

should be adopted, by which the Christian Church in India might go alone, and not seek its Holy Orders from an Episcopate, at the distance of ten or twelve thousand miles.—*Chr. Guardian.*

THE COLONIAL CHURCHMAN.

LUNENBURG, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1838.

HENRY MARTYN.—This is a name familiar and dear to the Christian reader, as one of the most eminent followers of the Redeemer in latter times, and a most devoted labourer in the missionary field. His interesting biography by J. Sargent—a most delightful book—we would strongly recommend to the perusal of those who can admire “the mind that was in Christ Jesus.” We have lately arisen from a fresh perusal of it, from which we have derived new pleasure, and we hope additional profit. No minister, we think, can observe the spirituality, the humility, the love, the surpassing zeal for the cause of God, the entire devotedness of this honored herald of the Cross, without being humbled at the contrast to be found in his own heart and life, so as to lead him in fervent prayer to the Throne of Grace for power to be a follower of such an example, that with him he may be partaker of a crown of glory hereafter.

Desirous of imparting to others who may not be so rich as to possess the life of this holy man, the profit and enjoyment to be derived from its contents, we purpose in this and future numbers, to furnish some extracts from the work. It is known to many of our readers, that Henry Martyn was a clergyman of the church of England. That after a brilliant course at college, he was led by the Spirit of God, to devote himself to the cause of missions among the heathen. That he arrived in India in the year 1806, where he applied himself with such intense zeal and assiduity to the work of the ministry, and especially to the translation of the Scriptures, that his weak constitution, enervated still more by the nature of the climate, soon sank under it; and in little more than six years, his pure spirit was wafted to the regions of the blessed.—“A more perfect character,” says one who bore the burthen and heat of the day with him in India (the late Bishop Corrie) “I never met with, nor expect to see again on the earth.”

Though it pleased the inscrutable wisdom of God that his servant should thus early rest from his labours of love (he was scarcely thirty two)—yet he left behind him works which have exercised, and continue to exercise, a powerful influence on the evangelization of the Eastern world.

“By him, and by his means, part of the Liturgy of the church of England, the Parables, and the whole of the New Testament, were translated into Hindoostanee—a language spoken from Delhi to Cape Comorin, and intelligible to many millions of immortal souls. By him, and by his means, also, the Psalms of David and the New Testament were rendered into Persian—the vernacular language of two hundred thousand who bear the Christian name, and known over one-fourth of the habitable globe. By him, also, the imposture of the Prophet of Mecca was daringly exposed, and the truths of Christianity openly vindicated, in the very heart and centre of a Mahometan empire.

“If success be demanded, it is replied—that this is not the inquiry with him “of whom are all things,” either in this world, or in that which is to come.—With him the question is this: “What has been aimed at: what has been intended in singleness of heart?”

“God, however, has not left Mr. Martyn without witness in the hearts of those who heard him in Europe and in Asia. Above forty adults and twenty children, from the Hindoos, have received Christian Baptism, all of whom, with the exception of a single individual, were converted by the instrumentality of one man, (Abdool Messee) himself the fruit of Mr. Martyn’s ministry at Cawnpore. At Shiraz, a sensation has been excited, which, it is trusted, will not readily subside; and some Mahometans of consequence there, have declared their conviction of the truth

of Christianity—a conviction which Mr. Martyn was the means of imparting to their minds. But when it is considered, that the Persian and Hindoostanee Scriptures are in wide and extensive circulation, who can ascertain the consequences which may have already followed, or foresee what may hereafter accrue, from their dispersion?”

His biographer thus justly and eloquently concludes his memoir—

“Nor is the pattern which he has left behind him, to be laid out of our account, in estimating the effects of his holy and devoted life. He doubtless forsook all for Christ; he loved not his life unto the death. He followed the steps of Zeigenbalg in the old world, and of Brainerd in the new; and whilst he walks with them in white, for he is worthy, he speaks, by his example, to us who are still on our warfare and pilgrimage upon earth. For surely as long as England shall be celebrated for that pure and apostolical Church, of which he was so great an ornament; as long as India shall prize that which is more precious to her than all her gems and gold; the name of the subject of this memoir, as a Translator of the Scriptures and of the Liturgy, will not wholly be forgotten: and whilst some shall delight to gaze upon the splendid sepulchre of Xavier, and others choose rather to ponder over the granite stone which covers all that is mortal of Swartz; there will not be wanting those who will think of the humble and unfrequented grave of HENRY MARTYN, and be led to imitate those works of mercy, which have followed him into the world of light and love.”

HENRY MARTYN AT SCHOOL.

“Little Harry Martyn,” for by that name he usually went, says one of his earliest friends and companions, “was in a manner proverbial among his school-fellows for a peculiar tenderness and inoffensiveness of spirit, which exposed him to the ill offices of many overbearing boys; and as there was at times some peevishness in his manner when attacked, he was often unkindly treated. That he might receive assistance in his lessons he was placed near one of the upper boys, with whom he contracted a friendship which lasted through life, and whose imagination readily recalls the position in which he used to sit, the thankful expression of his affectionate countenance when he happened to be helped out of some difficulty, and a thousand little incidents of his boyish days.”—Besides assisting him in his exercises, his friend, it is added, “had often the happiness of rescuing him from the grasp of oppressors, and has never seen more feeling gratitude than was shewn by him on those occasions.”

AT COLLEGE.

His residence at St. John’s College, Cambridge where his name had been previously entered in the summer, commenced in the month of October 1797; and, it may tend to shew how little can be determined from first attempts, to relate that Henry Martyn began his mathematical pursuits by attempting to commit the propositions of Euclid to memory. The endeavor may be considered as a proof of the confidence he himself entertained of the retentive powers of his mind; but it did not supply an auspicious omen of future excellence.

On his introduction to the University, happily for him, the friend of his “boyish days” became the counsellor of his riper years: nor was this most important act of friendship either lost upon him at the time, or obliterated from his memory in after life.

The tenor of Henry Martyn’s life during this and the succeeding year he passed at college, was to the eye of the world in the highest degree amiable and commendable. He was outwardly moral, with little exception was unwearied in application, and exhibited marks of no ordinary talent. But whatever may have been his external conduct, and whatever his capacity in literary pursuits, he seems to have been totally ignorant of spiritual things, and to have lived “without God in the world.” The consideration, that God chiefly regards the motives of our actions,—a consideration so momentous, and so essential to the character of a real Christian, appears as yet never to have entered his mind: and even when it did, as was the case at this time, it rested there as a theoretic notion never to be reduced to practice.

Providentially for Henry Martyn, he had not of the great blessing of possessing a religious friend at college, but the singular felicity likewise of having a sister in Cornwall, who was a Christian of a noble, heavenly, and affectionate spirit.

It may be well supposed, that to a sister, such as his, her brother’s spiritual welfare would be a most serious and anxious concern: and that she often conversed with him on the subject of religion, we have his own declaration. “I went home this summer, was frequently addressed by my dear sister on the subject of religion; but the sound of the Gospel, conveyed in the admiration of a sister, was grating to my ears.”

At length however it pleased God to convince Henry by a most affecting visitation of his providence, that there was a knowledge far more important to him than any human science; and that, while contemplating the heavens by the light of astronomy, he should devote himself to His service, who had made those heavens, did in his nature pass through them as his Mediator and Advocate. The sudden and heart-rending intelligence of the death of his father was the proximate, though doubtless not the efficient cause of his receiving these convictions. How poignant were his sufferings under this affliction, may be seen in the account he himself has left of it:—from whence it is evident, that it was not only a season severe but of sanctified sorrow; a seed time of the promising that harvest of holiness, peace, and which succeeded it.

“At the examination at Christmas 1799,” he writes “I was first, and the account of it pleased my father prodigiously, who I was told was in great heaviness of spirit. What was then my consternation, when in January, I received from my brother an account of his death! But while I murmured the loss of an earthly parent, the angels in heaven were rejoicing at my being so soon to find an heavenly one. I had no taste at this time for my usual studies, I took up my Bible, thinking that the consideration of religion was rather suitable to this solemn time; nevertheless I often took up other books to engage my attention, and should have continued to do so, had I not been advised me to make this time an occasion of serious reflection. I began with the Acts, as being the most amusing; and, whilst I was entertained with the narrative, I found myself insensibly led to inquire more attentively into the doctrine of the Apostles. It corresponded nearly enough, with the few notions I had received in my early youth. I believe on the first night after, I began to pray from a precomposed form, in which I thanked God, in general, for having sent Christ into the world. But though I pray for pardon, I had little sense of my own sinfulness; nevertheless I began to consider myself as a religious man. The first time I went to chapel, I saw, with some degree of surprise at my former inattention, that, in the Magnificat, there was a degree of joy expressed at the coming of Christ, which I thought reasonable. ——— had lent me Doddridge’s *Christian’s Progress*. The first part of which I could bear to read, because it appeared to make religion consist too much in humiliation; and my proud and wicked heart would not bear to be brought down into the dust. And ———, to whom I mentioned the gloom which I felt, after reading the part of Doddridge, reproached it strongly.—Alas! he thought that we can go along the way that leads unto life, without entering in at ‘the straight gate!’

In the year 1800, in writing to his sister, he thus describes the progress of his religious impressions:—

What a blessing it is for me, that I have such a sister as you, my dear ———, who have been instrumental in keeping me in the right way. When I consider how little human assistance you have had, and the great knowledge to which you have attained in the subject of religion,—especially observing your extreme ignorance of the most wise and learned in this world, I think this is itself a mark of the wonderful influence of the Holy Ghost, in the mind of well-disposed persons. It is certainly by the Spirit alone that we can have the will, or power, or knowledge, or confidence to pray; and by Him alone come unto the Father through Jesus Christ. “Through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” How I rejoiced to find that we disagreed only about words! I did not doubt, as