

Mr. Alexander Duff.

THE highest place in the history of Christianity belongs to those men who, taking their lives in their hands, have gone forth from many lands to proclaim the gospel of salvation amidst toil and hardship in the regions of degraded Heathenism. Of these, the late Dr. Duff was one of the most distinguished, alike for talents, eloquence, indomitable perseverance, and unflinching faith in the ultimate success of missions to the heathen. Dr. Duff was born on the 25th April, 1806, near Pitlochrie, Perthshire. The successive stages of his education were passed in the parish school, the Perth Academy, and the University of St. Andrew's, where he graduated, and distinguished himself as a classical scholar. From earliest youth he had been instructed by his father as to the objects and progress of modern missions, so that before he had completed his Theological Curriculum he was already at heart an enthusiastic missionary. It will be remembered that the proposal to send missionaries to the heathen was for the first time seriously discussed in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1796. It was then that Dr. Erskine, on rising to support the overture for instituting a foreign mission, prefaced his memorable speech by saying, "Moderator, rax me that Bible." But his eloquent appeal to Scripture was in vain. That overture was lost, and the subject of foreign missions caused no more discussion in the Assembly for the next quarter of a century, nor was it until the year 1829 that the first foreign missionary of the Church of Scotland was sent forth.

While Dr. Chalmers was Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at St. Andrew's, he was the means of establishing a

missionary society, of which Mr. Duff was the librarian. When the time came to seek for a missionary, his name was among the first proposed. After mature consideration he accepted the appointment, which was confirmed by the Assembly of 1829. On the 12th August of the same year, Mr. Duff was ordained in St. George's Church, Edinburgh, Dr. Chalmers presiding. On the 30th July he was married to Miss Drysdale, of Edinburgh, and in the middle of October the missionary and his bride sailed from Portsmouth in the East Indiaman *Lady Holland*. On the 13th February the ship was wrecked near the Cape of Good Hope. The passengers and crew succeeded in reaching the inhospitable shore, but Mr. Duff lost his library and his manuscripts, everything that he owned, in fact, excepting his "Baxter's Comprehensive Bible and Psalm Book." They embarked in another ship which, after a variety of mishaps, finally went ashore during a hurricane at the mouth of the Ganges. On the 27th May, 1830, they at length reached Calcutta.

The Assembly had resolved among other missionary operations to found an educational Institution at Bengal. Mr. Duff, however, soon convinced the Committee that the proper site for such an Institution was in the capital, Calcutta, and that the language taught in it should be English, for all the higher branches of education. The Institution, opened in August, 1830, became remarkably successful, and is now one of the best Colleges in India. In 1833 the first fruits of the Institution were reaped in the conversion of a young man called Anundo, who afterwards became a catechist. But in the mean time Mr. Duff's health gave way and he was ordered home in 1835. He employed his furlough in itinerating throughout Scotland and England, urging with an eloquence never sur-