

on the scaffold. What of this? We know that death is the portal to eternal life. We know that the light of the Saviour's love will illuminate the regions that lie beyond the grave. We know that angels will conduct our souls, as soon as they are separated from our bodies, to the Zion which is above, the New Jerusalem, where we shall behold the majesty of the Lamb that was slain—where we shall enjoy His favour without a single moment's intermission—where we shall employ the faculties of our purified spirits in celebrating the praises of His redeeming love.—*Edinburgh Christian Magazine.*

Progress of our Indian Empire.

WHATEVER affects the interest of India cannot but awaken our own. That great country covers 1,200,000 square miles, being an area equal to the third part of all Europe. It contains nine or ten races, differing from each other in language, religion, literature, and arts, and numbering upwards of 170 million souls. India, moreover, has been committed to the charge of Great Britain, by a series of what might be called miraculous providences, in order, no doubt, to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and our responsibility for the manner in which we discharge this duty is so momentous, as to be well nigh overwhelming.

In spite of many defects, the British rule has been an unspeakable blessing to the natives of India, who have made more progress under our sway than could have been possible for them under any other upon earth.

The material progress of India has of late been marvellous. The Ganges canal alone, recently opened, winds its way, like a huge artery, for 800 miles across the plains, and sends the life blood of its waters through countless tiny veins, to irrigate otherwise dry and parched lands, thus securing to the people produce annually worth about seven millions and a-half sterling, and increasing it in the same period to the value of £1,200,000. One great trunk-road, from Calcutta to Peshawar, stretches in an unbroken line 1423 miles. The railway is pushing its iron arms through tiger forests, over sacred rivers, and rapidly laying down a path along which the iron horse will snort, as it wheels its peaceful load of formerly strange and hostile tribes from Cape Comorin to the Himalaya. Already the Hindoo can send his letter for three farthings for 1500 miles from frontier to frontier, while the telegraph flashes its messages in a second over spaces, that the quickest despatch would formerly have taken weeks and months to travel. The progress of India in a civilization reaching to the minds, and affecting the ideas and moral habits of the people, has been, if possible, still more remarkable and cheering. The freedom of the person, of the press, and of commerce, is better secured to our subjects 12,000 miles off, than to any of our continental neighbours under the eye of the government and their police. The horrible system of Thuggee, which numbered its tens of thousands annually, and the equally ferocious and deadly murder gangs of the Dakoits, also a system connected with a sort of devil's religion, have been put down. Female infanticide which desolated families, and the funeral pile, on which in Bengal alone 600 widows were once annually consumed, have been laid under the ban of murder, slavery has been made illegal, while the dreadful human sacrifices, which demanded in Orissa alone about 1500 men each year, have almost

disappeared. Such glorious results as these, let it be remembered, have been achieved by the Indian Government, by the wise and righteous rule of British statesmen and British merchants. Our churches are acquainted generally with the names and labours of missionaries, who have done their part well in improving the people of India; but they ought also to know and cherish the names of those civil servants of the Company, who, with singular wisdom, philanthropy, and perseverance, and, in many cases we know, while we may hope in all, actuated by the highest Christian motives, have left behind them imperishable renown, in the history of savage tribes whom they have emancipated from cruel customs, and introduced into the path of advancing civilization. Such men as Sleeman and his fellow thug-hunters; Wauchope among the Dakoits and robber castes; Outram, Augustus Cleveland, Dixon, and Macpherson, in civilizing Bheels, Kouds, and other savage tribes; Duncan, Walker, Ludlow, Raikes, &c., in saving the child; and Lord William Bentinck in saving the widow, with other illustrious names of well known officials—Munro, Lord Hastings (who first set the press free), Elphinstone, Charles Grant, Metcalf, &c., will live in history, as among the greatest benefactors of the human race.

But the Christian Church has also done much for India, with her direct agency. Since 1813, when missionaries were first permitted freely to enter India, the mission staff has increased to 450 missionaries, with 700 catechists, while the church is represented by upwards of 4000 Christian youth of both sexes, 21,000 Christian converts in full communion, and five times that number under Christian instruction.—*Id.*

THE MONTHLY RECORD.

JANUARY, 1856.

Home Mission Collection.

We are now about to enter on a new and, we believe, much more successful and promising era in the history of our Church, than any of those through which we have hitherto passed. It is now high time to shake off the feebleness and inactivity of early life, and make an united and aggressive movement to place ourselves on a firmer basis, and in a more advantageous position for carrying, as a Christian church, the glad tidings of salvation throughout the length and breadth of the land. Hitherto most of our congregations, from distance, recent formation, local influence, and various other causes have been too much detached from each other, and from the superintendence of the Church Courts, each one pursuing its own separate course, attending only to its own individual interests: if successful, becoming prosperous and flourishing; if on the other hand neglected and forsaken, necessarily languishing and decaying. This is certainly not a desirable state of things;—not the condition in which a Presbyterian Church ought to be left for a single moment, when its members ought to be connected by the closest ties, and united together as a living and vigorous body, under regularly constituted Courts, and deriving nourishment and support from the same exalted and glorious head.

A conviction has been long felt and cherished by the zealous, public spirited and liberal

friends of religion amongst us, that efforts should be made to bring our different congregations into closer union and connection with each other,—that the office-bearers and members of our churches should be faithfully and affectionately reminded, that it is the duty of brethren in the same Christian community, to have a fellow-feeling for and a cordial sympathy with each other;—that the strong ought to assist the weak;—that those who enjoy the blessing of religious ordinances should remember and befriend those who are deprived of the means of grace;—that as members of the same family and one holy brotherhood, they should rejoice with each other in prosperity, and sympathize with each other in adversity;—that they should "bear each others burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Believing this to be the condition of a united and prosperous Church, it is certainly to be lamented that the extensive destitution of religious ordinances, and the suspension of the functions of our ecclesiastical Courts for a number of years, has greatly retarded the growth, and interrupted the manifestation of this friendly intercourse. We were becoming, though friends in profession and fellow-Christians, gradually strangers to each other. But now when a number of our vacancies have been supplied, and when our Presbyteries and Synod have by the superintending goodness of God, been once more re-established, it is fondly to be hoped that our whole religious community will be restored to a more healthy and prosperous state;—that our Sabbath schools will be revived,—our benevolent institutions invigorated,—a missionary spirit excited and propagated,—and the cause of the Redeemer, for which his Church was originally constituted, and is still maintained in our world, greatly advanced.

A large portion of the business transacted at the late meeting of the Synod, consisted in the introduction and adoption of measures for the furtherance of these and other kindred objects,—for encouraging more frequent communion at the Lord's Table,—for collecting statistics,—promoting pastoral visitation,—obtaining Gaelic Ministers,—and conducting a friendly correspondence with sister Synods, and other Presbyterian denominations in these Provinces. Among other objects of prominent interest, the establishment of a Home Mission Fund was earnestly advocated, and recommended to the fostering care and liberality of the church. A Home Mission Committee was appointed,—an annual collection directed to be made in every congregation, and means employed to render the fund as productive and useful as possible. The Synod have done their part in originating the fund, it remains for the people to sustain and increase it. A loud call—an earnest appeal—is now made by your ministers and elders for assistance, in the arduous work in which they are engaged, and for enlarged liberality in the support of Home Missions. By far the larger portion of this Province is to us a missionary field. For it is a striking and remarkable undeniable fact—a fact which cannot be too generally known, or too frequently remembered,—that whilst we have adherents, in large or smaller numbers, and some of them our most steadfast and tried friends, in every County in Nova Scotia, Cape Breton and P. E. Island, our present staff of Ministers is stationed in only two counties in Nova Scotia—*HALIFAX and PICTOU*—and in one county in the Island of Prince Edward.