

doubt, the preaching of the gospel. The religion of Christ will surely overturn all other systems of religion, whenever its distinctly-appointed means of grace are made known to men. India will furnish an exception to this remark. Already it affords many exemplifications of its truth.

Protestant missions in this country were first commenced in South India by the celebrated Swartz and other Moravian missionaries. Considerable success followed their labors; and as there has always been a larger relative number of missionaries in that part of India than in the north or west, there is a much more widely-diffused knowledge and profession of Christianity among the natives than can be found elsewhere. It is within comparatively a recent period that missionaries began their work in the presidencies of Bengal and Bombay; while in the north-west provinces, the field of the missions of the Presbyterian Church, it is not more than twenty years since these missions were commenced. A few excellent men of the English Baptist, and Episcopal Churches had been previously employed at far-distant places in the same provinces.

There has been such an increase of zeal in the Christian world for the conversion of the Hindus, that now nearly all the larger missionary institutions and many of the smaller have their agents at work, preaching the gospel in various ways, supporting schools for the Christian education of the young, and employing the press in printing the word of God and other Christian books. From carefully-collected statistics published last year in a Calcutta periodical, it appeared that there were in India, at the beginning of 1853, missionaries connected with twenty-two European and American Societies, to the number of four hundred and forty-three, of whom forty-eight were native ministers; nearly seven hundred native catechists; three hundred and thirty-one churches, containing over eighteen thousand native communicants, with over one thousand native Christians not communicants; upwards of thirteen hundred vernacular schools, in which nearly forty-eight thousand boys were scholars; ninety-three boarding schools, with nearly twenty-five hundred native boys, and one hundred and two similar schools, with over twenty-seven hundred native girls; one hundred and twenty-six superior day-schools for education in English, with nearly fifteen thousand boys and young men; and three hundred and forty-seven day-schools for girls, containing nearly twelve thousand scholars—in all making over eighty thousand Hindu children and youth receiving a more or less thorough Christian education.

These are striking statistics. They show great progress already made. They betoken still greater progress in the next few years. Add to these returns the statistics of the press, the great auxiliary of the modern missionary, and it is with increased hope that we look for coming triumphs. We are informed from the same source, that twenty-five printing-presses are maintained in India by Missionary Societies; and that the Bible has been translated into ten languages, the New Testament into five others, and separate Gospels into four others; besides numerous works prepared in these different languages for native Christians, and for Mohammedans and Pagans. The far greater part of this immense agency has been brought into existence, we are further informed, within the last twenty years. Well may the Church exclaim, in the view of such facts as these, What hath God wrought!—*Foreign Missionary.*

#### AUSTRALIA.

We make the following interesting extracts from a letter written by the Rev. Robert Hamilton, minister of the United Presbyterian Church Melbourne, to the Corresponding Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Nova Scotia, and published in the *Missionary Register*. We would call especial attention to two things stated in regard to the church endowing system that is attempted to be carried. First, the noble determination of the Bishop of the English Church, so opposite to our "John by Divine permission;" and second, the spirit of the Wesleyan Methodists, so like that which guides their brethren here:—

As yet our church in this country is in comparative infancy, the first minister having arrived only 7 years ago. It consists of 2 Presbyteries: the Melbourne and the Portland. The Synod meets annually in January, the last meeting having been the third annual one since its formation. It consists of 12 ordained ministers and preachers. Two of these, Messrs. Richardson and Browning in Portland are not engaged in the work of the ministry. The former has become Editor of the *Portland Guardian* newspaper; the latter is employed in conducting a Boarding Academy.

The population of Melbourne is estimated at about 70,000 or upwards; but there are the villages of Richmond, Prahran, St. Kilda, Brighton, Brunswick, Flemington &c., extending round the city in a circle of 6 miles radius, which give promise, from the rapid increase of population, that they shall speedily form integral parts of the city and shall soon give it the appearance of covering an area of magnificent extent. It is supposed that 10,000 are employed at the mines. Geelong contains about 15 to 20,000. Portland perhaps 5,000. These embrace the leading townships. Altogether there cannot be under 300,000 in the whole colony. The diggings are scattered over immense tracts of the country and are situated far apart from each other. The Ballarat diggings, the

first discovered of any consequence, is about 60 miles from Geelong and 100 from Melbourne, and are worked from the Mt. Alexander diggings are 100 miles from the north-west, and comprise Forest Creek, Head's Creek, Barker's Creek, Campbell's Creek, &c. and are about 50 miles from the Ballarat diggings. The Ballarat diggings, but 20 miles farther into the interior, and the Ovens diggings are 30 or 40 miles from the north westerly direction.

On account of the great distances at which the brethren of the Presbytery are situated and the great expense of travelling, there has not hitherto been afforded for mutual deliberation and effort. A Mission Board has been instituted, composed of the members of the Melbourne Presbytery, for the purpose of directing the labors of properly selected ministers who may arrive among us and who may be admitted into our fellowship, and to aid as far as possible in the work of evangelizing the country. It is only of recent origin. It has sent two deputations to the gold fields, but is not able in existing circumstances to do much, except in the way of covering sites for churches in suitable localities, till ministers arrive. It has no funds, however, at command, and it is an easy matter to raise funds for extraneous purposes, considering that the churches in existence are only in a state of formation, they are small in membership and not all successful in gold getting, and that their own immediate necessities are sufficiently urgent. As a church, we have acted on the principle of refusing all support from government, either in the shape of sites for buildings or money for stipends. This has rendered, and it renders now more than ever, the efforts of the churches for self-support peculiarly trying and arduous. Nevertheless, our principles in regard to the support of ministers by the unaided offerings of the people, we believe to be founded on inspired truth, and relying on the promise of Him who hath said that "I will honor, I will honor, we have resolved to persevere through good report and bad report, through honor and dishonor, through privation and abundance, just as our exalted Lord and Master may see fit to direct, assured that we will have no cause to regret the sacrifice of relinquishing dependence on the word of his infinite grace. And when we look to past experience and see the large measure of success which has crowned our humble efforts to glorify Him, we find that we have good cause to thank God and take courage.

Our churches have their principles in the matter of voluntary support peculiarly put to the test at the present time. By a recent act of the Legislative Council, the sum set apart for the support of public worship has been augmented from £6000 to £36,000 per annum, and was passed to utter defiance of public opinion. Petitions and remonstrances were sent from public meetings called by the Mayor and unanimously agreed to, and that too from meetings of a most influential character, and the petitions were signed by numbers, more or less, of every religious denomination in the colony, not excepting Roman Catholics, and yet they were treated with the most overbearing and tyrannical contempt. Unsuccessfully for our struggle to obtain the entire independence of the church, the press was wholly against us. We had no organ to convey a proper impression of the weight, importance and energy of the movement. Instead of this, we were vilified and slandered in unmeasured terms. We were refused the right of fair discussion. It is rather remarkable, that every member of Council who voted in our favor belonged to an endowed religious community, and that a majority of the elected representative members was on the right side, so that but for the dominion of government, the victory would have been ours. We have learned a little wisdom by the conflict, and with help rendered from above will never cease till the very vestige of the rotten system disappears. In the recent struggle, we have received the hearty co-operation of the Free Church, Baptists, Independents, the Wesleyan Association, and the Primitive Methodists. That branch of the Presbyterian Church which holds connection with the Scotch Establishment, and the Wesleyan Methodists have displayed a spirit of the most sneaking and beggarly dependence on the powers that be, cleaving with trembling grasp to the morsel of pottage, and greedily looking for more. The Episcopalian Bishop is highly favorable to the entire abolition of State grants to religion. He is quite evangelical in his doctrine and is generally much respected as an excellent character, but he never co-operates with other sects, except it be the Bible Society. He would take no active part in our efforts publicly to demolish the golden image, because his people are not all of the same mind with himself. The reasons of his opposition to endowments, like those of the Free Church are founded on the support given thereby to Popery. The only demonstration given in favor of State support was made by Roman Catholics among themselves. They are not slow to perceive the immense advantage given to their corrupt and soul-destroying system by government aid, and will doubtless not be slack in availing themselves of the golden opportunity presented to advance with rapid strides in the career of self-aggrandisement. They have one place of worship in Melbourne, and it the largest and most imposing building in the city. The foundation of another has been laid, but for want of funds has stood still for years. Their Bishop has recently returned from England, and it is reported that the new church is to be carried forward to completion forthwith, and that it is to be built in a style of great magnificence. The highest sum allowed by the recent act for building is £20,000, and it is not to be doubted they will lay claim to the lion's share. Thus we have the monstrous socialism in Legislation, perpetrated by the Solons of our community, in supporting religious systems and grades which are mutually hostile and destructive, and the not less shocking incongruity of Presbyterianism, Wesleyan Methodism, Episcopalianism and Popery all agreeing to differ for the time in order that they may lick