

Missionary Intelligence.

SOCIETY FOR CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 1854.

The Ven. Archdeacon Shortland, in a letter dated Madras, 9th Aug. 1853, wrote as follows respecting the spiritual wants of Cuddapah:—

"The Standing Committee will, I am sure, peruse the enclosed extract from a letter from the Rev. U. Davies with peculiar gratification, assuring us, as it seems to do, of an effectual door opened in a new sphere of labour, and affording a providential call to the Church to come over and help the perishing inhabitants of Cuddapah.

"Cuddapah is an extensive and fertile district, lying west of Nellore, and between it and Bellary. The English station of the same name, the capital of the district (or county town as it may be called), has for some time been occupied by a clergyman, whose income is derived from the Diocesan Additional Clergy Society. Though licensed only to the pastoral charge of the small English congregation, Mr. Davies has started over the perishing native inhabitants. His voluntary missionary labours have been greatly blessed, and when the circumstances under which he is about to leave the people whom he has been made the instrument of adding to the Church are taken into consideration, I cannot doubt that there will be an unanimous response from the Committee and the Board of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and in fact, from the Church at large, as far as she has a voice to express her pious aspirations. God forbid that those for whom Christ died, and who have heard and welcomed the glad tidings of his salvation, should be thus sacrificed."

It appeared from the Rev. U. Davies's letter, that, in addition to his increasing English congregation, he had a number of native Christians under his spiritual care. The infirm state of his health obliged him to quit this scene of important duty.

The Board agreed to grant £500 from the East India Mission Fund towards the Society's designs at Cuddapah, the amount to be paid through the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

Letters were read from the Rev. G. H. Nobes, Chaplain of Pitcairn's Island, thanking the Society for its assistance towards the islanders, and for looks which he had received as gratified. The following are extracts:—

Pitcairn's Island, July 21, 1853.

It has pleased our heavenly Father to permit me to return in safety to my island-home, and to a happy meeting with my family. I arrived here in H. M. S. Portland on the 15th of May, bringing with me my son and daughter. Admiral Moresby has continued to be the last and untiring benefactor, to myself in particular, and the islanders in general. We landed on the Savanna, and after the evening service I read from the pulpit my ordination letters and licence as Chaplain of Pitcairn's Island, granted me by my honoured patron the Lord Bishop of London. The Portland remained off the island four days, and then left us for the Gambier Islands. The next day after her departure the influenza made its appearance, and as there were two or three persons on board the Portland, who were affected with bronchitis, I am inclined to think the germs of the disease were derived from them. Unfortunately the wind was from the north-west, and the atmosphere was very dense and heated, when acted as fuel to the contagion; and so rapid was its progress, that in one week there were not ten persons capable of attending to their own wants. It was the most severe attack since 1840 (the date of its first appearance among us). After an absence of nine days the Portland returned, and the people on board her observing a flag flying on the shore, supposed it to be an intimation that the surf was too heavy to admit of boats landing; and the vessel was in the very act of sailing away, when they providentially observed our boat coming off. On their making known to the admiral our sad condition, he humanely lay by all night (it being very late when our boat got on board) and in the morning sent Captain Chaves and his secretary with one of the ship's surgeons to our assistance. As my small stock of tea and sugar was almost exhausted by imparting to those that had none, the Admiral sent on shore a good supply, and the officers also contributed biscuits and other necessaries. I attribute the severity with which the disease was felt to the debilitated state of the community, owing to the scarcity of food which prevailed for some months prior to my arrival, when they had been reduced to great straits in consequence of the want of rain, which had prevented their planting their usual crop of sweet potatoes. It was for

some weeks almost actual starvation; their only resource being half-grown pumpkins. Myself and my son and daughter, who came with me, escaped the epidemic, and the rest of the community have nearly recovered. No deaths have occurred; so that we are able to sing of mercy and judgment.

"I have administered the Holy Sacrament once since my return, and design (D. V.) to do so monthly. We have about seventy-five communicants. The number of inhabitants amounts to one hundred and seventy-two, eighty-five males, and eighty-seven females. I should be very happy of some copies of some small work upon the Holy Communion, from not having been in a capacity to administer it hitherto, I feel that my flock have not had so much instruction from me on this very momentous subject as they ought to have had."

Nov. 3, 1851.

The Dido has just arrived, bringing your letter, dated 18th June, which is the only one I have received since leaving England. She has brought large quantities of stores for us, from the Government, yourself, and others, but we shall not have an opportunity of opening them before the Dido leaves, so I cannot add any thing to the accompanying letter, but as soon as possible after the division of articles among the families, I shall trouble you with an account of our proceedings.

The Secretaries reported, that a supply of works on the Holy Communion, several copies of the Bible of London's Manual of Family Prayer, and other publications, had been forwarded to the Island in July last.

A letter was read from the Bishop of Barbadoes, dated Trinidad, March, 9th, 1854, stating that he had lately consecrated the chapel of St. Leonard's, Bridgetown, Barbadoes, in the erection of which the Society was assisted. The whole cost of the building was £1500. The Bishop said—

At the consecration there was a very crowded congregation, including the Governor, Sir W. Cockburn, who, with his daughter, has taken a marked interest in the work, and contributed largely to its erection and preparation for Divine Service, and Lieut-General Wood, with his family, whose son had, as Curate of the district, given to the work much of his time and attention, until he was, to our great pain and loss, removed from amongst us by fever in Oct. 1852. I have been able to supply the place, on the nomination of the Rector, by the appointment of a very earnest clergyman of some standing and experience, to the separate charge of the chapel, with a most important district attached to it, inhabited, I fear, by numerous who, for want of sufficient church-room, or sufficient pastoral superintendence, have lived hitherto in almost utter neglect, of all public religion. I have every reason to hope that the Society will find that their donation has in this, as in numerous other instances, helped under God's blessing, to the accomplishment of a very valuable object, likely to result in great and extensive good. The chapel was very much wanted, and it is quite cheering now to behold from a distance its lofty western gable rising above the town.

Selections.

MODERN JEWISH CUSTOMS.

"The Jewish population at Jerusalem has been differently estimated, from three thousand to five or six thousand. The number varies no doubt from time to time. Among them may be found representatives from almost every country in the world, though the greater part of them consist of Spanish, German and Polish Jews. Many of the men are devoted to the study of the law, and are generally acquainted with the Hebrew or the Old Testament, and with the Rabbinic, while they speak as their vernacular tongue, the language of the country where they were born, or whence their fathers emigrated. This fact agrees with the statement in Acts ii. 5, seq., where it is said that "there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven," and that they spoke the several languages of the countries to which they belonged.

The modern Jews at Jerusalem have several synagogues which they attend, not promiscuously, but according to their national affinity. The Spanish Jews, including those from Portugal and the northern coast of Africa, meet by themselves in some of the synagogues, since they are too numerous to form a single congregation; and the German Jews, including those from Poland, Hungary and some other lands, meet by themselves in other synagogues. This fact again, reminds us of something very similar to it in the time of Christ

and the Apostles, and brought to view in Acts vi. 2, seq. We read there that the disputants who engaged in the discussion with Stephen, were connected with synagogues that were supported by distinct national communities. Some of them were of the synagogues of the Libertines, i. e., Jewish freedmen, or the sons of freedmen who came from Rome, some from the synagogues of the Cilicians, (to which Paul belonged probably,) others from that of the Alexandrians, and so on. At Safet, in North Galilee, I learned from the chief Rabbi, Jacob Berish David, that the Jews there amounted to three thousand, and that they had eight synagogues, four of them appropriated to the use of the Spanish and Arabian Jews, and four of them to the use of the German and Polish Jews.

I attended the Jewish worship at Jerusalem, and was struck with the accordance of the ceremonies with those mentioned in the New Testament. The sacred roll was brought from the chest or closet where it was kept, it was handed by an attendant to the reader; a portion of it was rehearsed, the congregation rose and stood while it was read, whereas the speaker, as well as the others present, sat during the delivery of the address, which formed a part of the service. In the manner, we read that the Saviour, on a certain Sabbath at Nazareth, "went into the synagogue, and stood up to read, and there was delivered to him the book (or roll) of the prophet Isaiah; and when he had read, he closed (properly folded up) the book, and delivered it again to the servant, and sat down," and then proceeded to explain to the people the meaning of the scriptures to which they had listened. See Luke iv. 16, seq.

The modern Jews are not unmindful of the ceremonial rites, especially of the ablutions which the Jews in ancient days regarded as so important in connection with their worship. Every synagogue has a tank under the same roof, or in the vicinity, large enough for the immersion of the whole body. In one of the synagogues at Safet, an entire room is fitted with such tanks, one of them which I measured was twelve feet and four inches long, and proportionally deep, was steps leading down to it. Its dimensions equal to those of the swimming baths of the Greeks and Romans. Proselyte baptism, as it is called, is still practised among the Jews. When any one adopts their faith, he is immersed as a sign and seal of his admission into their community. A short time before my visit to Jerusalem, a Jew who had professed himself a Christian, renounced his new faith and returned to that of his fathers. The act of his immersion was performed in one of the synagogues at Jerusalem.

In one of the synagogues at Safet, I found a scribe engaged in making a copy of the law. A more elegant Hebrew manuscript, a more perfect specimen of the calligraphic art, I never saw, than that executed by this Jewish amanuensis. No printed page could surpass the beauty, symmetry and distinctness with which the characters were drawn. On a peculiarly important one, as I cast my eye over the parchment, was the horn-like appendage attached to some of the letters. I had seen the same mark before in Hebrew manuscripts, but never when it was so prominent as here. The sign in question, as connected with Lameth in particular, had almost the appearance of an intentional imitation of a ram's head. It was to that appendage of Hebrew letters that the Saviour referred when he said, "Not one jot or tittle [little horn] it is in the original Greek shall pass from the law until all be fulfilled."—Mat. v. 18. It was on one of the mountains of Galilee, that the Saviour uttered these words, and it was exceedingly interesting to me to meet with such a proof in the same country, that copies of the Old Testament are still made here so minutely similar to those used in the synagogues when Christ himself preached in them.—Prof. Hacks in October No. Christian Review.

CHURCH SOCIETIES IN ENGLAND.—The Spirit of Missions for April publishes the following statement of the objects and the receipts of several Societies of the Church of England, understood to have been drawn up by the Rev. W. T. Webb, Local Secretary of the Domestic Committee. The figures in all cases show the receipts for one year, in most, for the year 1853.

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts,	£120,011
Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, (1)	101,336
National Society, (2)	36,324
Clergy Orphan Corporation, (3)	7,123
London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews,	27,511
Society for enlargement, building, and repairing Churches and Chapels, (4)	38,674