

The Bazaar.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—ACTS xvii. 11.

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REPLY,

BY THE

RIGHT REVEREND DANIEL WILSON, D. D.,
LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA,

TO AN ADDRESS

Presented to him at a General Meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, held on Wednesday July 23, 1845, His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, President, in the Chair.

"My Lord Archbishop,—I beg to tender to your Grace, and this venerable Society, my most humble acknowledgments for this affectionate address of congratulation, of which I am very undeserving. I accept it as a token of the regard you feel for the sacred office which I fill.

"I ascribe it to God's great mercy that I was not compelled to resort to my native land, even for a season, till I had entered the fourteenth year of my consecration; and that my health is already so much restored by the voyage home, and one month's residence in England, that I have some prospect, if I can keep quiet, of being able to return next year to India, and to close my days in my diocese.

"I most humbly thank his Grace for the uniform kindness and condescension which he has shown me during the whole course of my Indian residence, and for his prompt and important advice and direction under the various difficulties I have had to encounter.

"I beg also to thank the Lord Bishop of London, and the venerable Society, for the measure of confidence they have reposed in me; and I would especially make my acknowledgments for the noble grant of £5,000, for founding a native canonry in St. Paul's Cathedral, in Calcutta.

"My ardent attachment to this great institution, has not been of late growth. I have been a member of it from the year 1801, and have never ceased to follow its proceedings with affectionate interest. This interest has been heightened since my return to England by the perusal of the various publications and Reports issued during the last few years; especially by the touching and masterly account of the Tinnevely Mission, by Archdeacon Robinson. I consider the Society more than ever a mighty instrument, based on the footing of our National Church, for the glory of the Lord Christ—liable of course to occasional fluctuations in the measure of its zeal, wisdom, and success, as all great and wide-spread institutions in this dark and miserable world of sin and imperfection are—but having in it the elements of unlimited spiritual good, and placed now, by the mercy of Christ, in a most momentous and hopeful position for the diffusion of Christianity in our destitute colonies; and for the conversion of the Heathen world.

"I will enter, however, on the unbounded field for its exertions in the British colonies; though I feel the greatest difficulty in abstaining, in consequence of the most affecting and striking reports of the various bishops—now, thank God, multiplied by the Additional Colonial Bishops' Fund, a measure which was hailed in India with delight and astonishment. I will confine myself to the account which his Grace and this Meeting will expect from me of the general state of the dioceses which are entrusted in different degrees to my care, especially as connected with their Indian Missions; and to some details of the difficulties, both in the dioceses generally, and in the Missions, on which I need their advice and aid; though even this will, I fear, occupy more time than his Grace may be well able to afford me.

"And first I may truly say, that 'the fields' in India are 'white already for the harvest.' Nothing has, I believe, been seen like it since the days of the apostolic Swartz and perhaps not then, nor anything approaching it. An outburst of the native mind seems at hand. The diffusion of education, the striking benefits of European medical science, the openings of an exhaustless commerce on all hands, the scarcely ascertained riches of the soil, the extent and magnificence of the rivers and mines, the superb harbours indenting its almost interminable coasts, the rapid increase of settlers from Great Britain and America, the security of person and property under the British rule, the unswerving purity of jurisprudence, the number of offices thrown open to native merit, the railroads contemplated and almost begun, and the incredible rapidity of communication by steam, uniting the whole world, as it were, into one vast family; are bringing on a crisis in the native mind most favourable to the introduction of Christianity.

"Hindooism, it is my firm belief, will soon altogether hide its head. The crescent of Mahomet has already turned pale. Worn out and effete superstitions, they are sinking before the mere progress of science and civilization, before the startling knowledge of history, the lights of chronological learning, and the laws of evidence. It is the duty, then, of this and other Societies to stand on their watch, and be ready to fill up the void thus created in the native mind, with the blessings of the revelation of Christ; and thus to enable the sagacious Hindoo to judge of the contrast between the purity, benevolence, and grace of the holy Jesus and his glorious Gospel, and the inconceivable craft, cruelty, and wickedness of Krishna and Mahomet, with their debasing schemes of morals. The question as to the true religion will then be virtually settled.

"God has been also pleased at this moment to interpose with his providence, and grace by throwing wide open the gates of China, and gathering 'multitudes' into Christ in India, of 'such as shall, we hope, be saved.' This Society, then, and other kindred institutions, especially the Church Mission-

ary Society, now happily under his Grace's patronage, are called on for redoubled exertions. So far from slackening their efforts on account of embarrassments as to funds, or defects, as some may deem them, in matters of external order, or even, partial disagreements on points of doctrine, we ought to press forward with the greater earnestness to discover and amend what may really need correction, to sink subordinate differences, and to unite all hearts and hands in assailing the tottering strong holds of Satan, relying on the power and grace of Christ. 'He that obsevereth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.'

"You are good enough to refer, with far too much indulgence, to my labours in India. I can say but little. God knows my unnumbered errors and defects. I have endeavoured, however, to follow up the measures of my venerated predecessors now with God, by first restoring and animating Christianity in all its mighty doctrines and grace amongst our professed Christian flocks, and then in aiding, with my whole heart and soul, the heavenly cause of Christian Missions. In doing this I have aimed at acting with the general body of our Church at home, under the directions of his Grace the Primate, and seeking for remedies for existing evils in the unity of that Church, waiting upon God in patience and prayer for his blessing.

"And I may venture to assure this Society that the progress of religious principle in India during the thirty-one or thirty-two years since the erection of the see, is almost incredible. The character of the clergy has been raised; a mild Episcopal Church discipline has been effectually established; the disposition of our Indian rulers towards Christianity has been rendered more favourable; the moral and religious conduct of the servants of the Honourable Company has become purer; the institution of holy matrimony far more honoured; the Lord's-day better sanctified; the number of chaplains and missionaries increased ten-fold; churches multiplied, perhaps, twenty-fold; the general esteem for the pious and consistent ministers and missionaries of Christ is higher; the attendance on public worship more numerous and punctual; and the reverence for the old-established and scriptural liturgy, offices, and usages of our Protestant Church, as laid down by our first Reformers, more enlightened and influential."

"[At this part of the reply, the Bishop adverted in terms of affectionate remembrance to the succession of Prelates who have filled the See since its creation—Synods of the Clergy, of semi-official character, held monthly since the year 1832—the question of caste among native converts—regulations with the Church Missionary Society—visits to the missions round Calcutta—directions to prevent our Missionaries' proselyting from other Protestant bodies—circulating explanatory details—Calcutta Vestry—ecclesiastical districts—fees—church-building—Additional Clergy Society—Visitations—Ordinations—Confirmations. The reply then proceeds:—]

"I need scarcely say, that I have laboured during the course of all these proceedings, to lay firmly the foundation which St. Paul, that 'wise master-builder,' declares to be the only 'sure one,'—Jesus Christ, and him crucified; in all the amplitude of that sublime expression, including its objective realities of the ever adorable Tri-unity of equal persons in the Godhead; the incarnation of the Eternal Word; the merit of his infinite sacrifice, and the penitent sinner's justification therein before the tribunal of God, by faith only; and also its subjective truths, in the sanctifying operations of God the Holy Ghost upon the understanding, affections, and life of fallen man. Nor need I say, that I have added to this substance of the 'glorious Gospel,' a diligent inculcation of the great importance of the sacraments, and other means of grace, and of all the decencies and order of our Episcopal Protestant Church, as settled by Cranmer, Ridley, and Jewell, vindicated by the judicious Hooker, and generally received and approved at home by the archbishops, bishops, and clergy, for a century and a-half, up to 1832.

"I have constantly resisted, wakefully and firmly, to the utmost of my power, the arts and chicanery of the apostate and idolatrous Church of Rome, propagated by her nuns, and monks, and tutors, and priests, and Jesuits, and religious books, and by her schismatical bishops and vicars-general: for schismatical I account them in the canonical diocese of Calcutta.

"I have also condemned, as known, from the first, both publicly and privately, the whole system, which I have ever considered, and which is now allowed to be, a kind of semi-Popery; and have stood immovably on the doctrines, polity, and usages of our Church, in their plain and natural import, as prevailing in England when I left it thirteen years since.

Jesus Christ. I have already nominated, provisionally, the first six canons, who will have the power of electing their successors immediately after my death, if any of them should be unable then to join their appointments themselves. The nominations are to be made by myself during my natural life. I thus hope to secure a devout chapter of suitable persons for ages to come. One of those appointed in this view is the Rev. Krishna Mohun Banerjee, who was educated, as were three of the others, at Bishop's College. These are all, as I firmly believe, enlightened and pious missionaries, free from distorted views, and full of a true love for Christ and the souls of the Heathen. I hope also to be able to take out with me an European Canon, well accustomed to schools and the training of masters, so that we may begin the Mission at once with a native school of 1,000 boys. The canons' house will soon be commenced, and the other works will proceed as we obtain funds—for we find we may still require 5,000*l.* or so, to complete them.

"Such are the measures which have occupied my chief solicitude, and which it does not become me to have mentioned; but you have compelled me. To God alone be the glory in Christ Jesus.

"You ask my opinion in your address, on the 'present appearances of our Missions, and especially of the encouraging events in the south of India.' I reply, without a moment's hesitation, that the power of the Divine grace seems to me to have been so sudden and mighty in its operations in Tinnevely and its neighbourhood, as to strike with wonder every mind susceptible of religious impressions. No doubt much caution must be used, not to decide too early upon the most favourable prospects, and large deductions made; but he that can read unmoved the Bishop of Madras's cries for help, or the touching and truth-bearing simplicity of the letters of the devoted missionaries, Pope, Caldwell, and Cameron—to say nothing of other names—must be utterly inaccessible to the sacred cause of Christ.

"I rejoice to hear that you are despatching two excellent missionaries to strengthen the fainting hearts of these holy labourers, who are indeed 'bearing the burden and heat of the day.'

"I am much confirmed in my hope of the infinitely important consequences of this awakening of souls at Tinnevely, because it appears precisely to resemble that at Krishnagur, under the Church Missionary Society, which began six or seven years since. The work is 'one'; but in Tinnevely 'the word of the Lord runs' as it were, and is 'glorified' more rapidly and to a far wider extent—the inquirers and converts of this Society and the Church Missionary, amounting to about 35,000 altogether. Such awakenings have not often been surpassed since the days of the Apostles; and there seems every prospect of all the south of India, containing millions of souls, becoming, ere long, the Lord's.

"Your Mission at Cawnpore is in its infancy only; but the publication No. 4 in your series, speaks for itself as to the spirit of the missionary, and the openings for usefulness. I will say nothing, therefore, of the simple piety there prevailing. I have to thank the Society for the Rev. Mr. Schleicher, sent out about two years since, and now labouring at Cawnpore. The transfer of the location of the Mission to the very heart of the native population, will rescue it from Cantonment embarrassments, and concentrate its proceedings amongst the 500,000 souls of the native town and neighbourhood.

"The prospects of Howra, Barypore, and Jhanjera, around Calcutta, are, I am concerned to say, not so bright as I could wish. In the year 1838 I was able to speak most strongly of my hopes; and I still feel much encouraged. The last Reports gave the number of converts and catechumens as 2,877 in sixty-four villages, of whom 676 are communicants. But Missions vary in point of simplicity and efficiency. Nothing so soon fades as the real missionary spirit; and 'nothing is so graceless as a Mission without the presence of Christ,' as Górickó somewhere observes. The Society must expect these disappointments. They occur, and have ever occurred, in all Christian Missions. I shall advert presently to some of the causes of the depression which seems to me to prevail in the Mission-work in this quarter. In the meantime it will, I doubt not, be interesting to his Grace to hear an extract from a letter received last evening (July 22*l.*), from the Venerable Archdeacon of Calcutta.—On the 6th of May, he says, 'I went to the opening of Barypore church. It is the most beautiful Mission church that has yet been raised, (to which I may just add that this Society contributed 1,000*l.*); a Gothic building, the Archdeacon proceeds to say, 'with clerestory and tower, and capable of holding 700 or 800 persons. We had a good muster of clergy present from Calcutta. I delivered an address by an interpreter; and the Rev. Mr. Driberg (the missionary) gave them a discourse in Bengalee, in which he appeared to put his whole heart. There were about 600 natives present. It was really a thrilling spectacle to see the earnestness with which they entered into the services, and the hearty manner in which they gave the responses in our admirable Liturgy; and then upwards of 200 at the holy Sacrament afterwards. Truly it was a day to be remembered.' Surely this is very encouraging."

"But I must leave this more pleasing part of my task. You will not have a just view of the situation of the diocese, unless I advert to the difficulties, which press heavily

on my mind, both generally as to the cause of religion, and especially as connected with the Indian missionary proceedings. God ever tempers prosperity with trials.

"The general difficulties of the Bishop of Calcutta spring from such causes as these:—
"The anomalous position of our Church as connected with our Government in India. The Letters Patent and the Act of 1814 seem not in entire harmony. The powers of the Letters Patent have never been recognised. The inconveniences have been, indeed, more and more modified in practice; but they still exist, and cramp the Bishop in his superintendence of the missionaries as well as chaplains.

"The unwieldy extent of the diocese of Calcutta is another obstacle to our Missions. To this the Report of the Colonial Bishops' Society adverted in 1841, as your present address most truly does. The erection of the sees of Australia, Madras, Bombay, and now of Colombo, have indeed most materially improved the state of things. Still the remaining diocese, stretching from Singapore to the Himalayahs, about 2,000 miles, and from the Indus to the Straits of Malacca and the coast of Arracan, nearly 1,600, is utterly beyond the powers of management of a single Bishop. A new see at Agra is imperatively required, both as respects chaplains and missionaries. Indeed, it will hereafter be accounted incredible, that a region of the world, which was afterwards divided into six large and important dioceses, was for some years actually imposed on the shoulders of a single man.

"The military authorities create another class of difficulties. Things are not defined. Chaplains and missionaries are left too much to the discretion of commanding officers.

"The institution of an order of 'indigenous sub-assistant chaplains,' born and educated in India, and acting as a kind of curates to the European chaplains, will remedy, if accomplished, another existing evil—the want of a sufficient number of chaplains; and will also be a most important step towards the conversion of India, as founding a native ministry in the regular ecclesiastical establishment of Bengal, and thus raising the whole native character; so that the children of our converts may in future generations become, some of them, chaplains of the Honourable Company.

"A further difficulty, as affecting the whole state of religion, springs from the unreasonable prejudices which still haunt the minds of some of our old Indians, notwithstanding the decided improvement in the public feeling. The opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of Christianity should by all means be afforded to the natives.

"There is, again, something still to be desired in the manner of selecting chaplains at home. These appointments are among the most important ecclesiastical ones under the British Crown. India demands the flower of our clergy. This is not always sufficiently considered. Something should be done, as in the case of missionaries, for a searching and effective examination previous to final appointments.

"I do not add to this catalogue of difficulties, what is so well known, the many sudden deaths and the general enfeebled health of the European residents, arising from the indescribable nature of the climate. Alas! I have the tidings of the loss of three of our clergy by this mail, in addition to four deaths in nine months before I left Calcutta, that is, seven in one year out of about one hundred clergy.

"Nor need I add that we feel the want in India of that full sympathy and Christian affection, which prevail in happy England; and have to lament constantly the instability of societies and plans for doing good, springing from the perpetual removal of the civil and military servants of the Honourable Company from place to place. You must ever bear this in mind, and pity us in our weakness.

"Besides these and similar general difficulties, there are others of a more specific character. I refer to the imminent dangers threatened by the recent religious movement in our Protestant Church, to which I have already alluded. Most evils in England, and in an aggravated form, in India. How far it has spread, I can scarcely say; but I am continually appealed to, to check its progress. In our settled stations the spirit of the Protestant lately soon enables me to calm temporary agitations arising from this source—for they are thoroughly and most justly offended, and I honour them for it; but in our Missions, if the disturbances reach them, we have nothing to fall back upon, and the consequences are alarming in proportion to the ignorance of the converts and the weakness of their faith—souls are fatally endangered.

"And here I must beg the permission of his Grace to open honestly my mind, as becomes my sacred office. I shall give only my own views; and shall be very far from wishing to commit his Grace or the Society to my most fallible opinions. But the reports and exaggerations on the subject of the Missions around Calcutta have been for some years so rife and injurious, from the agitated state of the public mind, that I view it as my duty to the Society, in reply to their inquiry about their Missions, and as calculated to promote their true interests, to make known, without reserve, the source whence a certain class of my difficulties springs. The Society cannot be aware of the extent of the evil. All I may say will, however, be only what I have in substance said for the last five or six years in my own diocese, and will indicate no tendency whatever in my mind to slacken my ardour in the sacred

cause of the venerable Society; but will, on the contrary, be designed to assist it in emerging from its partial trials, and rising up with augmented power for the salvation of India and the world.

"I cannot, then, conceal from myself the fact, that the few but zealous clergy,—I speak of the diocese generally, and not merely of missionaries,—who have unhappily been imbued with these sentiments, have done, and are doing, incalculable mischief in their several spheres. I respect individually the talents, learning, activity, and amiable character of these, as well as of all my clergy. There are no personal disagreements whatever. They perfectly know my opinions, as both publicly and privately expressed. No change for the better appears to have taken place in the minds of the clergy once possessed with the extreme views, distorted and un-Protestant as they are, of this system. They have yielded, indeed, as I believe; conscientiously, to my authority, to a certain extent; but the negative influence goes on, and the mighty void thus left I will not attempt to fathom. Amongst other consequences of this, your Missions in and around Calcutta have unquestionably been injured. A blight—a temporary one only—mars the harvest.

"You particularly refer, in your address, to your admirable institution of Bishop's College; and you express a hope, 'that the general conduct of the institution will ever be such as to commend it to the confidence and approval of the Bishop as Visitor.'

"This invites, and indeed compels me, however, reluctantly, to advert to it. My ardent attachment to that College from my first landing, and the opinion I formed of the high reputation and eminent learning and attainments of the late Principal, as well as my sincere love and esteem for the present, scarcely inferior to him in some respects, though with another cast of talents, are known to the Society.

"But the College is still not going on so well as I could wish. It is quite true, that in one or two recent ordinations I have detected no positive doctrinal errors on the points adverted to in my Charges, and have in some cases, been pleased with the attainments and devotedness of the candidates, as I was eager to state to the Society in my letter of November, 1843. But the hope which I then warmly, perhaps too warmly, expressed, of a steady improvement in the College, does not seem to me to have been as yet realized.

"What the Society may now think it right to do, I will not even presume to conjecture. My best services are still at their disposal; and if my life is spared, all will, I trust, be gradually remedied. But I confess that I am not without considerable anxiety.

"One immediate effect of the state of things to which I have referred is the diminution of confidence with the public, and the failure of the funds of the Calcutta Diocesan Society. We ought to go a long way towards supporting your Missions and Bishop's College, with the exception of the buildings and salaries. If we could relieve you from this burden, it would be of the greatest importance under your present financial embarrassments. As it is, we have done, for the last few years, little, comparatively speaking. I laboured all I could during the Visitations just closed to encourage subscriptions.

"Such, then, are some of my special difficulties, as they bear upon the cause of Missions. There is nothing new in these statements. What I have said on the present occasion, and much more, I have, as I before observed, communicated from time to time, with all respect, to the College authorities; and just before I left Calcutta, I intimated to my friend, the excellent Principal, that I should consult his Grace the Archbishop as to the means of reviving and improving this fine establishment. I need not say; nothing has been concealed on my part, for the first.

"The question, then, is, what can now be suggested for increasing the influence, and augmenting the funds, of this great Society in India,—and I presume also at home, but of this I am no judge—for it would be most imprudent in me to have touched on these evils, if I had no suggestions to offer for their mitigation or removal. They are merely local and temporary, whilst the good which the Society is doing in India on the whole is broad, manifest, and permanent. Such a cause must not be allowed to sink. It is impossible that the extreme urgency of the case can be known, without meeting with prompt aid. Such an urgency never before existed, because the flocking of thousands to Christ scarcely ever took place before. The 'harvest truly is plenteous,' and we only want the true-hearted 'labourers' to gather it in.

(To be concluded in our next.)

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE.

From a Charge delivered by the Lord Bishop of Winchester, at his Visitation on the 13th of October, 1845.

Much attention had been devoted of late years to the building and restoration of churches. Architecture had been sedulously cultivated. Houses of cedar and stone had been substituted for places of humble pretensions, and all the skill of art had been called into requisition to lend beauty to the new ecclesiastical edifices. He did not mention this in terms of censure. The finest jewel in the richest of caskets would indeed be a poor offering to God: David said he would not make an offering to God of that which should cost him nothing. But in erecting these costly and magnificent edifices it would be prudent to be cautious. It was an old attempt of Satan to corrupt by means of external splendour. It might happen that this splendour