

of society, who would find it difficult to tell, in so many words, what religion is, what its great aim and object! Even the same individuals at different times, do not always entertain the same conceptions of it. There are many good, honest, respectable people, who can manage their own affairs very well, who are shrewd and calculating enough in their ordinary business—men who attend church and are fond of hearing the Gospel preached, to whom it mayhap never occurred to enquire of themselves—what do I propose to myself by following after religion? what do I aim at by obeying its ordinances? what is it I am to expect from it? what can it do for me?

Now, it is this quiet, irresolute, un-questioning spirit which has begotten one half of the superstition that exists in the world; for once religion becomes dissociated from good sense and sound reason. (which it is ever apt to do from the interested designs of wicked men who usurp the prerogative of teaching it) then there is an end to any correct understanding of its purport and design. Men ask for bread, and receive a stone. Not being able to make anything of the stone, after sundry abortive efforts they give the thing up in despair, and to save themselves any further trouble, they leave the whole matter in the hands of their spiritual guides or teachers. Such being the case it is easy to perceive that from the corrupt nature of man, false views of religion, its nature and objects, are far more likely to prevail in the world than the true ones; and that consequently false teachers will by the great majority of mankind, be more readily welcomed than the propagators of the truth. Even in our Lord's time, and under His divine ministrations, the nation of the Jews were more guided and controlled in their notions of sacred things by the Scribes and Pharisees than by the Saviour himself; multitudes it is true followed him continually because of the wonders which he performed, but how few believed in him compared with the numbers that believed in the Jewish Doctors and Rabbis? And as it was with the Master, so it has been and ever will be with all his faithful servants, who truthfully proclaim his Gospel. Men will in general be more disposed to follow imposters than to follow them. This we say is more in harmony with facts and the often repeated declarations of scripture. "I am come in my Father's name and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name him ye will receive!" Such then being the strong tendency to swerve from the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus—which having the salvation of man for its object, at once answers the all important questions What is religion? What can religion do for me?—we are naturally prepared to meet with systems which altogether ignore such rational investigations, enveloping all alike in an impenetrable haze of mystery.

Such is the Spiritualism of the present day, including all the rapping and tapping, quaking and shaking to which it gives rise. But here we must pause and reflect a little. It may be, after all, that the Christian Church herself is very much to blame for this departure from her ancient simplicity. It may be that too many of her members are standing idle at their posts and neglecting the mighty assistances which are promised them in forwarding the good work, both within and without. It may be that a false spiritualism has sprung up around us to chide the professors of Christianity for the absence of the true. In harmony with the remarks now made, we conclude with the following quotation from Dr. Wilkinson, an able and eloquent writer, on "The Human Body and its connexion with Man:"

"As we read the Gospel, we see how the Divine Man was also the great Physician; how he went about healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people; and how as many as touched the hem of his garments were made whole, every one. He also commanded his followers to do the like, and founded cure as the grand evidence of the Christian religion.—His proofs of his mission were sound bodies; the deaf hearing; the dumb speaking; lepers cleansed; the dead raised; those who before were blind now they see. The channel of this was no learned science, but a simple command in His name who has all the power in heaven and on earth. Where is the lineal priesthood of this great restoration? Where are the claimants for this substantial apostolic successorship? where are the layers on of hands who give man to himself, casting out his devils, and increase the prime wealth of the earth as the sign and seal of the advent of the kingdom of heaven? Where is the clergy to whom sickness makes its last appeal for health, when doctors have pronounced the death words, No hope? We find them among the fishermen of the first century, but not among the prelates of the nineteenth: in mean-clad Peter and Paul, James and John, but not under the lawn of any right reverend bench. Our pontiffs say that the age of miracles is past; but no New Testament ever told them so; Christianity, as we read it, was the institution of miracle as in the order of nature; and if the age of miracles is gone, it is because the age of Christianity is gone. The age of mathematics would be past, if no man cultivated them. On the other hand we aver, by all our honesty to our faith, that for every reason we can perceive, a duty is neglected here which is the main cause of irreligion and skepticism among men. As in the sciences, which are the kings of these late days, let this mode and matter of healing be fairly experimented. It belongs to the priesthood. Let them turn it into the inclemencies of society, and try their excommunications against the storm of physical evil that exasperates the nations to their core. Let them put on the proofs of the apostolic power. Let them peril all in this great attempt. Let the weak excuse of this age of virtue being past, be exchanged for a godly resolve to bring it back again. If they fail, it will be because they are not christian, or else because Christianity cannot bide its own proofs. If they succeed there will be no need of missionaries any more, but mankind will sit in a right mind under them, and bless their privilege, and their Master's name.

The Indian Mission of the Church of Scotland.

The following is a full and correct report of the admirable speech of the Rev. Dr. McCulloch, of Greenock, at the recent meeting in

Glasgow, on behalf of the Indian Mission of the Church—an address well worthy of the best consideration of every true friend to the cause of Indian Evangelisation.

The Rev. Dr. McCulloch said—The resolution which I have the honor to propose is, "That the plan of operations originally formed and hitherto followed by the India Mission of the Church of Scotland is well adapted, if earnestly prosecuted and sufficiently extended, to lend effectual aid in the grand Christian enterprise of turning the natives of India from the worship of idols to the service of the living and true God." Now, in order to commend this resolution to your adoption, need I do more than remind you, in a few sentences, of the distinctive character of the plan of operations referred to. The India Mission of the Church of Scotland was projected about thirty-four years ago, its sole and undisputed author being the late Dr. Inglis of Edinburgh. After long meditating the project in secret, that eminent man brought it before the assembled Church, and, what is perhaps unprecedented in the history of similar undertakings, though he knew comparatively little of the Hindoo character and worship, and had to trust for guidance almost exclusively to his own comprehensive acquaintance with human nature and with the Gospel, yet he was able to mature and perfect at the very outset a scheme which experience has proved to be the wisest ever devised for sapping Indian idolatry, and preparing the Hindoo mind for the reception of Christian truth. Though it was reserved to that ablest of living missionaries, Dr. Duff, to be the first to carry the plan into actual operation, yet, singular to say, the grand principles and leading applications of the scheme were fully developed by Dr. Inglis himself from the first. Nothing required to be added; nothing to be taken away. Like the fabled Minerva from the head of Olympian Jove, it sprang forth from its author's mind—full formed, full armed—a finished monument of his intuitive sagacity and Christian wisdom. But what is the distinctive feature of the scheme? It is the prominence assigned to the Christian and intellectual education of the native youth as an engine for the eventual conversion of India. The grand mistake in all preceding missionary operations in India was that they were limited to the work of preaching to adults, and undertaken with an express view to immediate fruits. Their projectors were, too, like the man who tries to produce a ready-made garden or pleasure-ground by planting it with full-grown trees. They forgot the example set them by our Lord and his Apostles, of imparting religious knowledge first to men prepared for it, and then to men unprepared—first to the Jews, then to Jewish proselytes, and only after that to the idolatrous Gentiles; they forgot that even in countries already Christian, you can do little towards the conversion of most men, unless you begin with them when they are young; they forgot, in short, the law of Christ's House, that "one generation soweth and another reapeth;" and, in forgetfulness of these principles and precepts, they hoped to be able, simply by the preaching of their missionaries, to overthrow the idolatry of India wholesale, and at a bound. But the Church of Scotland was happily led to frame its missionary scheme with an express regard to prospective rather than immediate results, and to make the rising rather than the risen generation the object of its first and principal care. It was held by Dr. Inglis that no great or speedy impression could be made on the idolatrous Hindoos by Scottish missionaries standing