

harassed by the part which they have been required, by the regulations of Government, or by the usage of the service, to take.

"We, therefore, most respectfully solicit that inquiry may be instituted by your Excellency in Council into the topics to which we have adverted; and we would farther suggest that the following particulars ought also to be included in the inquiry, as it may often be found, that where only justice or charity was intended, an unnecessary and criminal support to native superstition has been, or is liable to be, afforded.

"1. The support given to Hindoo temples, to mosques and tombs, either by the granting endowments, pensions, or immunities, or by the collection and distribution, by the officers of Government, of the revenues already appropriated to them.

"2. The granting of allowances and gifts to Brahmins and other persons, because of their connection with the heathen and Mahomedan priesthood.

"3. The present mode of administering oaths in the Native Courts of Justice, and whether it be such as is proper for a Christian Government to allow and sanction.

"4. The endowment and support of colleges and schools for the inculcating of heathen and Mahomedan doctrines and practices.

A similar memorial, of a very important character, was addressed by 150 influential British at Madras to the Governor of that Presidency. It was also signed by thirteen chaplains, and thirty-seven missionaries besides, of various religious denominations:—

The grievances complained of are—

1. That the Christian civil and military servants of the Government are required to attend Heathen and Mahomedan religious festivals for purposes of respect.

2. That they are required to present offerings and do homage to idols.

3. That the impure and degrading services of the pagoda are carried on under the supervision and control of the principal European, and, therefore, Christian, officers of the Government, and the management and regulation of the revenues and endowments, both of the pagodas and mosques, are vested in them; that no important idolatrous ceremony can be performed, no attendant of the various idols, not even the prostitutes of the temple, be entertained or discharged, nor the least expenses incurred, without the official concurrence and aid orders of the Christian functionary.

4. That British officers, with the troops of the Government, are also employed in firing salutes and doing other honours to Mahomedan and idolatrous ceremonies, even on the Sabbath-day, and that Christians are thus often compelled, by the authority of Government, to desecrate their own most sacred institutions, and take part in unholy and degrading superstitions.

5. That Protestant soldiers, members of the church of England, have also been required, contrary to the King's regulation, "that every soldier shall be at liberty to worship God according to the forms prescribed by his religion," to be present at, and participate in, the worship of the Church of Rome.

6. The last point noticed is the forcing of the poor classes to draw the idol cars, mostly without the

slightest compensation; but which complaint appears to have been subsequently remedied.

That none may imagine these are general statements, and that the evils complained of, after all, may not be very serious, we beg leave to direct the public attention to the following facts, which rest upon the best authority. —In the province of Tanjore there are nearly 15,000 temples of idolatrous worship, supported by a charge in the public accounts of £30,000. The Rev. Mr. Peggs, a missionary at Madras two years ago, stated that the receipts from the temple of Tripetty, a large temple near Madras, after paying all expenses, amount to £10,000 a-year, and that the revenue from the temples of Conjevaram, Seringham, and Madura, and Putney, are nearly equal; so that here is the British Government drawing a sum of £50,000 a-year, clear gain, from the idolatry and degradation of the wretched nation. In but five temples. An allowance of 56,000 rupees is yearly made by the same authorities for the support of the idol and worship of Juggernaut. Mr. Poynder, one of the East India proprietors, who has done himself so much honour by his persevering labours for the exposure of this horrible system, and to whom the Christians of Britain are so much indebted, proved a few years ago that after deducting every possible outgoing, four principal temples—Gya, Juggernaut, Allahabad, and Tripetty—in the course of seventeen years, yielded a net sum of one million sterling to the British Exchequer. This is raised chiefly from the taxation of the vast crowds of pilgrims—sometimes 260,000 at a temple—who visit these shrines of impiety. In this and in other ways the East India proprietors in this country receive an interest of 104 per cent upon their money! Nor are the temples the only sources of revenue. There are many others.

"In the South Mahratta country, a variety of penances are undertaken by pilgrims at the shrine of the goddess Yelheva, which cannot be performed in the presence of the idol without a large pecuniary sacrifice. For the privilege of swinging aloft in the air by means of an iron hook, fixed in the fleshy part of the loins, at the end of a beam revolving horizontally on a point, a fee of no less than ten rupees (£1 sterling) is exacted, and the smaller fee of two rupees for swinging on a smaller beam with the head downwards, and the hook attached to the feet. For sticking a fork through the hand, and treading on burning charcoal, the fee is not so large. Two rupees are levied on those who come attended by a band of music. All persons bringing offerings of clarified butter, oil, sheep, and gold and silver ornaments, are subject also to a toll; the proportion of those oblations respectively allotted to the officiating priests and the renter (British) being exactly defined. And no shops, booths, or stalls, can be erected during these carnivals, without payment of a fee for the license.

These revenues are collected not only at the great temples, such as Juggernaut and Tripetty, but at many of the smaller pagodas of celebrity; and in part, are classed in the Government accounts, under the general head of "Farms and Licences," without any specifications of the items; so that the exact amount accruing from these revenues is not known."

What would be thought of the British Government at home collecting a sum of money from the poor miserable popish pilgrims who visit the sacred wells in Ireland? And what is it better, according to the Dublin Gazette, to receive from 20,000 to 30,000 rupees from 20,000 pilgrims to the rock Goorgaon, "which kills or cures in all cases of small-pox?" What a profanation to receive this into the public treasury of a Christian nation!