

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN THE  
HALL OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, ON THURSDAY  
EVENING, 7th JANUARY, 1857.

His Honor Judge PARKER, President of the Society in the Chair.

The Proceedings of the Meeting were commenced by singing a part of the 67th Psalm, the immense audience joined heartily in it.

The President then made the following address :—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—I have no doubt I have the pleasure of addressing, on the present occasion, many who joined in the celebration of our last anniversary; and they will remember how we were congratulating ourselves on the peaceful times to which, at the close of the Russian war, we had apparently been brought, anticipating, justly, as it has since appeared, that the small cloud caused by the dispute with Persia would soon be dispersed; and we ventured to hope the East was gradually but surely opening to the blessings of Christianity, in a reign of peace. But in the providence of God it has been far otherwise ordered, though some months passed before we were roused by the terrible outbreak in India. It was, I think, in the very week of May in which our Parent Society was holding its annual meeting, that the wide-spread disaffection in the native army was first displayed in open rebellion at Meerut; though not until it had gathered strength in its progress did all its fiendish and most horrible cruelty and atrocity become developed. No one can read the accounts from India, without being struck with wonder and admiration at what has been performed by the arm of flesh, in the encounter of the fearful odds, to which our countrymen have been exposed; and blind must he be, who cannot discern the finger of God in the marvellous events that have occurred. The very last monthly report of the Bible Society contains this emphatic passage: "In the inscrutable providence of Almighty God, a new era now appears opening upon India. The fearful and criminal catastrophe which has spread such terror and cruel suffering through some of the fairest provinces, and which has filled the whole empire with consternation, has evidently impressed on the British public of all classes and religious denominations the conviction, that more must