

"While in Nariad I made the acquaintance of a character far differing from that of the unassuming Guru. This was not a resident of the place, but a "holy man," who had come to impress the people with his sanctity, and receive in return whatever honour and money his admirers might feel disposed to bestow. He had taken up his position with his followers in an open place in the vicinity of some trees. In modern Hinduism the first element of holiness or fitness for heaven is the absence of any ostensible means of gaining a livelihood. Our holy man was, of course, so far qualified; but in addition, he sat all day on a plank full of iron spikes, and walked on sandals bristling with nails an inch long; hence he was able to support about a dozen disciples or servants, as well as keep two or three camels, two pairs of bullocks, and a horse or two. People had feasted their eyes so long, that when we commenced to preach one evening, at a short distance, we attracted the whole crowd, and also two of his people whom he soon called in and reproved. On going up close to his holiness, I observed he had a good thick pillow between himself and the spikes on which his bare feet alone rested. There was no attempt at concealment, the pillow was visible to all; but he had established his reputation for austerities in by gone years, and could now safely draw on it. A native friend tried the sandals, and found very little inconvenience from the nails, as *there were so many and they were so closely set*. I have since heard that his saintship had to retire in disgrace."

General Religious Intelligence.

The Rev. G. Brown of Pau, contributes to the *Free Church Record* an account of his visit to the Union of the Evangelical Churches of France, or the French Free Church, which held its twelfth Synod at Mazamet, near Toulouse, in October last, from which we take the following:—

The Synod, which sat for a week, was opened on Thursday, the 19th October. It usually meets every second year; and as its last meeting was held in 1868, it would have assembled in 1870, but for the war and the siege of Paris. Accordingly, the Reports which were presented and reviewed extended over a period of three years.

The place of meeting was the Free Church "Temple," a plain building seated for four hundred persons, but in which sometimes six hundred or more found room to sit or stand. The forty-four churches of the Union were represented by their pastors, and many of them also by elders; while nearly twenty deputies from other Churches, French, Swiss, and British, were present. No wonder the scattered pastors of the Union prize the meetings of their Synod. They can hold no Presbyteries, and many of them have seldom the opportunity of taking counsel or of holding fellowship with a brother. At Mazamet it was pleasant to see their cordial greetings, their brightened countenances, their constant exchange of sympathy, and to hear the swell of their voices as they joined in the singing of the Chants Chrétiens. They have several men of power, intellectual and spiritual, among them. Daily the Synod was stirred by the earnest words of MM. De Pressensé, Fisch, Th. Monod, Pozzy, Hollard, Byse of Nismes, and others, the contagion of whose influence will be carried by the brethren to their isolated spheres of labour. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."