

Our ancestors were such: will you therefore sign on "A" or "B" or both, and send them to the secretary."

Under A are seven rules of which the seventh is, "I shall study our own religious books if time allows," and the other six rules are simply moral in their character.

Under B they promise to observe their old religious rites. In the introductory article we find the following:—

"It grieves my heart to see the young generation rising up like the young savage, ignorant of their splendid and ancestral literature and philosophies, falling through the sheer neglect, indifference and blindness of their elders, a prey to specious materialism or perverted by the clever arts of the missionary cause into utter religious scepticism."

Another sentence:—"I admire the courage of some of your club boys who have stood up for the ancient faith against the ridicule of the missionaries."

"Again it is a matter of great regret that our country is so much overrun by the preacher of alien systems of religious doctrines and our countrymen are becoming perverted everyday, at least in their thoughts and ideas by alien systems of philosophies, when our own systems are being neglected mercilessly by a universal hatred towards them as full of superstitious views and unscientific principles."

"This apathy towards our philosophical system is no doubt owing to our country being ruled by foreigners whose alien and unscientific religious doctrines are being universally adopted by ignorant and easygoing persons who have not the power of diving deep into the mysteries of our own philosophy. I am of opinion that if they can once have a look into its unexplored wealth they will no longer praise and admire comparatively an insane and unsound thought of the philosophers of the west whose works are generally of lengthy discussions on merely trivial matters, and who have shewn their utter ignorance of matters spiritual by declaring mind and soul to be one and the same thing."

"It is perhaps not known to many that the Aryan Rishis of old are still living in their physical bodies and are influencing the minds of the modern Indian Yogees by an unknown and wonderful means."

The young men of Maschalipattan resolve to form themselves into an association because "their hearts were full of grief that their time-honored religion was needlessly reviled and slandered by the local Christian community."

These words may be of interest to the friends at Home as showing at least that Christianity has at last aroused to active opposition those who so long in professed contempt of the influence and power Christianity ignored it. Enquiry is of necessity forced upon numbers that a few years ago accepted unquestioningly the dictates of their religious teachers, and we know that all that is needed is honest enquiry to expose and to overthrow that religion that has so long ruled in this land. The appeal is now made largely to the Vedas but only because they are so largely unknown. They can no more stand the light of investigation than the Puranas. The absurdly filthy and degrading stories of their licentious drunken gods can never be excused or tolerated because of the few moral precepts found occasionally in them or the philosophical covering that is thrown around them.

It is not worth while noticing the statements made in this and other periodicals that are now covering this land. The leaders recognize the danger of their old faith and know what its overthrow means to them. The great mass of priests with their fat livings will have to seek for some other more difficult means of subsistence. The Brahmanical claims will of necessity be ignored. The Brahmanical and national pride therefore combine to uphold the system, and hence desperate efforts are being made to counteract the influence of the Christian missionaries. Their methods are in harmony with their past training in too many cases, but in spite of all their misrepresentations the result is that they are stirring up enquiry; bringing to light that which will not stand the light and so hastening the very end that they are seeking to avert.

As I to-day hear the filthy, disgusting songs and see the shameless, open, gross sensuality of the "Holi" it is hard for me to understand the brazen-faced impudence of those Hindoos who in Christian lands dare to palm off as Hinduism a product of their own imagination and the influence of Christianity, and it is almost as hard to understand how those who know and value Christian purity can be found to give the system any encouragement whatever. The "Holi" is a part of Hinduism directly encouraged by

their so-called sacred books and religious teachers, and no amount of philosophical casuistry can make it anything else. That, on the other hand taught by the Hindu apologists at the Parliament of Religions and elsewhere is not Hinduism either as practised to-day by the people or as described in their sacred books.

Only to-day some Hindoos from Holkar College asked the loan of my Magic Lantern slides, that they may get up some entertainments in the city so interesting that they may draw from the filthy scenes of the streets some of the city boys during the worst days of the "Holi"—Hindoos actually trying to save their companions from the degrading influences of Hinduism! Can we do less? The day is coming when its gods will be as much an object of derision as are to-day those of Greece and Rome. And even to-day in the face of the bold misrepresentations of it all lovers of truth and purity must speak out clearly that those who do not know may at least be led to enquire lest they be found in their ignorance to encourage that which their heart loathes. Let all true Christians have a care how they countenance those pious decoivers from Hindustan.

Yours faithfully,

J. WILKIE.

Wreck of Presbyterian Church, Suva, Fiji.

The first Sunday of 1895 promised to be one of the happiest in the history of the Church in Suva. At the morning service an exceptionally large number of new members, mostly young people, were admitted to communion. Everything connected with the service went well. At the close some of us were chatting about the state of things now compared with what they were seven years ago. Then there were about a dozen members, and £300 debt. Now the debt is paid off and there are fifty-six members. Little did we think that we had held our last service in the church.

There was a strong breeze in the morning, but the glass was not low, and no one suspected a hurricane, but in the afternoon during Sunday school the wind and rain increased to such an extent that we began to feel uneasy. Still the glass was not low. As the Sunday school prizes were to be given out many parents and friends were present. All got drenched going home.

By the time for evening service it was evident that we were going to have a storm. Only one person ventured out, and he lived just over the way. The wind steadily increased, but even at bed-time the glass indicated nothing very serious, so we turned in, but the noise was so great that sleep was out of the question. About midnight Mr. Duncan, who is staying with me in the manse, got up and had a look at the glass. It had gone down with a run. He came and roused me and we got on our clothes and prepared for the worst. Soon the house began to shake. The dining-room wall was assuming concave and convex shapes with alarming rapidity. One of the bedrooms looked as if it would go bodily. The galvanized iron on the roof was beginning to flap, a sure sign of the beginning of the end.

Every time we tapped the aneroid it went down till at last it reached 23.20. We felt sure the manse was going, and looked round for what we could save. I secured a Bible and some old sermons with which to make a fresh start, and had a last look at my library. We then put out the lights in case of fire when the house went over, and sat, each where he thought he was safest, waiting for the worst.

About half-past three, above all the din of the storm, a tremendous crash was heard, and we knew the church had gone. Mr. Duncan was one of the founders of the church. I have been minister for most of its history, so our feelings when we heard the crash need not be described. "And after the struggle we had to pay off the debt!" was all that was said.

At last the long-wished-for day began to dawn, and we could see how complete was the ruin. The church had not only fallen but was smashed to pieces. A large part of it was out on the road, and it was painfully evident that the building could not be put up again.

As day broke, the wind died away. We anxiously watched the glass, but it did not go up, so we knew we were in the centre of the hurricane, and that the wind would soon start with the same force from the opposite direction. We worked hard throwing ropes over the manse roof and tying down the verandah which was to be the next point of attack.

We had scarcely finished when about seven o'clock the wind set in, as we expected, from the N.W. We had done our best and could do no more, so we patiently waited the result. There was this comfort; we knew that, being in the centre, we would get the worst over at once, and the force of the wind would gradually diminish just as it had gradually increased during the previous half of the storm. If the manse stood another hour we knew it would outlast the storm. After a little suspense our minds were set at rest. The manse and what belongings we had were safe.

During the day we heard that the only church that escaped was the Roman Catholic one. The public houses too were all left uninjured. Many private houses were blown down, some people having to spend the whole night in the open air. The town looks as if it had been in possession of the victorious Japs for a few days. We expect when we get in reports from the country, to find that it will take the colony some years to recover from the effects of this blow.

WILLIAM GARDNER.

The Manse, Suva, Fiji.