

and more to see the beginning of your city life. Will you tell me what national literature was ever developed to its completeness in one generation or in five? Will you tell me what government was ever established in equity and wisdom, even with the heroic efforts of men who gave their lives to its service in one century or in two? Will you tell me what physical continent was ever transformed from barbarism to the beauty of civilization in one century or in two? Great works imply gradual progress; and nothing is more preposterous than to suppose that this immense, surpassing work, which man says is too great ever to be accomplished, is to be accomplished within a few generations.

Why, there is an interval of ages between the cave and the skin tent, or the hemlock hut and any one of our modernly equipped houses. There is an interval of ages between the first attempt at a song or a narrative and the completed literature which dates from that attempt. There is an interval of ages between the hollow log floating on the water and the majestic steamship that unites the hemispheres. There is an interval of ages between these shores as they were when our ancestors landed here and as they now are; and the great interior behind them has been subdued and cultivated through many successive generations until now it blossoms in villages and in cities. Gradual progress towards the mighty effect is the law everywhere; and we are simply foolish, we simply entertain the most preposterous notion that can ever come into the human mind, if we are offended because the expectation is not realized that in one year or in ten years, in one generation or in five generations, the work of redeeming the world unto Christ and purifying it unto his beauty is not accomplished.

But let us also never forget that supreme fact that God is behind this progress and it never will cease until God is dead—never while omnipotence has power, never while the divine wisdom foresees the end from the beginning, never until the heart of God is turned to indifference or hostility towards his children on the earth. There is one banner that never goes down in any battle, and that is the banner of God's truth. There is one army that always marches to success, and that is the army of the Cross. God brought this continent to light at exactly the right moment; He colonized this country with a Christian population at exactly the right moment; He has carried us through all our perils and over every obstacle to our present state of national development and power and Christian culture; and His arm is never weary and His heart is never faint, and it is as sure as that He lives that the result at last shall be accomplished and the earth become the abode of His saints, visited with joy by angels, smiled upon by Him who baptized it unto Himself in water and in blood—in the tears which He shed and in the blood which gushed from His heart. This continent is not a dream; it is a vast majestic fact in the constitution of the globe. That realization of God's plan to which this was to contribute is not a dream, not a reverie of the devout. It is a purpose of the Almighty as certain to be accomplished as the stars are to remain in their poise, as the constellations are to maintain their sublime and shining configuration in the heavens. Let us be carried forward in all our work for the nation and for the world by this sublime certainty that God is with us and the future is ours.

The humblest life becomes sublime when it takes hold upon God's plan, and helps to work it out. The noblest powers of earth take their supreme inspiration, their coronation and glory, from contributing to the Divine plan. And that will be a joy to us when heaven is open-

ed, for we may look back on the earth and say: "I saw that purpose and I worked to accomplish it. I gave money and time and labour and life to that supreme endeavour." There will be a joy which the harps of saints cannot fully bear, and the lips of the redeemed cannot fully utter. The magnificent privilege of life is to take part in this work, and do it with all our might, and do it unto the end.

HINDU MINSTRELS.

Rev. William Carey, in the Missionary Herald.

GROUPS of Balragis, or wandering minstrels, go about singing the ballads of Krishna; sometimes from house to house, more often by invitation at feasts, melas, and the like. They form a caste by themselves, and live a lawless, self-indulgent life, quite in keeping (though on a limited scale) with that of their chosen god. I was walking across the fields one hot morning some weeks ago, when I suddenly heard strains of music proceeding from a homestead near. A boatman was with me carrying the camera, which he sometimes exchanged for that heavier load, myself in puddly places. He is a shrewd fellow, with an eye to the main chance, in the form of rest and tobacco. He said there was probably a wedding going on, and reminded me that I had long been looking for a wedding "subject," and that possibly I might never get so good a chance again—in short, that we had better swerve off to that homestead and see what was going on.

It was a Mussulman homestead; and yet there, in the space between a couple of huts, were these Hindu minstrels, singing the praises of Krishna. To me this was surprising, and the more so when I noticed that the basket in front of the fiddler was nearly full of rice, with a good layer of copper coins on the top. Not only were the faithful listening to idolatrous songs, but positively paying idolaters to sing them. The boatman, however, was not in the least astonished. He said it was a common occurrence. The people love the music, and so they get that; it doesn't much matter about the words. Hindus and Mohammedans mix freely at the village fairs and religious festivals; the fact being that excitement and fun largely predominate over the element of religious devotion.

Indian minstrels may one day work wonders in the name of Christ. Every home is open to its influence, and every heart moved by its touch. It may yet be the chosen method of evangelising the people here. The method is going to be tried as an experiment, on a small scale, here in Backergunge. A preacher of our society, a thoroughly good man, has lately resigned his stipend from the Mission, and joined to himself two others with whom he proposes to move about amongst the people of the villages, singing for Christ. His great desire is to stir up the native churches to more spiritual life, and, following thereupon, more active missionary zeal.

[Our own missionaries in India are using a similar method with considerable success. They have written and printed in verse the story of Joseph, and some others. Some native Christians with good voices learn these verses and sing or chant them, as do the minstrels. Mr. Craig when at home told us, they plan to have much of the Gospel story written in verse and thus sung by the natives. We would think that: "Blind Bartimeus" as the missionaries call him, would be eminently successful in this kind of work.—Ed.]