

affirm, of the children of Bethlehem who were cruelly massacred by the order of Herod, and the chapel and tomb of Jerome, that marvellous biblical scholar of the fourth century, who here spent thirty years of his life laboriously in the study and exposition of the Scriptures.

Emerging from these rocky vaults—all too dim and dismal to be associated with Him who is the light of the world, I was greatly delighted with a survey of Bethlehem and of its interesting surrounding localities, which are forever immortalized in the pages of the Bible. A short distance north by east of the town is the traditional site of "the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate," from which David, on the sore day of battle, eagerly longed to obtain a draught of clear, cold, refreshing water. Stretching away eastward is the beautiful and fertile plain where once were the fields of Boaz in which Ruth gleaned while she resided with Naomi. Beyond this fruitful plain is the pasture ground on which the humble shepherds watched their flocks on the memorable night that the herald angel announced to them that the Saviour of the world was born in the city of David. The old hills and dales which are seen in other directions agreeably vary the prospect. The town itself, with its good, solid, though not imposing stone houses, has a substantial, prosperous appearance about it. Its present eight thousand inhabitants are particularly noted for their good appearance and for their industrious habits. David, in his early manhood, "was ruddy and wilhal of a beautiful countenance and goodly to look upon." And I must say that the description is applicable to the natives of Bethlehem to the present day. Their ruddy countenance has been even improved, I think, by the streak of foreign blood that evidently came into the veins of the Bethlehemites when the crusaders were the rulers of Palestine.

The thrift and industry of these interesting people are everywhere apparent. On each side of the main street I noticed a large number of workshops in which men and women were busily occupied in the manufacture of bracelets, broaches, beads, crosses and crucifixes and rosaries and many other articles which they were making of olive-wood and of asphalt from the Dead Sea and

of mother-of-pearl oyster-shells from the Red Sea. Accepting the pressing invitations of the tradesmen, we entered several of these bee-hives of industry and purchased some mementoes of Bethlehem. In the immediate neighbourhood of the town the husbandmen were as busy at their work as these artisans were in their workshops. As a result of their industry we saw fine fields of wheat and other kinds of grain growing on the well tilled plains, and beautiful rows of olive, fig and pomegranate trees, varied with vineyards, on the terraced slopes of the adjacent hill-sides. Altogether I was very favourably impressed with the capabilities of the place and the people. With a purer type of Christianity and a better knowledge of agriculture and the mechanical arts, Bethlehem, where the Redeemer of the world was born, may yet become spiritually what it now is in the literal sense of the terms: "A city set on a hill which cannot be hid."

### Our Missionaries in India.

By REV. LOUIS H. JORDAN, B.D.

IN the course of my present trip around the world, I proposed to myself, as one of its definite aims, that visits should be made to as many of the centres of missionary activity as my time and circumstances would permit. And while this tour was undertaken rather in the hope of obtaining general information and of enjoying a period of rest than of pursuing any special inquiry, the subordinate aim just mentioned has never been forgotten. Hence I have had opportunity of becoming acquainted, however slightly, with the work which is being carried on in the east under the auspices of the Methodists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Baptists, Roman Catholics and Presbyterians. Whether in Japan or China, or India, or Ceylon, or Egypt, the Sabbath has been devoted to visiting mission churches, open-air services and schools; while portions of many a week-day have been most pleasantly spent in the class-rooms of native or Christian colleges, and in the homes of professors or pastors, or other new-made friends.

My chief anxiety was to gain the fullest possible familiarity with the work which our own beloved Church is doing in the East. In this quest I was often sorely disappointed, as when it became evident that distance and the lateness of the season precluded any advance towards Tientsin, and the difficulty and irregularity of communication shut off equally any approach to Formosa. In this way,