

your fellow-labourers, but they have not the power. There are very many that would be glad to go any whither—to Persians, Tartarians, Indians, or any unbelieving nation, to propagate the Gospel, but the defect of their languages is a great discouragement."

The gift of the Psalter to this people, was a great luxury. Eliot observes, "that the Indians are much pleased to have their language in metre and rhythm, as it now is in the singing psalms in some poor measure; these they sing in our musical tone." It is observed by travellers, that the Indians had no songs among them, and had no idea of melody, and that the few sounds they intended for such, were barbarous and offensive; the being enabled to sing in companies, and in many tunes, no doubt, took wonderfully with them. "They met me," writes a minister, (Mr. Experience Mayhew,) "about two months since, at Little Compton, to hear me preach; had you been there to see how well they filled up their seats; how powerfully Nishokou prayed, and how melodiously Paquawise set the tune for the psalm, and carried it out, and how dexterously it was taken up by the others, I am sure you would have been much affected with it." I seek in vain for these quaint passages in the description of Eliot. No doubt, there were some things sufficiently simple, and a few, perhaps, bordering on the ludicrous, in the teaching of the savages, as well as in their expressions, but he had the good taste to avoid the details.

Fourteen years had now passed in these various labours; great, but not unvaried success, had attended them. There had been opposition, even from some of the Englishmen in authority, to the novelty of Indian towns and regular Christian churches. Storms and floods had at times wasted the plantations, reduced the Indians to distress, and their missionary was compelled to solicit aid from England to supply the losses. Some of the converts, even more than one of the chiefs, proved unfaithful, and fell into open excesses. The first serious disappointment he experienced, was in his efforts for the instruction of the Indian youth in the classic languages; many of the ablest and most promising among them were set apart for this purpose; his ambition was to bring them up "with our English youth in university learning." Where was the use of this? Eliot's best purposes were prone to be carried to excess. It has been mentioned that he gave away a whole year's salary, at a wretched cottage, while his wife was probably expecting it at home for household demands. He had learned his Indians to read and write; many could read English well; and now he wished to give them a polite education, that must have sat as graciously on them as the full-sleeved gown and bands of the divine. Considerable sums were expended in their board and education: a substantial building of

brick, which cost between three and four hundred pounds, was erected; it was large enough to accommodate twenty scholars.—It must have been Spartan discipline to the heads as well as hearts of the poor Indians, to labour morn and night through the Greek and Roman authors, to try to discover and relish the beauties of style and the splendour of imagery. No doubt, their thoughts some times fled away to their deserts, where their fathers roved in dignity and freedom, and books never came. The design might be praise-worthy, but Providence did not smile upon it; most of these young men died when they had made great proficiency in their studies, as if the languages wore out their hearts; others abandoned their books, even when they were prepared to enter Harvard College, in the town of Cambridge; their patience was probably exhausted, and the boon of literary dignity could lure them no further. A few of these, passing from one extreme to the other, burst their bonds at once; and as if mind and body panted together to be free, hastened back to the wilderness again, into its wigwams and swamps; where neither Homer nor Ovid was like to follow them.

"These circumstances proved very discouraging to the godly in New England," says a contemporary. "Some were so far affected by them, as to conceive that they were manifest tokens of the Divine disapprobation. Mr. Eliot, however, whose faith was more vigorous, considered them merely as trials, to which they ought to submit without reluctance". In consequence of the death and failure of those who entered the aforesaid building, it was soon after chiefly occupied by the English. Only one of these Indian students appears to have obtained his degree at Harvard College; and at the conclusion of two Latin and Greek elegies, which he composed on the death of an eminent minister, subscribed himself "Cheeseacumak, Senior Sophista." What an incongruous blending of sounds!

Eliot at last saw his error, and, instead of the classics, applied with fresh ardour to his more useful translations, of which the circulation was so rapid, that he printed a fresh edition of the "Practice of Piety."—He also soon after established a lecture at Naticke, in which he explained the leading doctrines of theology and logic: here he was on safe ground and his labours were eminently useful. During the summer months they assembled eagerly once a fortnight, and many of them gained much knowledge; yet he was far from being satisfied with its oral instructions, and he printed a thousand copies of a logic primer, and made little systems of all the liberal arts, for the use of the Indians. The same minds that had pined and sunk beneath the study of the classic tongues, embraced these things with ardour.

Their insatiable love of asking questions.