

European and American constitution. Not only is life shorter and health more uncertain, but they have less energy of body and mind than in their native climate. And they can better perform the labour of qualifying a native agency than they can endure the fatigue and exposure of preaching to the native population in the only places and circumstances in which they can have access to them.

It is impossible for missionaries to pursue their labours of itinerating and preaching in the cottages, and hamlets, and villages over a large part of India, during much of the time in the hot months and in the rainy season. But such are the constitutions and habits of the natives, that they could perform such missionary labours, and yet suffer little inconvenience or injury of health from what has often cost Europeans sickness, sufferings and death.

The nature and number of the languages of India furnish strong reasons for missionaries to prepare a native agency for their work. It has been said that missionaries have often failed in acquiring sufficient knowledge of the native languages to use them acceptably and intelligibly to the native population. But those who originated such an opinion were mistaken. They were not competent judges themselves, and did not take the trouble to obtain the opinion of those who were competent. A few European missionaries have found a useful, and, what appeared to them, an appropriate sphere of labour in preaching to their countrymen and Indo-Britons in English, or in teaching English science and literature in the mission seminaries. But I have known no American missionary who has not acquired a knowledge of the native language of the people around him, and then made it the principal medium of his labours. Probably the Europeans or Americans acquire the exact pronunciation of the natives, just as few foreigners ever acquire the exact pronunciation of all the words and sounds in the English language. Some of the native languages are difficult to acquire, and in most of these languages the first missionaries had to prepare grammars and dictionaries. Missionaries now have many and important facilities for acquiring the languages of India compared with what their predecessors had. Still to acquire such knowledge of any vernacular language, as every missionary should have, requires considerable time and labour, and during all this time he must be supported from the funds of the society with which he is connected. Now, a native missionary would not require this time, labour and expense, and would yet be able to use his vernacular language in a more forcible, effectual, and acceptable manner, more suited to persons of every degree of capacity and measure of intelligence, than American or European missionaries are ever likely to acquire.

There is yet another reason in the languages of the people for a native agency. In the large cities the population is

composed of different classes, and these classes have each their own language. Men of business early and easily acquire a knowledge of these different languages, and use them fluently as far as they have occasion. But the people of each class generally understand and use only their own hereditary language. Now a missionary has seldom time to acquire two or more languages so as to use them intelligibly and acceptably on religious subjects, and for want of understanding them, he often feels that he cannot improve the best opportunities and openings for usefulness. But a native missionary would not experience this difficulty, for such educated men generally understand all the languages used in the places where they live, and can often apparently use one as well as another.

Another important reason for a native agency is its cheapness. The expense of one missionary's going to India, and of his support there till he has become qualified for his work is ordinarily enough to educate several native missionaries. And then the expense of one American or European missionary (including his family) when reduced to the lowest rate consistent with a due regard to health and usefulness are ordinarily enough to support several native missionaries. The truth of this is well known to all who have any experience of living in India, and it corresponds to the systems of salaries and allowances in use in all missionary societies for their European and native agency.

I have often heard native missionaries preach to their countrymen, and I have never heard religious services in any place with greater satisfaction. Their sermons and exhortations were sound in doctrine, appropriate in manner and fervent in spirit. No one can hear them thus addressing their countrymen on the sin, folly, and absurdity of polytheism and idolatry, describing the character of Jehovah as displayed in his works and revealed in his word, inculcating the duty and obligation of all to love and serve him, setting forth his love for mankind as manifested in the way of salvation, and love of Christ as exhibited in giving himself for an atoning sacrifice, and now exalted to be a Saviour, able, willing and waiting to save all that come unto God through him, and then urging them to forsake idolatry, turn to the true God, flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life by looking to Jesus as their Mediator and Saviour—no one can hear these native missionaries thus addressing their countrymen, without being forcibly impressed with the great importance of a native ministry, and also with the importance of using all the means which appear likely, by the blessing of God, to secure such an agency in every mission as soon as possible.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A Summer Midnight in the Arctic Regions.

"I have before made mention of the remarkable stillness which may be observed at mid-

night in these regions; but not until now did it come on me with such force, and in such a singular manner. I cannot describe the mingled sensations I experienced of constant surprise and amazement at the extraordinary occurrence then taking place in the waters I was gazing upon, and of renewed hope, mellowed into a quite holy and reverential feeling of gratitude towards that mighty Being who, in this solemn silence reigned alike supreme, as in the busy hour of noon when man is eager at his toil, or the custom of the civilized world gives to business active life and vigour. Save the distant humming noise of the engine working on board of the steamer towing us, there was no sound to be heard to denote the existence of any living thing or of any animate matter. Yet there we were perceptibly, nay, rapidly gliding past the land and floes of ice, as tho' a secret power had been lent to work to carry us swiftly away from those vexatious, harassing and delaying portions of our voyage, in which we had already experienced so much trouble and perplexity. The leading vessels had passed all the parts where any further difficulty might have been apprehended, and this of course gave to us in the rear a sense of perfect security for the present. All hands, therefore, except the middle watch on deck were below in our respective vessels; and, as I looked forward ahead of us, and beheld the long line of masts and rigging that rose up from each ship before me, without any sail set or any apparent motion, to propel such masses onward, and without a single human voice to be heard around, it did seem something wonderful and amazing! And yet it was a noble sight: six vessels varying in size, strength, and equipment, from the huge hull of the powerful man-of-war, to the humble and lowly private keel, alike varying in their build and sailing qualities from the lofty three-master to the single-sparred cutter, acting as a tender to a schooner, but a size or two larger,—square sails, and fore and aft sails, and pinnaces and barges, whale-boats and light boats; with every new invention in the art of steaming to aid the one class, while late discoveries and useful plans were brought into use in gutta percha and inflated skins, to the latter class,—were casting their long shadows across the smooth surface of the passing floes of ice as the sun, with mellowed light and gentler, but still beautiful lustre, was soaring through the polar sky, at the back of Melville's Cape, already on his way back to begin the journey of another day. Yes, it was a noble sight: it was a sight that gendered in the heart the loftiest feelings, it made one proud of one's self, and of every other man that was connected with the vision then in view. Ay, in truth, it was a noble sight, and well could I look upward to the streaming pendant of my own dear country, that hung listlessly from the mast-head of the 'Assistance,' and feel the highest satisfaction in my breast that I, too, was one of her children, and could boast myself of being born in her own free soil, under her own revered and idolized flag. But even as I beheld that listless symbol of my country's name, pendant from the lofty truck, my glance was directed higher; and as it caught the pale blue firmament of heaven, still in this midnight hour, divested of star or moon that shine by night, and brightened by the sun, my heart breathed a prayer, that He who dwells far beyond the ken of mortal eye, would deign to grant that the attempt now making should not be made in vain, but that those whom we are now on our way to seek might be found and restored to their home and sorrowing friends; and that until then, full