

# Canadian Presbyterian Magazine :

Especially devoted to the interests of the United Presbyterian Church.

"SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY GO FORWARD."—Exodus xiv., 15.

Vol. III.—No. 10.]

TORONTO, APRIL, 1854.

{ PRICE \$1 PER ANNUM\*  
\* Paid in advance.

## CONTENTS.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE—	PAGE	ORIGINAL ARTICLES—	PAGE
Missions in Northern India .....	145	Influence of Christianity on Public Morality and Institutions .....	152
Australia .....	147	Translation of Calvin's Commentary on 1 Peter .....	154
Australian Aborigines.....	148	Address of Rev. R. Irvine. ....	155
New Hebrides—Aniweum .....	148	MISCELLANEOUS—	
The Czar and the Sultan .....	149	Poetry—Grace Abounding .....	157
Protestantism in Turkey.....	149	Grandeur of Missions .....	156
Split among the Jews .....	149	The Wise Fool .....	156
Moravians—Labrador .....	149	The Temple .....	157
EDITORIAL NOTICES—		Cheer Up .....	158
Call—Demission .....	150	The Bible—The Will of God .....	158
Death .....	150	The Forgetians .....	159
Rev. Dr. Duff.....	150	Education in Russia.....	160
Contributions to Uppar Canada .....		Rome Dreads the Bible.....	160
Bible Society .....	151	Patagonia .....	160
Methodism and Calvinism .....	151	Coughing in Church.....	160
Union of Free and United Presbyterian Churches .....	152		

## Religious Intelligence.

### MISSIONS IN NORTHERN INDIA, OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OLD SCHOOL, UNITED STATES—COMMENCED IN 1823.

One of the earliest of these missions to which these pages are devoted, was formed in North India. It has also become one of the largest missions; so that a full account of its history cannot be given in this work. I would aim here at giving merely a general view of India as a missionary field, and the Presbyterian mission in its north-western provinces.

The country, to which the title of India is now commonly applied, forms a well-defined part of south-eastern Asia. It is bounded on the north-east by the Himalaya Mountains; on the north-west by the river Indus, and on other sides by the Indian Ocean, and the Bay of Bengal. From Cape Comorin, in north latitude  $8^{\circ}$ , to Cashmere, in  $34^{\circ}$ , its length is about 1,900 miles; and its greatest breadth, from the mouth of the Indus to Burmah, is about 1,500 miles. Owing to its irregular figure, its area may be stated at about 1,230,000 square miles, being nearly the same as that of the old twenty-six States of our confederacy.

Some parts of this vast territory are mountainous, though they are under cultivation to a considerable extent. At the north-west some districts are nearly deserts of sand, while extensive deltas at the mouth of the Ganges and some other rivers, are also uninhabitable. The greater part of the country, however, possesses a rich soil, which is mostly under cultivation, and which under the heat and moisture of a tropical climate, produces a large supply of food and clothing for its own inhabitants, and some of the most valuable articles of commerce with foreign nations. The people of India, estimated at 150,000,000 are clothed to a great extent from the cotton grown in certain districts; and the production of this important article of modern commerce might, no doubt, be greatly increased. Sugar, indigo, opium, and rice, are all leading staples of Indian commerce. Rice forms a large part of the food of the natives, and is exported to foreign countries. In the northern provinces, wheat and other grains are cultivated.

The Hindus differ from each other in their appearance, and probably in their origin. Commonly they are of a dark complexion, but the wealthier classes are of a lighter color. In some provinces, as in Bengal, they are a slightly-built, effeminate race; in others, as in Rajpootana, and other north-western provinces, they are a muscular, vigorous people, the men looking quite warlike, with their match-locks, shields, and swords. They are by no means a savage race. A certain kind of civilization has existed for centuries. They are found cultivating the soil as their chief employment, but carpenters, blacksmiths, weavers, dyers, gardeners, grocers, cooks, barbers, teachers, learned men, soldiers, priests, and other classes show a civilized state of society—though these terms do not describe occupations or professions at all so advanced as we meet with in western nations. Their habits of life are simple, and

for the most part regular. Two meals a day, chiefly of vegetable food, with no other beverage than water, supply their wants. There are some men of wealth, but most of the people are extremely poor. Hard-working men, in the fields or on boats, are glad to obtain three rupees a month for wages, or less than a dollar and a half, out of which they must find themselves. Their hope of better circumstances depends on Christianity. This will relieve them from the heavy burdens of idolatry and superstition, which now consume much of their time and property. It will break the yoke of caste and allow scope for enterprise. It will substitute the holy day of rest for numerous festivals, demoralizing and expensive. It will teach them truth, integrity, contentment, domestic happiness, so needful to all men, but especially to the poor. Religion will then be their best support, instead of being, as it surely is now, their greatest burden.

It is difficult to describe clearly the religion of the Hindus. Conflicting views are given in their sacred books. Some writers maintain the unity of the Divine nature, others, pantheistic notions, others still, polytheism, many are fond of metaphysical subtleties, more delight in foolish legends and corrupting histories—such as the amours of the god Krishna with several thousand dairy-maids. Their sacred writings are very voluminous, and contain many just sentiments and good precepts; but contain also greater quantities of nonsense and depravity than could be found in the literature of all other nations.

Some authors have attempted to treat this religion as if it were a logical system. They speak of Brahm as regarded by Hindus as a pure and original spirit, pervading all things, but existing in an unconscious state, until, suddenly awakening, he created in illusion or caused their images to appear the universe, and the seeds of things that should exist; he then gave existence to Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiv, and committing to them further conduct of the world, he relapsed into unconsciousness. As a spirit taking no interest in the affairs of men, Brahm receives no worship whatever, but the triad, Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiv, the destroyer,—supposed to represent the three conditions of all finite existence,—are worshipped over all India. innumerable lesser divinities, gods and goddesses, are also worshipped in various places, at particular times, or for special jurisdiction over the affairs of human life, each by his own followers. A goddess is worshipped by thieves and murders; another is invoked for the removal of the small pox, a god presides over the fields, &c. Whatever theory may be advanced in order to systematize the religious belief of the Hindus, or however their learned men may speculate on the metaphysical and actual relations of the gods to each other and to human beings, it seems to be quite certain that practically this religion is neither more or less than a heterogeneous compound of gross idolatry. The image of Shiv may perhaps help the learned worshipper to meditate on the object of worship to nearly all who resort to its temple. Not only are images of various sizes and figures—constructed out of clay, stone, wood, or metal—the objects of religious worship, but certain trees, stones, rivers, &c. The Ganges is considered a goddess, and receives worship from most of those who live on its banks, and from multitudes who resort to it from distant parts of the country. To bathe in its waters is a sure way to become free from sin, to die on its banks, drinking its water and invoking its name, is a passport to heaven. Thousands of worshippers may be seen every day paying their homage to this river, and in many places the sick and dying are exposed on its banks, under the burning sun by day, and in the damp air at night, in the vain hope of thereby ending life in peace, and going at once to a better world.

The doctrine of the transmigration of the soul, or its passage from one body into another, is a part of this religion. This idea of a succession of births into higher or lower beings, according to the conduct, has great influence over the Hindus. To deter men from killing Brahmans, for instance, Manu, the great law-giver, enacts, that "the slayer of a Brahman must enter into the body of a dog, a boar, an ass, a camel, a bull, a goat, a sheep, a stag, a bird, a low person, or a demon." The common abstinence from meat as food, results theoretically from this belief, otherwise, men might kill and eat the bodies of their relatives or friends. One of the effects of this opinion is similar to that of a belief in purgatory—it serves as a sedative to the conscience; men may be punished for their sin by an evil birth, but they will hope to escape from it by some meritorious act,—it is not considered an irrevocable sentence.