

THE HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD OF
THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

The November number of this greatly improved and now highly interesting periodical, came to hand after our *Record* for December was made up. As comparatively few of our readers have access to it, we make some extracts. Under the head "Foreign Missions," an extract from a letter of the Rev. W. S. Mackay, of Calcutta, gives the cheering intelligence of the conversion of a young Brahmin, Samachura Mookgea, who having received the elements of the common Bengal education, and being of an inquisitive disposition, and anxious to acquire more learning, made his way to Calcutta. Being a determined idolater, and having the name of Jesus, he tried several of the cheap English seminaries. With these he soon became dissatisfied, and entered the Free Church Institution about three years ago. There he soon lost his Hinduism.

"Samachura was soon distinguished by his teachers as a thoughtful earnest youth, with a strong tendency to speculation, but fearless and self-dependent. He was one of those who came to me on the Sabbath forenoon, to converse seriously and privately about the state of their souls. Sometimes he seemed almost resolved to be a Christian; but the Lord's time was not yet come, and I had the grief of seeing him seduced into wild atheistical speculations, which led him to deny that there was either good or evil, or that there was any guilt in wickedness or crime.—About this time (two years ago) he left us to become a teacher in a native school, at the French settlement of Chundernagore; but he still occasionally visited and borrowed books from me.—The school did not succeed, and he returned to Calcutta; and, by the advice of Dr. Duff and myself, and the kindness of Mr. Francis, the head partner, he was admitted as an apprentice (without a fee) into the workshop of Messrs. Jessop and Company, iron-founders, where he still remains. About three months ago, he happened to be present when I was reading HILL'S Lectures with the catechists, and he remained, as he frequently did, to our family worship. Some statement which I made agitated him considerably, and, after we separated, he had a long conversation with Backantoonath Dr., one of our native Christian brethren. This still further moved him, and when he went home, not being able to sleep, he went up to the house-top, and walked long there, thinking deeply, and praying for light.—At half past four he awoke, his thoughts still troubling him, and repaired a second time to the terrace, whence he came down resolved, if some remaining difficulties which still haunted him could be removed, to become a Christian. From that time he came to my house in the evenings, as before, but evidently in a better spirit; until by prayer, and reading the Scriptures, and my repeated conversations with our catechist, Lal Behari Dr., with Backantoonath, and Dinonath Adhya, all his doubts were removed; and he came to us asking for baptism. The missionaries being fully satisfied of his sincerity, and Mr. Mackail having also conversed and prayed with him, and believing that he was a sincere and intelligent believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, it was resolved to baptize him; and ten days after he came to us, he was admitted into the Christian Church by Mr. Mackail, in the presence of a considerable audience. Since that time he has been going on steadily and satisfactorily, and I trust he will prove a valuable acquisition to our native Church. We have at present another youth from the first college class, who has left his father's house, and come to us asking for baptism. He is now on probation, and hitherto has successfully withstood the prayers and entreaties of his

relatives. May the Lord still further strengthen and enlighten him!"

BOMBAY.

There is also an interesting report from the Rev. J. M. Mitchell, Bombay, of the conversion from popery and reception into the Free Church, of a young man of Portuguese descent, Mr. Vincente Aveilino De Cunha.

"The case of this young man has been under your eye for some time. He joined our Institution three years ago, and has ever since been connected with it, both as a teacher and a pupil. He came to us almost entirely unacquainted with the Word of God, as I fear is almost universally the case, even with the more intelligent Romanists in Western India. I first began to think that the Lord was effectually drawing him to himself about the beginning of June last year. During the whole of the rainy season he continued most earnest in his attention to Divine things. Besides attending to his scriptural studies carried on in the Institution, he frequently came to me in private, for the purpose of reading his Bible and prayer; and never have I seen an instance in which the heart seemed more earnestly to desire, or more simply to feed upon, the 'pure milk of the Word.' In the end of September, as he was continually exposed to every kind of annoyance, and every persecution, in the boarding-house in which he lived, (his own relatives reside at some distance from Bombay.) I requested him to take up his abode in my house, which accordingly he did, and for nearly a year past he has lived with me.

"There has been nothing during the whole time that our young friend has been an inquirer, that has for a moment shaken our belief in his entire sincerity. This temptation, indeed, was some time ago suggested to his mind during a visit to his relatives; that, while holding and professing all Bible truth, he still need not formally break off his connexion with the Romish Church—nay, that possibly he might do more good by remaining in it than by coming out of it; and it was not without much prayer, and some painful struggles, that he gained the full, clear conviction, that necessity was laid upon him to come out of the mystical Babylon, lest he should be partaker of her plagues. While fully conscious of the sore warfare in his mind, and any thing but unconcerned as to the issue of the struggle, I cannot say that I ever felt any very serious apprehensions as to what that issue might prove; inasmuch as I knew that our dear young friend was earnestly imploring direction from above. And asking, he received; seeking, he found. No shadow of doubt remained; and he longed for an opportunity of publicly protesting against Romish corruptions of the pure gospel of Christ. Since he sat down with us in commemoration of a dying Redeemer's love, his heart has been exceedingly happy; the whole man seems touched with new life, and his study and teaching have been more buoyant and energetic than ever. In the Institution, along with our much beloved Narananroo, (whose companionship, I may add, has been very valuable to dear Vincent,) he will now be of exceeding service, not only an able teacher, but a brother beloved, a believing, praying co-worker."

INCIDENTS IN A MISSIONARY TOUR, BY HORMAZDJI PESTONJEE.

"The common people heard me gladly, to say the least. This was verified in the simple and unsophisticated inhabitants of Turada, of Bulwali, of A'pia, and of others, as well as in the Merachi I have just been speaking of. I shall give you but an instance or two. There is a Hindu burying-ground on the way between Alibag and Mandwa; and I halted there for an hour or so from my march, and embraced the opportunity of speaking to a multitude that was collected on the spot, on the occasion of the death of an old woman they had just then buried. They said

they had never before heard of the resurrection of the dead, and seemed to believe the doctrine on its first announcement."

"Come we now to sacred things. Brahmans innumerable, at once in the Konkani and the Dakhani, declared to me with unblushing faces, on various occasions, that they were *Bhudevas*, 'gods on earth'; and that to them were the poor deluded villagers bound to give turbans, and shoes, and umbrellas, and cows, and a number of such things. Nothing but a silent contempt, nothing but an instinctive expression of holy indignation, was all the answer I often gave to such deceivers; for, says Solomon, 'Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.' But the wise man also says, 'Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.' So that there is unquestionably a time to speak, and a time to refrain from speaking, with an opponent that is a fool. Accordingly, I sometimes took upon myself to argue on the point with those destroyers of mankind.—They had founded their claims on the assumption that they were 'gods on earth.' So I said to them, 'Prove your premise, and your conclusion will stand.' 'Very well,' said they, and asked, 'Do you see those gods inside the temple?' 'I see some idols, but they are no gods; well, but go on.' 'Who made them, think you? Who consecrated them? Who set them there?' 'You yourselves.' 'Good: are not we, then, even greater than they?' 'To be sure you are; but so am I.' 'Not you, not you; for you can never make gods.' 'You have made idols; but to say that of the only living and true God, is open blasphemy.' 'But we made him too.' 'Then who made you?' 'He made us, and we made him.' 'There is a manifest contradiction in that you say: if he made you, how can it be said that you made him, seeing you did not exist before he made you, and when he made you, he himself existed, and did not need to be made?' 'This way of arguing attracted many to listen; and while this was the case, Sakhuba and I were greatly amused, and our poor audience somewhat ashamed, to find, once at a place, that our chief opponent went into the temple by a front door, and made off by a side-door, from sheer inability to reply to my last question. In other places, however, the brazen-faced men were not backward to say only this much in reply—'Say what you will, our people hereabouts recognise our authority to be no less than divine.' 'And who, quoth I, gave you this authority?' 'The gods.' 'And who gave them the authority?' 'We.' 'Then there is again a plain contradiction in what you say,' &c., &c. 'You don't understand our philosophy. Our gods are in the hands of the *mantras*: the *mantras* are in the hands of us Brahmans: therefore the gods themselves are in our hands.' Thus they often practically proved what Solomon has so boldly asserted:—'Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.' Yet still, to drive off their head this self-conceit, I often asked and answered them according to their folly.—Amongst other things, I used to say to them—'God is perfectly holy, but you are sinful—you have been using sinful words since I came here: how then can you and God be one and the same?' Some of them were greatly puzzled by this way of arguing. Others, again, broke out in some such way as the following:—'We may do what we like, and yet we can have no sin; for we are gods.' O what ignorance they often betrayed! And what wickedness too! Would that I could tell forth all their reasonings, instead of giving you but a specimen of them! They would put any Brahman in our enlightened Bombay to shame! They often made me exclaim—'O how darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people!'—*Overland Summary of the Oriental Christian Spectator, August, 1850.*

The missionary intelligence from Africa, is on