

# THE MISSIONARY RECORD

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### LIGHT IN THE DWELLING.\*

The plague of darkness was the ninth of those plagues which God sent upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians. How little do we think, that the day is the Lord's that the night also is His, that he created the light and the sun! By a command he could withdraw yon luminary from the heavens, or cover his face with sackcloth, and leave the world in total darkness. And were this happening at noon-day what would be our consternation! Were the heavens all at once becoming dark, while the sun had not yet run his course, and while we could assign no cause for the phenomenon, what amazement, what alarm, would fill every breast! Such were the circumstances of the Egyptians as we have them recorded, Exodus x. 21-23. They had been familiar, indeed, with the wonders of Jehovah's power, and the tokens of his anger; but this did not take from the majesty or awfulness of each plague as it arose at the command of God. Conceive the Egyptians arrested at their occupations by this thick darkness, without any warning, without any twilight ushering it in, darkness coming down upon them at once, like a thick mantle, and what would not be their wonder and alarm! It was a darkness that might be felt: it lasted three days.—there was no sun all that time, no moon, no stars—nothing to relieve the impenetrable gloom; so that "they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place three days." In the midst of this darkness, while there was light no where else, we are informed

"all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings." They had light, applied no doubt directly from Him who gave the sun his light, and who says: "I form the light, and create darkness." We need not inquire how they obtained that light: it is enough to know that they had it—light to walk by, light to work by, light to enjoy. We may regard this circumstance as descriptive of the spiritual condition of all God's people in all ages, in contrast with the world around: They have light in their dwellings.

And in a certain sense this is true of all to whom the light of the word of God has come. That word is light. When man departed from God, when he fell: he extinguished with his own hand that light which God had given to guide him, and darkness immediately covered all his faculties, so that he could discern no spiritual truth or object aright. From that moment spiritual darkness brooded over the earth. We cannot now discern those great truths which are necessary to guide us—to lead us to God—and to enable us to walk with him. All history is a corroboration of this truth. If we go to those heathen countries which are yet destitute of the knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus the only Saviour, what complete darkness in regard to spiritual things! How melancholy the ignorance that prevails in reference to God, to his law, and to the way of salvation! What sin! What foolish superstitions! What gross idolatry! What revolting cruelties! Compared with such a state of things as exists in those dark places of the earth, we have light in our dwellings! And oh! how should we prize that light! How should we bless God that such light has come to us! But

\* "Light in the dwelling," is the title of a work by Mrs Fry, the author of the "Listener,"—being short comments on different passages of the New Testament.