

tunes or misfortunes of the loved ones far away. If we have the true Church feeling, the newspaper is, as it were, the weekly abstract of the Family correspondence, simultaneously sent with its intelligence of success or failure, of rejoicing or mourning, to all in whose hearts the love of that Family beats warm and strong. This is, or ought to be, the root idea of the Church Newspaper. It presupposes the existence of the Family, its extension, its close and clinging ties, its strong affection, its traditions, watchwords, festivals, and the thousand indescribable tendernesses that mark and make the indissoluble unity, of which the Family is the consecrated sanctuary,—the abiding Home. It takes all this for granted. But this root idea is no barren root, set in a dry ground. It is a vital power, springing up and growing, generously and vigorously, into many thriving branches, of which we may have more to say hereafter.

Foreign Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

INDIA.

We conclude the very instructive and interesting account of the mission work at Edeyenkoody, Tinnevely. The Rev. Mr. Caldwell has done good service in this use of his pen:—

I must here mention some particulars respecting the progress of the native Missionary Association.

In the field selected for its labours, the western and almost wholly unchristianized portion of this district, it employs three school masters, who instruct the congregations as well as the schools, and two itinerant catechists, at an expense of a little more than 30 rupees a month. Every fortnight some members of the native committee, according to rule, join the itinerants, and make a missionary tour in their company amongst the heathen villages.

The labours of the Society have already produced some, though not much, direct fruit. In one village a little christian community has been formed, numbering 24 souls, in another 13 souls. All these converts are Pariahs, with the exception of two Shanar families.

There have been no accessions as yet from amongst the higher castes, who form the bulk of the population in that extensive district, as well as the most influential portion of it; but it is a source of gratification that our native itinerants, who go about amongst them from village to village have free access to them, and are every where, respectfully received and attentively listened to. If I were to judge, as I might safely do in England, from the demeanor and language of the people, alone, as reported to me by the native itinerants, and confirmed by my own observations, I might naturally expect that large numbers of them would soon place themselves under christian instruction. Much of this apparent friendliness, however, is owing to the natural politeness of the Hindoo character, something is owing to the respect which is supposed to be due to the teachers of religion, and something also to the wish to get rid of troublesome visitors by speaking them fair. Often have I seen politeness turning into bitter hostility in consequence of a few conversions. Still, we have much reason to be thankful that so wide a "door of utterance" has been opened to us, and that the inhabitants of this newly opened field listen to the Gospel so patiently and attentively. All the itinerants testify that the most thoughtful, attentive people they meet with, are the Vellalers, the most respectable cast of farmers, and that here and there, especially amongst members of that caste, they have met with individuals who not only listened to them attentively, but seemed to be well disposed to

receive their message. Few of the private members of congregations, who make their fortnightly tour, according to rule, in company with the catechists, have been found to be competent to say much to the heathen. Their visits, however, seem to be beneficial notwithstanding. When I asked the last catechist who visited the West, how the old headman of Edeyenkoody who accompanied him had got on, he replied, "To tell the truth, he never opened his mouth, and he was besides rather hard of hearing; but I found him very useful to point to when any body said you are teaching this new religion for a salary. I would reply, You see my friend here; he has come all this distance, and goes with me from village to village without the smallest reward, and at his own expense: he is a farmer like yourselves, but he wishes to convince you that christianity is a good religion."

I took the opportunity of cloudy monsoon weather to make a ten day's tour myself amongst the principal heathen villages in the west, when my own observations were exactly in accordance with the various reports I had received from the itinerants. I was invariably listened to with respect, and allowed to say whatever I pleased, and as much as I pleased, but an attempt was almost invariably made to reply to what I said, and it was only in a few instances that I met with people who seemed really to desire to know what the truth was.

From the great variety of the lines of defence which the people adopted, it was evident that when driven from one argument, there were many others on which they believed that they could fall back. Their remarks disclosed the real state of their minds; and for this reason I will mention a few of them here, in the promiscuous way in which they were uttered in different villages or at different times. Sometimes the same reply was made by some one or another in almost every village.

Many said, "We are hard-working farmers, and these learned matters are above our comprehension. We must attend to our occupations. We have too much to do in this life to have time to think of any other." Not a few paraded their stupidity—more pretended than real,—as a reason for putting the consideration of religion aside altogether: "We are stupid farmers, and our one duty is to endeavour to get our bellies filled." "Our lot is fixed already," said others, "and can never be changed. The Creator made us what we are." This was an answer which all were ready to make, and it was sometimes followed up by the assertion of still more explicit fatalism. Thus said one, "God intended us to be sinners. He made sin. He gave us the nature from which sinful acts proceed. What can we do but submit? Don't speak against God, sir! don't say that any thing can happen which God dislikes." I quoted to him in reply the Tamil proverb, "one's own mind burns one;" a proverb which proves their belief in the existence of conscience, and endeavoured to explain how conscience testifies that the guilt of our sins rests upon ourselves, and how God must disapprove of what conscience disapproves. I met a consequential old man, with whom I had attempted to have a conversation some time before in another village, when he had drowned my voice by loud, violent assertions, that God was the author of sin. On this occasion I fared a little better. I told him, on his recommencing his former argument, that no matter what the origin of sin was, I came there to inform him of a way whereby he could be freed from sin. He immediately roared out, "You say that sin can be taken away, I don't believe that; sin is part of our nature, it quits its hold of no man. There is your nice Pariah

christian, Mark of Kanaken kullum. He has five times allowed his cow to get into my field. Has that man's sin been taken away?"

Some would make their prosperity a reason for remaining in heathenism,—“We are suffering no lack of any thing; nobody oppresses us; we have every comfort. Why should we wish to change our religion?” I would reply, “Your minds, your souls, are being ruined. You have made no provision for a future life;” to which they would say, “We are not ambitious of obtaining more happiness than we have, it is good to be content with what God gives us.” Others would try the discontented tack,—“I don't see,” said a man, “what we have to be thankful for. Rain has fallen, it is true, but we shall have to pay the land-tax whether there is a harvest or not.”

People often said that they would become christians, as a matter of course, when their time came, without our putting ourselves to any trouble about them. One man expressed it thus: “Why do you trouble yourself to come here and give us advice? when our time comes we will send for you. Things are not really yet; when the berries of the banyan get ripe, it will not be necessary for any one to invite the birds to come.” Some, on the other hand, were careful to explain to me, that whosoever might change their customs, no change was ever to be expected of them. The people of a Kottei-reddy village said, “We are a peculiar caste,—you will meet none of our caste north of Palamcottah. People of our caste have never gone over to any foreign religion. Search and inquire, and every body will tell you that our caste never changes. Once only a widow lady, who was living in this village, was won over by a catechist; but we and the headmen of the neighbouring villages of our caste joined together and we rescued her.”

A village Moonsiff, a sort of petty judge, who gave me a very attentive hearing together with a group of his neighbours, replied, “If our religion is wrong, why does your Government pay for the support of so many temples?” I replied that those payments were no proof of approval, for they were merely in lieu of lands which had been resumed. Immediately he shifted his ground, and said, “Well, at all events, your Government respects the customs of former Governments; it regards a custom as a right. This shows the propriety of our adhering also to custom. It is better to adhere to custom, even if the custom is an objectionable one, than to follow our own fancies in an arbitrary sort of way, without any custom to bear one out.”

I met a man who had once been employed in a mission school, but remained a heathen, and who made use of an argument which proved how little he knew of the spirit of christianity. “There are two kinds of virtue,” he said, “according to the Shastras, ascetical virtue and domestic virtue. Christ practised and taught the ascetical sort of virtue, but I follow the domestic sort. I have a wife and family, and it is therefore impossible for me to become a christian.”

In a village in which I had spoken, as I sometimes did, of the gods that had not made the heavens perishing from under the heavens, and said that it was evident that Brahma, Vishna, and Siva had also perished, for they had failed to obtain for their votaries the government of the only part of the world in which they were worshipped or even known, a man replied, “The government is now in the hands of christians, it is true, but formerly, for thousands upon thousands of years, it was in the hands of the worshippers of our gods—our turn will come again some day. These external gods and evils come and go, but the gods never perish.”

In another village, called Kotci-karaukkullum