

In this way they became masters, almost against their will, of one tract of land after another, till at last in the good Providence of God, and by a succession of events—many of them so wonderful as to be almost miraculous—the whole of the empire now called British India, became subject to English rule. Numbers of the natives, attracted by the good and regular pay which they received from the Government, now enlisted in the English army, or rather themselves formed an army commanded by English officers, for the maintenance of our power in India. It is this army, once deservedly celebrated for its faithfulness, which has now revolted against us, and with the most merciless and fearful cruelty slaughtered thousands of our fellow countrymen and countrywomen who had been wont to look to them for protection.

What, then, can be the reason of so strange an event? If we look to second causes, it seems pretty clear that it is the work of the Mohammedans, who have always hated us, and that they took advantage of the distribution of the greased cartridges to persuade the Hindoos that they had been prepared with animal fat, (the use of which is forbidden by the Hindoo religion), and that it was a plot framed with the intention of making them Christians by force.

But whatever the immediate causes may be, there are others which lie far deeper: "Is there evil in a city," or country, "and the Lord hath not done it?" and when He whose "strange work" is judgment, has lifted up His hand to inflict so signal a chastisement, ought we not, in all humility and earnestness, to inquire what it is which has provoked His anger? and in this case it needs not that we look far. It is the statement—not of a missionary, not of a minister, but of the *Times* newspaper—that "We gave the actual countenance and support of our Government to idolatrous ceremonies and institutions; we permitted rites of the foulest impiety and barbarism to be practised; we allowed the profession of Christianity to remain absolutely penal by Hindoo law, and we conducted ourselves generally as if we held our power by suzerainty, and were content to sink our character as Christians, on condition of an easy tenure. It is a fact that British officers have, in their public capacity, made offerings to idols, and that the first baptized sepoy (native soldier) was dismissed from the army."*

But why need we, who have no power to alter these things, think about them?—

1. That we may learn from these judgments of God's hand how hateful a thing sin is, and think if it bears such bitter fruits—if it is visited with such heavy chastisements only in a way of warning, (for it is only in a way of warning that sin is punished in this world), what will be

those drops of the cup of God's wrath which must be drank hereafter by the sinner who has passed into his Maker's presence unforgiven?

2. That we may mourn over the sins of our nation, and entreat the Lord to cause His anger to cease. Daniel, though so holy a man that his enemies could find no fault in him, yet humbled himself before God for his nation's sins, saying, "We have sinned;" and if we will sincerely, and earnestly seek for mercy now, and ask help from Him who alone can effectually give it, doubtless He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him.

3. That we may be stirred up to employ any means which may be in our power, and at all events and chiefly, to be earnest in prayer for the spread of the Gospel of Christ amongst the unhappy natives of British India.

C. M. M.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A Brahmin silenced.

A missionary in Hindostan must expect to have many contests with the Brahmins. It is necessary therefore, that he should be very familiar with their sacred writings; and he should have his knowledge always at command. On one occasion, a missionary in India went to a large place on a market-day. He says, "I had a large number of tracts and Bibles for distribution; and I sat down in the marketplace to converse with the people upon the grace and truth of salvation. But before I reached it, I heard a terrible noise of women as I thought, quarrelling. Now, the women in India who belong to the humbler classes, have tremendously long tongues. Well, I heard them abusing somebody, and using language very improper to escape from ladies' lips; they were calling some one all manner of names but that of gentleman; and when I came to the place, I saw what was the matter. They were not abusing a man, but a great fat bull, which was eating up the rice, and sweetmeats, and vegetables, and other things, that these women had brought in from the country to sell. The bull in his rounds had found them out, and was poking his nose into this basket and that basket; and there were the women doubling their fists and cursing at his nose; but no one dared to touch him. He knew very well that hard words would never break bones, and he went on and enjoyed himself, to the great injury of the people. The women when they saw my white face (for a white face is very uncommon in the interior villages), directly put their hands together, and called, 'Have mercy, have mercy!' I saw what was the matter. They were looking at the bull eating up their goods. 'Drive him away,' said I. 'We dare not,' they said. 'Why not?' Because he is a god.' He

is no more a god than I am,' I said. 'Drive him away for us,' they said; and as this was an appeal to my humanity, and I saw the women distressed, I gave him two or three good pokes in the ribs, and he soon hurried away. The women went down and thanked me; and I was about to give them a solemn address on the folly of calling such a thing a god, when I found I had got into a terrible mess. It was very easy to get into a difficulty, but very hard to get out of it. There were hundreds and thousands of men there; and a number of them, who were watching me, as soon as they saw me strike the bull, came down looking like a thunder-cloud, and they spoke almost like thunder too: 'What are you doing?' I thought I was in for it now; and I said, 'I was only driving away that thief of a bull.' 'You struck it, did you not?' I said I did. 'Do you know that you struck a god?' 'What nonsense,' said I to call that brute god! 'Stay,' said they, 'here comes a Brahmin.' Now, the Brahmins are some of them very learned, and some of them are not; but all of them are very proud. This man had great influence among the people, and they said, 'Here comes the Brahmin; answer him.' He came down, surrounded by some hundreds of people; and he contrived to look as black as he possibly could, as if he thought he would annihilate me with his black looks. 'What have you been doing?' 'My lord, I was waiting to drive away a thief of a bull,' I said. 'Did you strike it?' 'I did.' 'Do you know that you struck a god?' I tried now to make myself two or three inches taller than I was, and to look as black as possible, and I said, 'Answer me. Are you a Brahmin?' To call his Brahminical character in question was dreadful, and he said, 'Certainly,' and showed me the emblem of his office. 'Are you a Brahmin, and call that creature god?' 'Yes, I am.' 'Have you read your own shasters?' 'Certainly, I have,' he said. 'Well, will you be good enough, for the benefit of these people, who do not know the shasters, to quote one passage about God's honesty?' 'I will not,' he said. 'The fact is,' said I, 'you cannot; but if you cannot, I can; and if you won't, I will. I then quoted out of one of their shasters: 'God is honest; God is just; God is true,' 'Is that true?' I said. 'It is,' he said. 'Tell me Brahmin, was it honest for that great bull to go to these poor women, and take their rice, and sweetmeats, and fruits and vegetables, without paying for them?' The idea of a bull paying for anything never occurred to him. He had not a word to say. I said, 'Now, what are you going to do? You are the priest of the bull; are you going to pay the women for what the bull has stolen?' 'I am sure I will not.' 'Can you say, then, that this

* See "The Connexion of the East India Company's Government with the Superstitious Customs of the Natives of India." Hatchard, 1838.