

deen is the head of the school and keeps good order. He has lengthened the hours without any increase of restlessness among the children. And when I am in the school it is simply to assist him, so that when I have to retire to hold meetings with the adults, or at other calls of duty, I can do so without in the least affecting the school. He speaks English better than Hindustani, but his acquaintance with the customs and ideas of his countrymen gives him an advantage in speaking with them, on religious subjects. One of our young men was reading a lesson on idols, in explaining the lesson a great discussion arose on the subject of idol-worship. The young man gave up the defence of idols (murat) almost at once, but took up the defence of gods (de ota.) I saw that he did not feel on equal terms with me, so I looked on and left him to speak out his mind and get his answer from Soudeen. Soudeen urged that these de ota could not be gods, because, their history shows that they were not possessed of the attributes of deity, and that many things are said of them which cannot be true of God. The fact that scandalous sins were committed by them is quite enough to show that they could not have been God, or even an avatar of deity. The young man answered with a readiness which showed that he uttered what he considered an acknowledged truth, "Well, but god commits sin—everybody is a sinner and God is a sinner too." You can scarcely imagine the horror with which we heard this statement. I believe the blood rushed to both our faces. Our solemn testimony to the character of God seemed to impress the young man, and he has since admitted that it must be true, that God cannot commit sin.

IDOLATRY.

Two weeks ago we had an example of idol and serpent worship in this village. Having heard of the idols from some of the school children, I went to see them. I found them three in number and nearly completed. At their feet were several snakes and one of them had a serpent in its hand. Another had a number of snakes coming up at its back with their heads rising above the head of the idol like a crown. The idols and snakes were all made of clay, shaped, dried in the sun and painted. The workman had been a month employed on them, and his employer hoped that the offerings would make it pay well. He asked my opinion of them, which I gave freely, and I set myself to make the coming festival as far from a success as possible. I found that a great many were quite ready to laugh at the whole affair and would give it no encouragement. On Friday the promoter of the festival brought

me a paper, which I told him was a permit to play his drums and march on the street till ten o'clock on Saturday night. He told me that would not do, he wanted to play and march on Saturday and again on Sunday when they would carry the idols and throw them in the pond. I told him he must not play the drums on Sunday. It was God's day and if he did so, I would lodge a complaint against him. "Well," he said, "it is God's day but this is for God." I said, no; for pieces of dirt fashioned by man's device. I did not see the procession, but they made very little noise on Saturday and none on Sunday, and the people in attendance were not numerous. Perhaps some would be inclined to attribute this to the progress better ideas have made among them or to my influence. I attribute it most of all to the fact, that it was a Bengali affair, and looked upon with indifference by the Coolies from other parts of India. On Sunday the idols were thrown into a pond, and on Monday I went to the house and found them singing, and making offerings to a live snake which they had in a basket. The snake was of a harmless variety and was evidently contounded by the noise that was kept up, for it lay quiet even when the basket was uncovered.

I wanted to secure the idols, and the leading man at the festival would have brought them to the Church, and have left them as long as I liked. But as I declined having anything to do with them, except as curiosities, he would not save them for me. I did not feel justified in offering any thing handsome for them; but if I had, I have no doubt the ceremony would have been so far changed as to save them from the pond and transfer them to my possession. A similar festival with worship of idols and serpents took place a few weeks ago between this and San Fernando. On the Sabbath following the festival in this village, I had about eighty Coolies at the four o'clock service in the Church, and among them I noticed the Coolie at whose expense the idols were made. Every spare moment for a week had been devoted by me to the subject of idolatry and the preparation of plain translations of passages bearing on it. Thus prepared, I told them I would give them not my words, but the words of the Almighty, and I read to them Ps. 115: 1-8. Isa. 40: 12-31. Isa. 43: 10-13; 44: 6-19; and 46: 5-9. To the reading of these passages and the short discourse that followed, they listened with the greatest attention. Although we can not report any conversions to the faith of the gospel, we do feel that the Church is through us bearing witness to the character of God, and declaring "his glory among the heathen" "So shall the heathen fear the name of the Lord."