

the ready remembrance of their lessons from the Shorter Catechism has furnished suitable subjects of self-examination and soothing meditation in their solitary hours, and on their beds of languishing.

THE SHORTER CATECHISM—ITS HISTORY.

We recently published a Lecture, which set forth in earnest and forcible terms the advantages derivable from the use of the Shorter Catechism, and we now, in continuation of the subject, give insertion to a sketch of the history of that valuable book, which has been compiled for us by a correspondent from the writings of Brewster, and from Hetherington's History of the Westminster Assembly, though chiefly from the former. We conceive we are doing our readers a service in placing before them information of the nature contained in the ensuing sketch, as many of them probably have not opportunities of access to it elsewhere:

MISCELLANEOUS.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—In consequence of some dissatisfaction respecting the operations of this Society, a Committee was appointed, some months since, "to inquire whether any modification of its administration be practicable, which may promote the stronger attachment of its constituents, or increase its efficacy." The investigations of this Committee were particular, and occupied two days. In the result which has just been published, they say it is but an act of justice to place upon record the following resolution:—"That this meeting cannot separate without expressing its deep conviction, as the result of the present investigation, of the integrity and efficiency of the Directors and Officers of the Society generally, and especially of the Rev. Arthur Tidman, their honoured and invaluable Foreign Secretary. Thomas Raffles, CHAIRMAN.

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.—The January number of the *Missionary Herald* contains the usual annual summary of what is doing by this important Society. We have only room for the concluding paragraphs.

From the foregoing survey it will be seen that the Board has under its care twenty-five missions, embracing one hundred and three stations, one hundred and fifty-eight ordained missionaries, nine of them being also physicians, five licensed preachers, seven physicians not ordained, twenty-four other male and two hundred and eight female assistant missionaries; making four hundred and two labourers who have been sent forth from this country. Associated with these are thirty native preachers, and one hundred other native helpers; consequently the whole number of persons in connection with the missions is five hundred and thirty-two.

The number of churches, organized and watched over by these different missions, is eighty-seven; and one thousand nine hundred and thirty-nine hopeful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ have been reported, within the last year, as having been received into Christian fellowship; making the present number of communicants twenty-five thousand six hundred and fifty-seven.

The educational department embraces seven seminaries for the training of native preachers, in which there are three hundred and forty-nine scholars; twenty-four other boarding-schools, in which there are seven hundred and twenty-six pupils; also three hundred and five free-schools, in which nine thousand three hundred and fifty-five children and youth are taught, making the

whole number, directly or indirectly under the instruction of missionaries, ten thousand four hundred and thirty. The common schools at the Sandwich Islands, as they are wholly supported by the natives, are not included in this estimate; though they owe their existence to the Board, and are still dependent for their prosperity and success upon the co-operation of the missionaries.

The present number of printing establishments is twelve; connected with which there are seven type and stereotype foundries, and fonts of type for printing in nearly thirty languages. During the past year 36,061,118 pages are reported as having been printed, making the whole number of pages, from the commencement of the missions, 752,542,318.

THE SIKHS—A Religious Tract and Book Society has been formed at Agra in India, for the purpose of giving the Gospel to the Sikhs. This is a noble enterprise, and it is cheering to see British Christians following so rapidly with the blessings of religion in the footsteps of British conquest.

DIOCESE OF PRINCE RUPERT'S LAND.—Bishop Anderson, late incumbent of All Saints, Derby, after a quick passage arrived at York, Hudson's Bay, in health and safety.

The death of the Rev. E. Bickersteth, an eminently evangelical clergyman of the Church of England, and the author of several devotional and other works of high reputation, took place on the 28th February. He was rector of Wotton, in Hertfordshire, a prominent member of the low Church party, and a gentleman of a most Catholic spirit.

THE GORHAM CASE.—This important case, in which the Rev. Mr. Gorham was the appellant against the Bishop of Exeter, backed by a decision of the Ecclesiastical Law Court, has been decided by the Privy Council in favour of Mr. Gorham. The Bishop would not install Mr. Gorham, because he did not believe in Baptismal Regeneration. The Privy Council have decided, with the exception of one vote (Mr. Knight Bruce), that the Church has admitted those who believe in that doctrine and those who do not, and that Mr. Gorham should be installed.

WESLEYANS IN FRANCE.—The Wesleyan Methodists have, in France, chapels, 48; preaching places, 78; missionaries, 24; Sabbath school teachers, 115; local preachers, 39; full members, 950; Sabbath school scholars, 1,099; attendants on public worship, 6,160.

NINEVEH DISCOVERIES.—Very late and highly satisfactory accounts have within these few days been received from Mr Layard, in Assyria, giving intelligence of new and important discoveries in the Nimroud mound. He has made fresh and extensive excavations in parts of the eminence not yet explored, and the result has been the finding of nothing less than the throne upon which the monarch, reigning about 3000 years ago, sat in his splendid palace. It is composed of metal and of ivory, the metal being richly wrought, and the ivory beautifully carved. It does not appear in what part of the edifice this discovery has been made; but it seems that the throne was separated from the state apartments by means of a large curtain, the rings by which it was drawn and undrawn having been preserved. At the date of his advices (the beginning of last month) Mr Layard was pursuing his researches with renewed ardour in consequence of the astonishing success that has hitherto attended his exertions. No human remains have come to light, and every thing indicates the destruction of the palace by fire. It is said that the throne has been partially fused by the heat.

DR GUTZLAFF, THE CHINESE INTERPRETER.—Dr Gutzlaff is about to visit Europe after an absence of twenty-three years. That long term has been passed in China, or among the Chinese. Perhaps no foreigner of the age has more thoroughly identified himself with the people; their literature, religion, government, history, and social and domestic habits, have been investigated by a mind which finds pleasure in study. Even

in personal appearance the learned gentleman has in a degree become Chinese. We have heard it asserted in North America, that Europeans who live for years among the Indians acquire their expression of countenance, especially a peculiar cast of the eye, which no Indian is without. Sir Henry Pottinger went to the East when a mere lad; he resided for many years at native courts as a political agent of the government, and no person who has seen him will forget his Oriental countenance. Similar influences among a different people may have had the same effect on Dr. Gutzlaff.—*Friend of China.*

THOMAS DICK, L.L. D.—The Secretary of a Society in London that occasionally assists authors of repute has sent a bank draft for fifty guineas for the venerable Doctor's acceptance.—*Scotsman.*

DR ACHILLI.—A public meeting was held on the 7th March at the Exeter Hall to welcome Dr Achilli's return. The great Hall was crowded densely.

Mr. Bevan took the chair. The Rev. Baptist Noel, John Burns, and a crowd of eminent clergymen were on the platform.

Dr. Achilli addressed the meeting in the Italian language, and eloquently described the consolation he had derived from the Bible during his imprisonment. He had sacrificed everything for the cause and was ready to meet death for its sake.

A liberal collection was made, and the proceedings lasted a considerable time.

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES, LONDON.—A very curious paper was read on Thursday night, in connection with the exhibition of Major Rawlinson's Assyrian Antiquities, on the preceding Thursday. It was by the secretary Mr. Akerman, and related to Baal or Bel, whose supposed statue, discovered near Babylon, had been produced. The object was to show that Baal or Bel was not a name, but a designation or epithet formerly applied to the tutelary deity of every important city. After the reading was concluded, notice was given from the chair that Major Rawlinson had kindly promised Lord Mahon to attend again on Thursday next with his original paper casts of cuneiform inscriptions from Assyria. This announcement gave the highest satisfaction, and was received with much applause. It is supposed that Major Rawlinson will enter into some explanation of his mode of reading this not only dead, but extinct, language.—*Morning Chronicle.*

THE CATECHISM IN ARABIC.—An Arabic translation of the Shorter Catechism has been found of essential service by the missionaries in Syria in instructing and evangelizing the young.

DEGREES.—The Senatus of St. Andrews' University has unanimously conferred the degree of D.D. on the Rev. Wm. Ritchie, parish minister of Longforgan, Presbytery of Dundee; also on the Rev. N. M'Michael, Dunfermline, and Rev. John Eadie, L.L.D., Glasgow, Professor in the United Presbyterian Church. The degree of L.L.D. was conferred on Dr. Eadie, by the Glasgow University, about two years ago.

The Senate of the University of Glasgow has conferred the degree of L.L.D. on Mr Patrick M'Kindlay, one of the Classical Masters in the High School of Glasgow; and on the Rev. James Cumming, Rector of the Glasgow Academy.

The Senatus of Marischal College and University has conferred the degree of D.D. on the Rev. James Foote, minister of the Free East Church, Aberdeen, and the Rev. James Bisset, minister of Bourtie, Alumni of the University; and on the Rev. Arthur Tidman, foreign secretary to the London Missionary Society.

The Senatus Academicus of King's College, Aberdeen, has conferred the degree of L.L.D. upon E. R. Humphreys, Esq., M.A. of Merchiston Castle, formerly secretary of the Government Board of Education, Prince Edward Island. The University of Edinburgh had previously conferred the honorary degree of M.A. on the same gentleman.