

ther exhaustive, leaving nothing to his successors but to reiterate and enforce its weighty monitions and requirements.

Had that despatch been attended to by the local authorities in India as it deserved to be, and ought to have been, British connection with Indian superstitions and idolatries would have speedily and everywhere come to a satisfactory end. But there was a terrible *vis inertiae*, the *residuum*, or fossilized petrification of former Christianity-repudiating and idolatry-fostering times, to be encountered abroad; while it was well known and understood that luckwarriness, or even avowed antagonism, as regarded the main object of the despatch, was the prevailing sentiment in the Indian senate of Leadenhall Street. Consequently, years passed without any active steps or measures being taken to carry its provision into practical effect.

At length, however, the patience of the Christian people began to be exhausted; agitation was renewed; public meetings were held, and petitions and memorials were addressed to the British parliament.

Aroused reluctantly from their cherished slumbers, the potentates of Leadenhall Street began partially to bestir themselves. Orders of a diluted kind were sent to India. Something began to be done, in feeble ineffective forms, in divers places. Still, the British Christian public—not causelessly suspicious—kept a jealous and watchful eye over them. Fresh discussions in the British parliament; fresh demands for Indian papers and official documents on the subject; fresh appointments of committees of inquiry; all, all tended, with greater or less impetus, to propel the reformatory machinery which had been set in motion. Slowly, grumblingly, procrastinatingly, link after link of the odious connection, by here a little and there a little, was broken or dis severed; and now it is with gratitude to the God of providence that we are enabled to announce that, so far as Indian legislation is concerned, the *very last link* of the vast, and apparently adamantine chain, has recently been shivered to atoms.

Until within the last two or three months, there were two regulations in force—one of 1810 of the Bengal code, and one of 1817 of the Madras code—which imposed certain duties on the Boards of Revenue and the local agents in the Presidencies of Bengal and Madras respectively, relative to “the due appropriation of the rents and produce of lands granted for the support of mosques, Hindu temples, and other purposes.” Well, an act was recently introduced into the Supreme Legislative Council of India, entitled “An Act to enable the Government to divest itself of the management of religious endowments.” But in the preamble of the act it was particularly explained that its

express purpose was to *repeal* the objectionable regulations above referred to, and henceforth “to relieve the Boards of Revenue and the local agents from the duties imposed upon them” by the said regulations, “so far as these duties embrace the superintendence of lands granted for the support of mosques or Hindu temples, and for other religious uses; the appropriation of endowments made for the maintenance of such religious establishments; the repair and preservation of buildings connected therewith, and the appointment of trustees or managers thereof; or involve any connection with the management of such religious establishments.” This very important act, after due consideration and discussion, was passed by the Supreme Council, and on the 10th March last received the assent of the viceroy and governor-general of India.

The local governments are imperatively required “as soon as possible after the passing of this act,” to make special provisions, after the manner indicated in the act itself, for carrying its object into speedy and complete effect.

The paragraphs, which lay down, with unmistakable clearness, the principles on which the local governments are to proceed in thus consummating the final and complete severance of the British government from the mosques and temples, the superstitions and idolatries of India, extend to seven or eight quarto pages, and all that is needful to be said on the subject, so far as concerns the interest of the general public in the matter, is, that the principles and rules, so completely laid down, appear to be altogether unexceptionable; and, when fully carried out—as carried out they must now ere long be—the untoward and ill-omened alliance which resisted and seemingly defied the pertinacious, life-long assaults of Poynder, the thunder and the lightning of the eloquence of Wilherforce, and the grandly-majestic state papers of Charles Grant, will wholly vanish from the stage of existence, and be forever buried with “the wreck of things that were!”

A new cause of thankfulness, verily, to the God of providence, who, though sitting above these elements, and apparently incognisant of human affairs, is, nevertheless, watching over, guiding, controlling, and directing them all towards the accomplishment of his own infinitely wise and gracious designs! A fresh ground, too, of encouragement and hope to all who, under the cloud and tempest of frowns and opposition, have to fight the battles of humanity and truth; that however, often defeated, or long slumbering in the sepulchre, to them, or their successors, the final glorious victory is sure.