

MISSION FIELD.

THE BIBLE IN SOUTH INDIA.

(Continued from last number.)

In time Rhenius undertook the work of re-translation, and executed what may be called our third version. He was a good Tamil scholar, inferior to his predecessors in knowledge of the originals, but of a singularly clear and practical mind, though unfortunately given to paraphrase where dilution of the text is inadmissible. His version was idiomatic, easy, and clear, but often unfaithful, nerveless and loose—as unlike its predecessors as it well could be.

The fourth version came from Ceylon, and now, for the first time. English men, with Americans, touched the work of Tamil Biblical translation. Mr. Knight [of the C. M. S.], Messrs. Spalding and Poor [of the American Board of Missions], and Mr. Percival [at first a Wesleyan, and afterwards of the S. P. G.] were engaged for some years in the work of revision. Their work fell at last absolutely into the hands of Mr. Percival, and was beautifully printed as a tentative version by the Bible Society in 1852;—a work of undoubted erudition, it is the antithesis of that of Ziegenbalg and Schultze. Abounding in Sanskrit and High Tamil words, pedantic and polished, it is in Tamil much what Dr. Johnson's "Rambler" is in English; and is curiously ill-adapted to its purpose.

And now comes the fifth chapter of our history. Almost every Tamil Missionary, certainly every group of Missions, had worked at revision. Almost every point had been discussed, and the proposition was at length made by the Madras Auxiliary of the Bible Society to the S. P. G. that the Rev. Henry Bower, one of its Anglo-Indian Missionaries, a man of pre-eminent Tamil scholarship, and of great attainments in other ways, should be appointed permanent and sole revisor, submitting his work to certain others for advice, with a view to the issue of an authoritative and [as far as this is possible] final version, acceptable to all. This has been, after about four years' toil, accomplished.*

The Bible Society bore all the expenses of this undertaking, published the edition in all forms and sizes, with headings, parallel references, &c., and without them, and liberally supplies copies to all who need them.

This version has met with almost unanimous approval, and certainly seems to me equal to any version in any language that I know of.

It is, apart from its sacred character, the longest prose work in

*Mr. Bower, who received from the Archbishop of Canterbury the degree of D.D., as some acknowledgment of his labors, and was also created a Fellow of the Madras University, is gone to his rest. A long list of useful Tamil works attests his diligence and ability. He was a devout humble-minded, loving-hearted man.

the language, and will be a chief standard of orthography and of prose idiom in Tamil. Indeed, Tamil prose, Tamil typography, and the literature generally, owe almost everything to Missionaries [from Basahi to the present] and to Mission presses. I am only stating what belongs to my own sphere, but others can say much the same in regard to the Telugu, Kanarese, Malayalam, and Tulu languages.

If we left India now, these imperishable monuments of Missionary zeal, industry, and erudition would remain.

This very brief sketch of the history of one of the many versions of the "sacred Books of the West," showing how a long and very varied succession of men of many nationalities have carried on this work with unwearied patience, enthusiastic zeal, and with no small amount of genius and learning, from A.D. 1650 to 1880, illustrates the spirit of modern Missions.

In such a work how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell and work in unity together. May it not tend to gain for us that grace which shall draw us nearer and nearer, till a United Christendom shall advance to the work—only thus to be completely successful—of bringing the world to accept the Revelation so presented to them.

And now I would add a few considerations affecting the use to be made of our versions, in South India especially.

1. When I look at the Tamil literature I seem to discern great encouragement to believe that we shall succeed in making the Bible dear to the hearts of that people; for it has the best literature, and is in many respects the ablest, the most progressive, and the most thorough of India peoples. This literature is much concerned with heroes and saints. The legends of old Sanskrit literature have been translated into excellent verse by poets not inferior to *Valmiki* and *Kalidasa*, and also into prose Tamil, while they have been worked into dramas, romantic poems, lyrics, and hymns. Besides which, the histories of the sixty-three *Caiva* saints and of the *Vaishnava* apostles are circulated in every form, and are full of earnestness and of genuine pathos. Epics and shorter poems of Jain origin exist, and would do honor to any literature.

What I wish to emphasize is the fact that the Tamil people are quite capable of receiving and appreciating the Bible, which gives them histories incomparably more interesting and affecting than those of their own books.

The great work of the Christian Missionary is to hold up to the love, admiration, worship, trust, and imitation of men, the Christ of the Gospels. I find vast multitudes of men to whom the name of Rama and of Krishna, supposed incarnations of Vishnu, are inexpressibly dear. I examine these histories, and find much that is interesting, affecting, and noble, mingled inextricably with much that is puerile, revolting, and degrading. If, then, in churches, in schools, in bazaars,

by word of mouth, and by our publications, the Saviour of the world is perseveringly and piously made known, who can doubt as to the result?

When men write about the success or otherwise of our work in India, I feel inclined to urge this consideration. It cannot be denied that as the result of Missionary work the idea of the great Master in the holiness of His character, in the majesty of His works, and in the ineffable excellence of His teaching, is becoming, and must ever more and more become, familiar to the minds of all classes and all ages of men in India. This will work its way, will win affection, respect, and reverence. I look for the regeneration of India from this exhibition of Christ, who will thus draw all men unto Himself. The main question is not how many have openly renounced heathenism, but to what extent is the great body of Christian labourers able thus to introduce the idea of the great Master into the minds of men. If from every Christian institution the savour of His saving name is being spread by zealous, loving Christians, no one who has faith in Him will discourage their labours, or be doubtful about the result. Organizations, just at the present may or may not flourish, but an influence is being extended which sooner or later must surely bring all India to the Saviour's feet. There is a work over and beyond that of gathering together bodies of converts; and it is that of creating a Christian atmosphere in which no non-Christian system can live and move and have its being. Viewed in this light the whole aggregate of Mission work in India, and especially that of Bible translation, is helpful, hopeful, and mighty. Perhaps Christian Missionaries themselves require to be reminded of this. Christians at home must resolutely turn their minds away from statistics, and simply take heed that the men they send forth are men whose whole mind is set on bringing the personal Saviour before the minds of those for whom He died, and whom He has graciously promised to draw unto Himself when He is thus lifted up.

Best cure for colds, cough, consumption, is the old Vegetable Pulmonary Balsam. Outler Bros. & Co. Boston. For \$1 a large bottle sent prepaid.

THE CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE LAW DEFENCE ASSOCIATION.

IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.

PATRON:
The Most Rev. the Metropolitan of Canada.

HON. SEC. TREAS.
L. H. Davidson, Esq., M.A., D.O.L.
Montreal.

This Society was formed at the last Provincial Synod, to uphold the law of the Church and assist in distributing literature explanatory thereof. Membership fee only nominal, viz., 25 cents. Subscriptions from clergy and laity may be sent to the Hon. Secretary-Treasurer.

POZZONI'S
MEDICATED
COMPLEXION
POWDER.
Imparts a brilliant transparency to the skin. Removes all pimples, freckles and discolorations. For sale by all first-class druggists, or mailed for 50 cts in stamps by J. A. POZZONI, St. Louis, Mo.

SHORTHAND

May be easily and quickly learned at your own home by our practical course of home instruction.

Send for our terms and commence at once.

Address the
"CONDUCTOR SHORTHAND INSTITUTE,"

43-1

St. John, N.B.



M. S. BROWN & CO.,

ESTABLISHED A.D. 1840.

JEWELLERS & SILVERSMITHS,

—DEALERS IN—

Arch Plate and Metal Altar Furniture.

128 Granville St., Halifax, N.S.

The following well known clergymen have kindly permitted their names to be used as references:—

The Ven. Canon Edwin Gilpin, D.D., Archdeacon of Nova Scotia, Halifax.

The Rev. Canon Brock, M.A., President King's College, Windsor, N.S.

The Rev. C. J. S. Bethune, M.A., Head Master Trinity College School, Port Hope, Ontario.

The Rev. E. S. W. Pentreath, Christ Church, Winnipeg, Man.

Prices can be had on application.

ADVERTISE

IN

THE CHURCH GUARDIAN

BY FAR THE

Best Medium for advertising

BEING

The most extensively Circulated

Church of England Journal

IN THE DOMINION

IT REACHES EVERY PART OF THE DOMINION.

RATES MADE ATE.

Address

THE "CHURCH GUARDIAN"
190 St. James Street, Montreal

THIS PAPER may be found on file at Geo. F. Powell & Co's Newspaper Advertising Bureau (20 Spruce St.) where advertising contracts may be made for in N.Y. NEW YORK