

which, during his long history of stormy times he had to pass, must have been most irksome to him. The sturdy, uncompromising nature of Bishop Strachan adapted him for dealing with the times, in a manner without gloves, but the gentler nature of his constant upholder and subsequent successor seemed ill adapted for such a deplorable, however unavoidable, arena. Nor did this cease with the death of the older bishop. It happened that the Episcopate of Bishop Bethune was marked with many unseemly scenes of party strife, from which his gentle disposition continually shrank. They were the days of the Church Association, which was disbanded only on the election of his successor, and of men of strong feelings and even of aggressiveness in the opposite direction. Many can recall the thin, wan, anxious face of the frail Bishop when presiding over the Synod at such times, and though perhaps a firmer man might not have accomplished more good, yet some stronger control at times seemed necessary. It is certain that the period of his episcopate was a difficult one and one when no living man could possibly please all parties,—but in the midst of all, the learning, the incessant toil, the holy and gentle life of the second Bishop of Toronto are prominent and are strong and decided features of his memory.

THE REV. A. C. Laughlin, in a communication to the *Bombay Diocesan Record* says: "The districts round Kohlapur have been little visited. In those towns and villages which members of our Mission had formerly visited we were often asked why so long a while had elapsed since the last visit, thus indirectly showing that a spirit, if not of enquiry, certainly of interest, is abroad. Indeed this was the more noticeable from the increased rancour with which we were attacked. Christianity may now be suspected of being a formidable rival. It was noticeable how the more educated Brahmins, who have been brought into contact with Westerns seem to be somewhat ashamed of their religious puja and speak of it apologetically. One often wonders how much of their religion is real. They disclaim any intention of worshipping stocks and stones, and it is almost inconceivable that any person credited with even elementary ideas of right and wrong, can deem the deities in the Hindu Pantheon to be at all worthy of regard, let alone admiration and worship. There seems to be, however, a hideous gap, a something lacking,—in that Kondus seem to be utterly devoid of the sense of sin, how heinous it is in itself. Consequently the myth that such and such a god did such an atrocity not only sanctifies the deed, but apparently the very awfulness of the deed redounds to the doer's credit. One of the hardest things we found to bring home to our hearers' minds was the very sense of sin. Generally the idea that a bad or illegal action was sinful (as we understand it) was scouted entirely, or else was deemed condonable on account of associations. If ever the cry from Macedon sounded, it is now, and that from our Kolhapur districts.

BETHLEHEM.

BETHLEHEM, the birth-place of Christ, and the place of so many sacred associations appears suddenly to the view of the traveller approaching it along one of the mountain roads. At first sight it appears to be a long, irregular, rather straggling line of white eastern buildings on the summit of a hill thickly covered with trees. One cannot help being thrilled by the sight, especially on a clear day when the sun in the blue vault of heaven shines full on the city and its surroundings.

What great numbers of sacred memories crowd upon the mind as one gazes at the city-crested hill! Hither came Ruth, in her generous attachment to Naomi, and somewhere near she gleaned in the fields of Boaz. In the mountain fastnesses close by, young David fed his father's sheep, and hence he went down, the ruddy shepherd boy to that unexpected and victorious contest with the Philistine giant.

Among the prominent features of modern Bethlehem is the Church of the Nativity, which is a huge, shapeless pile of masonry, with three convents, Latin, Greek and Armenian, abutting from it. The central part was built by Helena in A. D. 327, and is very interesting, both because it has within it the spot where tradition says the birth of Christ took place, and because it is the oldest Christian Church now existing. In the chapel of this centre part there is the grotto of the Nativity, a low vault covered with Italian marble and profusely decorated with embroidery, hanging lamps, etc. On the east side under an alcove is a large silver star set in a marble slab, around which are the words: *Hic, de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est*,—"Here of the Virgin Mary Jesus Christ was born."

But all these are forgotten as one thinks that it was to this place the Magi came, guided by the star, to offer their precious gifts at the manger-cradle of the babe that was God incarnate.

Just where this wonderful star first appeared is not told us, but we first behold it moving through the heavens, followed by the wondering wise men of the East, till it stands above the little town of Bethlehem. Here it passes from our vision—but not to set in darkness. Never since its dazzling brightness first astonished the Magi, has it paused in its heavenly mission. See how it travels on, shedding its wonderful brilliancy first through all Palestine and then through Asia. How it passes over the sea to the proud old city of Rome, steeped in sin and idolatry giving its pure light and guidance to many. And then it journeys to the British Isles, and countless multitudes are greeting to-day its returning radiancy. On and on it goes travelling from continent to continent, island to island. And thus it will continue to travel till earth's remotest region shall ask, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship Him?"