

daily, even hourly, with complimentary salvos of artillery to Governor-General, Duke, Commander-in-Chief, Governors of Provinces, and the thousand-and-one of our feudatory native Princes who have flocked together to welcome the Duke and display their loyalty; and I wish to say a few words about all this *tamasha*.

(1). A few words about the Doorga Poojah holidays. They are all to us that the Christmas holidays are to England, and the New Year to Scotland, and far more. In Europe and America, holidays, no doubt, are enjoyable, and an "institution" to be patronized; but here they are necessary. In the former places they come as relaxation—here, as life; there, as affording opportunities for unbending from labor,—here, for filling the lungs once in the year with cool air, and rendering future labor not only pleasant but possible; there, Christmas and New Year come in the midst of cold and bracing weather, and subserve the purposes of jollity even more than health,—here, the Doorga Poojah comes just about the close of the worst season of the year, the hot, damp, stewy "wet season," and enables all to escape for a fortnight or three weeks out of the Plains to the Coast or Hills, and to return again, not to be again prostrated and all sap to be again stewed out of them, but to find that their absence has been the elbow-joint of the season, and that the cool weather, with fresh breezes and pleasant mornings and evenings, has taken the place of the everlasting steam and vapour bath of July, August and September. Truly Mrs. Doorga, as a heathen deity, is by no means a respectable acquaintance; but as the occasion, if not the cause, of these holidays, she deserves the gratitude of every Sahib from Comorin to the Himalayas. Her's is the great festival, lasting longer, and celebrated with more prodigality and display, than that of any other idol. Government took advantage of this, and of its happening just at the season of the year when every one of us in the Plains is completely "done up," to convert it into the *long* holidays of the year. Besides this, we keep as close holidays not only such holidays as Christmas, New Year, Easter, &c. but also something like a dozen of the chief Hindoo festivals. Indeed, in all warm countries, a multiplicity of holidays arises from the necessity of human nature and circumstances. Men *need* them, and in the course of time they will have them; and if they do not commemorate great national or political events, they will soon come to commemorate real or fancied religious ones. Instead of endeavoring to crush this necessity, it would be well for wise men to endeavor to give people worthy events to remember, and to teach them how to remember them in a worthy manner. It may seem strange that a Christian government should legalise heathen festivals, but remember, (1) the people *would* have them, let Government do as it pleased; (2) the people *needed* them, and as they would not accept Christian ones, wisdom decreed to let them have what they wished till a higher inner life warranted a higher outward form; (3) Government has always gone on the "conciliation" policy, according to which the utmost claims of heathenism have been readily admitted,—its rights, even according to its own pretensions, vindicated,—and the advance of Religion secured, not by legislative assistance, frequently even not by legislative *justice*, but by its own inherent superiority, and by the operation of that Law according to which Darkness as a negative must fly before Light as a positive.

But even as a matter of policy this recognition of Doorga might be justified. The educated natives now speak of and regard the "holidays" far more than the "festival." They long for the former; they laugh at the latter. True, many families even of the wealthy and educated still keep up the Poojah, still celebrate the worship at enormous expense and with an infinity of tinsel display; but this comes from an utter want of faith in anything real and true, an utter want of conviction, on the one side, and a fondness for old customs, and the regard of the masses on the other, and not from any belief in the existence of the goddess or the reality of her worship. As *conscience* is being developed in the Bengalis, they are more and more beginning to protest against