This meal he ate in their presence; and at the same time told them he would not object to his son, when he came of age, marrying a respectable and educated Pariar. At first the heathens admired his consistency; but before the meal was over, they were ready to lay violent hands upon their caste.

The only defect I ever noticed in Abraham's

character, was one which seems to be almost universally characteristic of the Tamil mind. It was a preponderance of speculation over feeling, of reason over devoutness. I have no reason, however, to suppose that this defect was so great as to neutralize his piety; for the whole course of his conduct proved that his Christianity was not merely a speculation, but a living principle and a reality.

The consistent course of this good man terminated suddenly, and, as we should say, prematurely in his thirty-fourth year. His sun went down while it was yet day, before it had even reached the meridian. Whilst engaged in his ordinary humble occupation, drawing water to irrigate his garden, the plank on which he stood gave way, and he fell into the well. The broken plank fell with him, and inflicted a wound which within eight days caused his death. I had him brought to Edeyengoody, and did what I could for him; and then as his state seemed critical, I sent him to the Rev. J. T. Tucker, of Punneivily, by whose kind attention and medical skill everything was done that could be done, but without avail.

During his illness from the various conversations I had with him, and from the report of all who saw him, I was perfectly satisfied that he was prepared for his great change—that, though the race had been short, he had gained the prize. A great many people, besides his relatives and friends, learning what had befallen him, came to show their sympathy and to condole with him; and few of them, whether Christians or Heathens, went away without being exhorted to turn to God with full purpose of heart. To one of his unconverted relatives, who said to him, "It must be hard to bear the pain of your wound," he replied, "Bodily agony, though hard to bear, may be borne; but how will you bear the agony in store for a lost soul?" Not long before his death, the Catechist that accompanied him to Punneivily asked him if he felt prepared to die. He answered, "My heart rejoices at the prospect of death!" He was then asked why he rejoiced at the prospect; to which he replied, "Because my Saviour has conquered death, and my faith in Him stands firm, and where He sits at the right hand of God eternal happiness awaits me." These were the last words he uttered; as soon after lock-jaw came on. After some time one of his sisters asked him if he wished to say anything to her. He could no longer speak, but he pointed upwards with his finger, as if to say, "Lift up your heart: depend on Him who is above."

I trust it will appear in the end that Abraham's death will be the means of greater good than was done even by his life, and that what has cast a gloom over the district will prove like the cloud in the desert, "the shadow of the Almighty," a source of comfort, guidance, and defence.

I have given so particular an account of the character of the deceased, as thinking it desirable to place on record, "to the praise of the glory of God's grace," a striking instance of the enlightening, disenthraling power of the Gospel of Christ in this Heathen land, and in the case of a member of a peculiarly ignorant, indolent caste. I wished also to show that, whilst Native Christianity in general is miserably superficial and carnal, there are exceptions to the general rule,—a few persons here and there who exhibit in their lives "the powers of the world to come," who are God's witnesses, in their generation, to the excellence of that "wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

Advertisements.

DR. MELVILLE,
CORNER OF YORK AND BOLTON STREETS,
TORONTO.
November 13th, 1850. 16-1f

DR. BOVELL,
John Street, near St. George's Church,
TORONTO.
April 23rd, 1851. 39-1f

MR. S. J. STRATFORD,
SURGEON AND OCULIST.
Church Street, above Queen Street, Toronto.
The Toronto Dispensary, for Diseases of the Eye, in
rear of the same.
Toronto, May 7, 1851. 41-1ly

WILLIAM HODGINS,
ARCHITECT AND CIVIL ENGINEER.
OFFICE:—Directly opposite the Arcade, St.
Lawrence Hall, King Street, Toronto.
Toronto, February, 1852. 28-1f

JOHN CRAIG,
GLASS STAINER,
Flag, Banner, and Ornamental Painter,
HOUSE PAINTING, GRADING, &c., &c.
No. 7, Waterloo Buildings, Toronto.
September 4th, 1851. 6-1f

J. P. CLARKE, Mus. Bac. K. C.
PROFESSOR OF THE PIANO-FORTE,
SINGING AND GUITAR,
Residence, Shuter Street.
Toronto, January 13th, 1837. 5-1f

* Contributions "for the Forteau Mission," may be sent to 79, Pall Mall.