

encouragers of devil ceremonies. To conceal their want of skill, they say to the people, "Ob, this sickness is caused by a certain demon; medicine alone cannot cure it, you must send for a devil-priest." Should the patient die, of course the demon is to be blamed, not the medical attendant. Some of the doctors, however, it must be allowed, oppose these ceremonies. In certain cases, it is pretended that evil spirits entering women cause them to dance publicly, and distort their bodies in various ways. This was very common at one time in the south of the island. A native practitioner, however, put a stop to it. There is a small species of pepper here which is very hot. He reduced some of it to powder, and blew it up the nostrils of some women who were possessed as before described. It occasioned such agony that they ran and plunged themselves in water, if possible to alleviate the pain. This was noised abroad; and a friend of mine, who resided for about ten years in that part of the country, did not see a single instance of women dancing during the whole time.

The devil-priests pretended to be able by repeating certain charms, to cause any person to fall down, blood gushing from his mouth and nose. When at the town on the island most noted for its devil-priests, I offered a reward to any charmer who would make me fall in this manner. Two of them came forward, but failed completely. A few months ago, we printed about 4000 copies of a challenge to all the devil-priests in the island, offering 300 dollars to any one who, on a certain fixed day, either at Colombo, Galle, Matara, or Kandy, the four principal towns, by means of charms, caused blood to flow from the mouth and nostrils of persons who denied their power. Not one devil-priest ventured the trial; and many of the people reproach them as a set of deceivers. A few of the most obstinate heathen, although forced to admit that the devil priests do not possess the power now, assert, that in ancient times, they were able to do such wonders. The question, however, is triumphantly asked, Why then did not the Ceylonese kings send clever charmers to destroy the Hindoos, when, a thousand years ago, they ravaged the island? Why, in like manner, were not the Portuguese and Dutch repulsed when they attacked the maritime districts?

The tract on Angels will help to remove the superstitious fears under which the Singhalese labor; it will point out that sickness is not caused by devils, but proceeds from a benevolent Father who "doth not afflict willingly the children of men;" it will urge them, instead of making offerings to demons for their removal, to humble themselves under the hand of God, and to use proper medicines; it will caution them against yielding to the temptations of Satan, yet encourage them by the thought that there are legions of blessed spirits

who delight to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation.

The subject of the second tract will be Pride. This evil disposition is universal, but it prevails exceedingly among the Singhalese. The language contains about a dozen pronouns of the second person which are used according to the rank of the individual addressed. The same feeling regulates nearly the whole of their social condition. It extends to religion on account of possessing what they affirm to be one of the "canina teeth of the holy, the blessed, the all perfect Buddha, the teacher of the three worlds;" they fancy their nation the envy of the whole earth. The tract will show the hatefulness of pride in the sight of God, and the beauty of humility. The third tract, "John the Ploughman," is translated from one of the publications of the "London Tract Society." It relates how he acquired a knowledge of reading; gives an account of his marriage, and the manner in which his children conducted themselves.

My next letter will probably contain an account of some Ceylon curiosities, which I hope will go to England by one of the ships now at Colombo. Copies of the Magazine will also be sent in the box.—Believe me, &c.

JOHN MURDOCH.

Noble Liberality.

Our readers have often received interesting accounts of the liberality of native Christians. The Report of the London Missionary Society for 1852 contains some new proofs of this. During the past year more than twelve thousand pounds have been raised for the support and spread of the gospel at the missionary stations. A large part of this is given by poor people, and not a little by the young. But the spirit with which many give is even more precious than the gifts themselves. The following anecdote will show this, and will, we hope, encourage many of our young friends who are active in raising, or generous in giving money, to persevere in this good work. It is given by the Rev. Charles Pitman, of Rarotonga, in a letter to the Directors:—

"Since our May Meetings, we have been very busy receiving the contributions of our poor people, who have exerted themselves to the very utmost; and this you will not doubt when you hear that in many, *very many instances*,