

and no regular rites and religious observance. They fancy that they can cure diseases, save life, find out secrets, and other things, by their strange performances. One of their customs I may mention here—it is their strange manner of praying.—They have an idea that the oftener a prayer can be repeated the more sure it is of being heard, but they are too careless to be troubled to say their prayers too often ; so they pray by machinery. They write out the form of prayer they wish to present, roll it round a cylinder made for that purpose, and then connect it with a small windmill. Here they leave it—the wind sends round the scylinder, and they mind their work, quite contented that the windmill should be praying for them without stopping, while they could get on with their business.—Every time the cylinder goes round, stands, they think, for one saying of the prayer. These praying-machines are very numerous, and, however we may laugh at the idea of praying by machinery, are firmly believed by these people to be very efficacious.

The places in this great country where missions have been attempted, are SAREPTA, where the Moravians have had for many years a settlement ; ASTRACHAN, where the Scottish Missionary Society commenced a mission in 1821, and the neighbourhood of Lake Baikal, where the London Missionary Society laboured for several years in various places.

#### Nathaniel and Naomi.

Benares is a large city in India, full of heathen temples. It is the most idolatrous place in that land of idols, and not less than a thousand Brahmins live in it. For this reason it is called by the Hindoos the Holy City, and this holiness is not confined to the city, but spreads for ten miles round it. Many of the people of Benares are very rich, and nearly all of them are not only idolaters, but very wicked

ones too ; and throughout India this city is believed to be so sacred that sick people from all quarters are brought there, because these poor blinded idolaters think that if they die there they shall be happy for ever.—Hence you would see the ghauts or steps leading down to the Ganges, which flows through the city, crowded with Hindoos, who bathe in the sacred stream with the hope that thus they will wash away their sins.

In this place there lived a man named Ram Ratten. He was a famous Hindoo, and had been an earnest worshipper of idols from his childhood. One day a tract was put into his hand ; he read it, was struck with what he read, and wished to hear more of the truth it contained ; so he went about to try and find a teacher, and was directed, by a native Christian whom he met, to a Missionary ; but at first he was too proud to give up all idea of his own merits, and to believe in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners. He therefore left the Missionary and joined the enemies of the Gospel. But he now knew too much to be easy in the worship of idols ; and, as he could find no peace, he soon came back to the Mission-house and confessed to the Missionary that he could resist the truth no longer. From that time it was plain that he was a sincere believer ; for he lived as a true Christian, and was baptized by the name of Nathaniel, a name which he himself had chosen, because, he said, he wished to be a man “ in whom there was no guile.” He had three little boys, and these he called Abel, Noah, and Moses.

His wife, like all Hindoo women, could neither read nor write, and had never been able to learn. Nathaniel felt very much about her, and earnestly prayed that the Lord might open her heart as He opened the heart of Lydia. But whenever he talked with her on religious subjects, she used to say, “ Do you really believe that God has