

**Missionary Intelligence.**

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**Missions in Ceylon.**

**POINT-DE-GALLE.**

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. William H. A. Dickson, dated August 15th, 1850.

It is now some months since I wrote to you; but the uniform character of our proceedings prevents that variety which invites to frequent detail. I have continued to visit all our out-stations once in the month, as I before proposed, which, though it occupies me two weeks in each month away from home and more immediate Circuit duties, strengthens them, and prevents that decay which often occurs from want of efficient oversight. In June last I opened a new chapel at Amblangodde, which we have built for the accommodation of the people by the assistance of our friends there, aided by a trifling grant from some private available funds. The district is intensely Heathen, and I trust the chapel will prove a place of salvation to many. The other places in the Amblangodde Circuit afford little room for gratulation, which is mainly to be attributed to the inefficient working of the Station, as its only supply is a young and inexperienced Catechist, who is wholly without influence in the neighbourhood, and the state of the funds prevents a more efficient appointment. Mr. Rodrigo continues to labour on the Balligam Station; and the chapel there is now in a more satisfactory condition. The people generally manifest an awful indifference to truth, and an equally eager pursuit of degradation, in the abominable rites of demon-worship. Sometimes, however, spathy gives place to opposition; and a few Sabbaths since, a company of Buddhists collected under a sacred banian-tree immediately in front of our chapel, at the hour of public worship, with the avowed design of putting it down by a clamorous chanting of Bauu, the sacred writings of the Buddhists. Remonstrances were vain, and the interference of the police-officers was almost leading to its being brought before the Magistrates; but, as I happened to go down at the time, I succeeded in inducing them to accept a promise that the annoyance should not be repeated, without prosecuting the adversaries, which could only lead to irritation of feeling on one side, and unholy influences on the other. Litigiousness is a characteristic of the natives, and by it they often abuse both the law and liberty they are under; and our people are frequently too weak in grace to suffer wrong, as well as too weak in faith to labour amidst trials.

Our aged native brother Salmon is in charge of the Matura Station; and I trust our work among the Burghers at least is advancing. There is a much greater outward decency, and desire for the means of grace, than formerly existed, and a change, I trust "the great change," is observed in the lives of a few.

I visit the families in their own homes when I am on that side, and make it a rule while thus employed to let the conversation be only on serious and eternal things. The schools are still by no means what I could wish, though they have been gradually improving through the year. What is most necessary in this Circuit is a healthy Singalese work; and I regret that the appearances of that are not more promising. The Catechist at Dondra has suffered much opposition in his work, chiefly through the influence and intrigues of the Patagania Schoolmaster, who was dismissed, as mentioned in my last, for the performance of some Buddhist and devil ceremonies.

Difficulties are doubly formidable to a Singalese; but I trust a discipline of trial will make our Catechist "add to patience experience, and to experience hope."

Last month I opened the new chapel which we have been for some time building at Goddapitiya, and preached to those lovers of carnal demon-worship on the spiritual worship of God, who is a Spirit. I say carnal demon-worship: for the devils to whom they offer are beings who are believed to delight in flesh and blood, and to whom they attribute all bodily disease and physical deformity. Our new chapel is small, but neat, pleasantly situated on an eminence in

the midst of this degraded people. I was happy also to find our school there considerably improved, and the work altogether in a more promising state. But the condition of the people is deplorable indeed. In these jungle villages Buddhism has become a practical nullity before the fiercer and fiercer form of devil-worship. So demented are they, that the more intolerably abominable the demon is supposed to be, the more assiduous are they in performing ceremonies to his honour.

Even poor frail men, disreputable Singalese, who lived and died within the memory of some of the present generation, receive an apotheosis, and are honoured and supplicated in festivals and orgies; while the Creator is altogether forgotten, unmentioned, unadored.

How sad it is to think, that in such a district, where spiritual wickedness is enthroned, and multitudes perish in sin, the limits of our great permit us to station only one poor solitary Catechist, aided by occasional visits of a Missionary from a distance of forty miles, a great part of which is through jungle!

I am much depressed at the extent of the southern section of the South Ceylon District, and its peculiar difficulties, compared with the paucity of labourers. Cannot the Committee make us a special annual grant of at least £100 for the more efficient occupation of these jungle stations, teeming with degraded devil-worshippers? Though we should all work ourselves to death, we alone could not efficiently occupy the ground; and the Chairman wrote to me last week that there was no probability of our having further help at present, as the ordinary grant is fully absorbed in existing appointments.

Respecting Galle Circuit, properly so called, I have but little to add, though that little is, I hope, encouraging. Our work has been maintained, and within the last few months two or three new classes have been formed, and there are some manifestations of divine power and grace. I was invited, a short time since, to visit a Portuguese woman, who had not been in a place of worship for upwards of twenty years. I did so, conversed with her, and invited her to our Portuguese service on Sunday evening. She promised to attend, and did so reluctantly; but I was happy last week to receive a letter from her husband, stating that she had left the service profitable, and was desirous of becoming a regular attendant; and that he himself had marked a great change in her conduct.

There is an interesting case of a Singalese convert, now an applicant for baptism. He is a well-educated young man, of a wealthy Singalese family of the Velala or highest caste, and his father is a rigid Buddhist, but says that since his son has become a Christian upon inquiry and conviction, and not in name and for secular purposes, he will not oppose him. The young man was formerly a strenuous defender of Buddhism; but, from conversation with an excellent Christian schoolmaster, and the studious consideration of Christian tracts and pamphlets, and the sacred Scriptures, he has become entirely convinced of the truth of Christianity; and, after much consideration and prayer, is desirous of public baptism, which I hope shortly to administer. All hail Emmanuel! of the increase of His government there shall be no end; and these scarce firstfruits are pledges of a harvest coming, when long-withstanding Buddhism shall finally and forever fall.

My health, I am thankful to state, which was a few months back very seriously impaired, is now considerably improved, and I trust that the amendment will be permanent.

**Biography.**

**Biographical Sketch of Mrs. Sarah McLeod**

"The memory of the just is blessed."

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—The pen of inspiration, in recording the sentiment placed at the head of this commemoration, sanctions my soliciting a place in the columns of *The Wesleyan*, to place before your readers a concise sketch of the life and religious character of a sister in the Lord Jesus, who has been recently removed to the communion of the Church above. Although persuaded of my incompetency to furnish a finished portrait of one distinguished by a more than ordinan-

amount of moral excellence, yet I trust that a careful practical study of the outlines presented may be "blessed" to those who emulate religious worth.

MRS. SARAH McLEOD, the late consort of the Rev. Alexander W. McLeod, was the daughter of Hannon and Cynthia Trueman. She was born at Point De Bute, in the Province of New Brunswick, on the 27th of August, 1812, and enjoyed the inestimable advantage of pious parentage, and consequently of early religious instruction and example. In childhood she gave pleasing indications that she was destined to occupy a high moral and social position; being distinguished by unusual mental vigour, sweetness of disposition, domestic affection, placidity of temper, and amiability of demeanour. Possessing and manifesting this rare and happy combination of qualities, she shared largely in the affections of her family, and of the circle of friends who had the privilege of her society. Her educational opportunities were not adequate to the rapid and full development of her intellectual powers; but the privation of advantages enjoyed by youth of the present day, was compensated by her ardent thirst for knowledge, and by diligent and persevering application to those sources of it which were accessible. By this means she was enabled to outstrip many of her companions of less studious habits, to become a proficient in general English literature, and to acquire a correct rudimentary knowledge of various branches of art and science, for which, in subordination to the more important practical engagements of life, she always cherished a peculiar fondness and taste.

In the range of reading opened up to her she took great interest in perusing the memoirs of persons eminent for piety, and thus, in connexion with parental and ministerial instruction, formed correct views of Divine truth, in its application to Christian experience and practice. When about fifteen years of age, the neighbourhood where she resided was visited by special influences of the Holy Spirit, in connexion with the ministry of the word by the Rev. J. W. Temple, Wesleyan Missionary. Many were brought under deep conviction for sin, and were led to the fountain of living waters. Among those who experienced the blessing of justification by faith in the atoning blood, the subject of this sketch was happily numbered. A previous life characterized by as much blamelessness as attaches to any of the unregenerate gave a peculiar cast to the exercises of her mind while penitently seeking salvation. Her conviction of the depravity of the human heart was deep and intelligent—a consciousness of having lived in a state of alienation from God prostrated her spirit in profound humiliation; she thankfully hailed the message of reconciliation through the sacrificial death of the Redeemer, and opened her heart to the renewing operations of the Holy Spirit. Believing in Him through whom God justifieth the ungodly, she obtained a clear assurance of her adoption. Aided by the regenerating grace which ever accompanies the exercise of pardoning mercy, she consecrated herself unreservedly and irrevocably to Him "to whom her all was due;" and having thus given herself unto the Lord, she gave herself also unto his church, thereby manifesting her acquiescence in the wisdom of Divine arrangements. Thenceforward, the undeviating consistency of her deportment, until a career of pious employment was exchanged for an eminently peaceful transmission to the rest reserved for the saints, afforded indubitable evidence of the reality of that spiritual transformation of which she professed herself a subject.

In August, 1831, she was united by marriage to him who now submissively deploras his irreparable loss. In the new relations in which then, and subsequently, she was placed, there were opened up new fields for the exercise of her natural and gracious endowments. As a wife, she was affectionate and sympathetic, and "looked well to the affairs of her household"—As a mother, tender, indulgent, influential, and exemplary.—Feeling the vast responsibility devolving upon her, she was indefatigable in her efforts for the mental improvement of her children, of whose early education she took the chief charge, and for whose instruction in the truths and duties of christianity she laboured with commendable diligence, accompanied by fervent prayer for the Divine blessing. In her peculiar relation to the Christian Church she faithfully discharged her obligations, co-operating, within her appropriate sphere, with her beloved partner in the duties of the pastorate, by her valuable counsels and affectionate sympathies lightening the pressure of ministerial anxiety, and by her personal exertions, as a Sabbath School teacher, and a Class-leader, assisting in the establishment and extension of the cause of God in the Circuits on which she resided. For both these departments of christian service, and especially the latter, she was remarkably adapted. During the last three years she was entrusted with the charge of a class composed chiefly of young females, for whose spiritual interests she was most conscientiously devoted, and for whose advancement in holiness she laboured, until within a few months of her decease, when growing debility compelled her to practically resign her beloved charge to another. As a friend, she was affable, unobtrusive, prudently confiding, faithful, a cheerful and agree-

able associate, and a judicious adviser. Her circle of intimacy was bounded by the line which separates the church from the world. She took great pleasure in intercourse with Christian friends, to whom her conversation was ever interesting and edifying. For the poor of Christ's flock she always manifested special concern—visiting them for the impartation of instruction and spiritual consolation, and for the ministrations of benevolence as regarded their temporal necessities. By these her removal is painfully felt, and deeply lamented. A fact illustrative of this has come to my knowledge. An indigent, afflicted, and aged coloured woman, who had received many proofs of Mrs. McLeod's benevolent sympathy, on hearing of her death, exclaimed with deep and manifest emotion, "O then my mother is gone!"

But I must lay restraint upon my inclinations, and limit myself to the presentation of a few of those inimitable principles of action, by which our beloved sister was enabled to rise to such honourable elevation of christian character.—Among these may be enumerated,

**Strong attachment to, and appreciation of Divine institutions.**—She greatly valued, and regularly attended the public ministrations of God's word and ordinances. Her seat in the sanctuary was seldom vacant, except at the call of imperative necessity. By judicious domestic arrangements she was enabled to encourage the ministers of God, by her general attendance on week-night religious services. Her demeanour in the house of God was always devout. She revered the Lord's presence in his sanctuary. Her attention to the truth enunciated was fixed, and her habit of contemplation, and of self-application and appropriation of its conscientious and intelligent. Nor was she less distinguished by her manifest delight in the assemblies of the saints for mutual fellowship and prayer, and for her active engagement in those edifying services.

**Veneration for the Holy Scriptures.**—With the doctrines and duties of the christian faith she was intimately conversant. The volume of inspiration was rightly regarded as an inestimable treasure. By a well arranged plan it was consecutively read, with devout study and prayer, furnishing materials for meditation, and for direction amid the perplexities, and consolation in the trials, incident to a pilgrimage on earth.

**Regular attention to private devotional exercises.**—In reference to closet duties she walked by systematic rule. The engagements of domestic life, or the interchange of the courtesies of society, were not allowed to interfere with the time appropriated to secret intercourse with God. His claims on the homage of her heart, and a conviction of her own spiritual necessities, were felt to be paramount to all other considerations; and in her practical obedience to the injunctions of the Redeemer, relating to private devotion, consisted the elements of that religious strength and consistency which I have faintly delineated.

Thus our beloved sister "walked with God," until he was pleased to remove her to a purer sphere of duty and enjoyment. To a life occupied in the cultivation of those divine graces, which, acting upon a mind of superior order, and upon a natural disposition more than ordinarily amiable, formed a character so uncommon, a happy termination was to be confidently anticipated. For "God forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever." This anticipation was delightfully realized. About three years ago, appearances of incipient disorder, in the form of pulmonary consumption, excited the apprehensions of her friends. All the appliances of which conjugal affection and medical science are capable were resorted to in vain. The insidious disease, which ordinarily seeks its victims among the most gentle and lovely of the family of man, made its approaches to the citadel of life stealthily, but with unrelenting purpose. As is the wont of persons under its influence, Mrs. McLeod was the last to recognize its existence, and long declined to place herself under those restraints from exposure in the discharge of public duties, to which the counsels of her friends would fain have prompted her. Her zeal for God, and her estimate of the value of time, as expended in his service, urged her to efforts beyond her strength, until failing nature constrained her to seek invigoration in comparative retirement and repose.

After resigning the charge of her class, she resorted to her place of birth, cherishing the hope that by the blessing of God life might be protracted by a change of air and associations. There was in this hope no want of confidence in the wisdom of Divine procedure, nor of submission to the will of her heavenly Father. Few in like circumstances have manifested more patience and resignation than did this afflicted saint. There were ties to earth which none but God has authority to sunder. The desire would not be criminal, when subordinate to the decision of Him who "worketh all things after the counsel of His will," to be permitted to guide for a much longer time the minds and steps of her five surviving children. And her maternal affections and anxieties clung to this idea, until a few weeks before her death she was informed by her medical attendant, in answer to her own calm and candid enquiry, that her stay on earth was soon to terminate. From that period she sought and obtained the grace to submit with un murmuring cheerfulness to the will of God.