

their work, even "this solitary place" would yet be made glad, and the desert, dry and barren as it is, and overrun with thorns and briars, would rejoice and blossom as the rose, and become the habitation of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The Lord, however, works by means, and unless these are speedily procured, the evil that is already so deeply felt, and so much deplored by many, will continue to increase, and new obstacles will be thrown in the way. Strongly impressed as I am with the certainty that such will be the result in the case of further delay, permit me to take the liberty of suggesting to you the propriety of sending Mr. McColl or Mr. McKinnon, who have completed their Theological studies, and who are, besides, acquainted with the Gaelic language, to visit the people of this district.

The contributions to the fund of the Home Mission, I hope will be considerable, but on account of circumstances which need not be mentioned, will not probably be fully collected until the month of January. Part however, may be realized sooner, and will likely be paid to me, for which I will be accountable to the Home Mission Committee.—Mr. Leshman will perhaps be able to give you what other information may be necessary.

### Foreign Missions.

The recent intelligence from Calcutta is deeply interesting. From the time when Dr. Duff and his colleagues were driven from the Mission premises, leaving their whole stock of books and apparatus behind them, the seminary under their care suffered not the slightest injury, in so far as the number of pupils was concerned. They commenced operations in the new premises with about 1090 on the roll, and this number has been steadily increasing ever since. But this unexampled measure of outward prosperity did not satisfy the hearts of these devoted Missionaries, and in the midst of all that was encouraging and cheering in this respect, their correspondence has indicated throughout their earnest longings for some token of the divine presence and favor in regard to the higher aim of their labors, viz: the conversion of souls.—The much desired blessing seemed to be denied, and instead thereof came a severe and trying bereavement. Two youthful converts of the highest promise as to future usefulness among their benighted countrymen, were suddenly snatched away by the hand of death. But as it has often been found in the experience of God's people, the darkest hour was that which immediately preceded the dawn, and we rejoice to announce that the Lord hath visited very graciously his chastened and mournful servants. Their sorrow has been turned into rejoicing, for the Lord "hath heard their supplications—the Lord hath received their prayer."

The narrative which Dr. Duff gives of the conversion of Umesh Chandra Sirkar and his wife, unfolds one of the most remarkable instances of awakening which we have ever seen recorded; and the perusal of it will awaken adoring gratitude in the dwellings of the righteous, and lead many, we trust, to be more importunate in their pleading for India at the throne of grace. What the Lord has been pleased to do in the case of these wanderers, he is able to do for thousands. "His hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, his ear is not heavy that it cannot hear."

This event occurred in the latter end of April. Umesh was a student in one of the higher or college classes of the Institution. It now appears that for two years his mind has been under deep religious impressions, leading to many serious exercises and internal struggles—although this was wholly unknown to the Missionaries. About a month before this period, his father—a person of high standing in the Hindoo community at Calcutta—under some apprehensions of leanings towards Christianity, removed him from the institution, and placed him under great restraint, so that he could only pay an occasional and stealthy visit to the Missionaries. On the first occasion, however,

of his coming in this private way, he revealed the entire state of his mind and circumstances to Dr. Duff. He also made known the affecting fact that from the time of his first serious impressions, he had begun to instruct his wife, a young creature, then little more than ten years of age—he himself being at the time about sixteen. The wife had proved a willing, docile and successful pupil. She became fully convinced of the worthlessness of the idolatrous system in which she had been trained, but being yet without a sufficiently lively impression of the gospel scheme of salvation, she pleaded for some delay, saying to her husband—"what would be the use of my leaving all, if I did not feel myself ready to become a Christian?" This hesitancy on the part of his wife, proved a source of great anxiety and distress to Umesh, who felt constrained by his own convictions and feelings to profess his faith in Christ at once. But as this step would involve his utter separation from her, and the casting away of the only chance of conveying the truth to her soul, he was powerfully restrained from taking it immediately. He continued her instruction for some time longer. The sickness and death of Mahendra occurred, which seems to have been greatly blessed to Umesh.—The faith of his wife was strengthened, and in reading the "Pilgrim's Progress" with her, a book which Mahendra had given them before his death, when they came to that part where Christian finally resolves to forsake all and flee from the city of destruction, she stopped, and as if under a resistless impulse, said to her husband: "Is not this exactly our condition? Are we not now lingering in the city of destruction? Is it not our duty to act like Christian—to arise, forsake all and flee for our lives?" To the spirit of this spontaneous utterance, Umesh joyfully responded, and after various trying difficulties, they made their escape from his father's house, and took refuge at Dr. Duff's. He thus describes their unexpected but welcome arrival:

"On Sabbath afternoon, the 20th instant, about four o'clock, while meditating in my own closet on the ways of God, and wondering whether, and in what way, he might graciously interpose to deliver us from our distresses, suddenly the outer door of the house was opened, and in a moment Umesh, his wife, and Jagadishar, one of the converts, appeared before me! It looked like the realization of a vision or a dream. "The Lord be praised," said I—what could I say less?—"His mercy endureth forever. He hath visited and helped his servants. To him be all the praise and glory."

Of the trials to which Umesh and his wife were subjected for several successive days by the importunities and violence of his relations and friends, I have not space to describe. They persevered in, in every form, until their baptism on the following Sabbath, we can only find room for the following specimen, extracted from Dr. Duff's most interesting letter:—

"In the evening, his father and eldest brother came to our house in the greatest trepidation and distress. They remained upwards of two hours, and would have remained all night, had I deemed it proper to allow them. They implored, they expostulated, they besought—accompanying their entreaties with tears, and looks indicative of mental agony. All the tenderest and most endearing associations were pathetically appealed to. Bribes, allurements, and proffers of every kind were freely held out. All these were alternated with various attempts to whitewash Hindooism, and bespatter Christianity; but all in vain. They then dealt out the most formidable threats—declaring, moreover, that he was not of legal age—that they would apply forthwith for a writ of *habeas corpus* against me—that he and I would both be severely punished—and that have them rescued they would, by fair means or foul, though it should cost them *lacs*, or hundreds of thousands of rupees. The young man, who is certainly of age—which for males in this country is *sixteen*—being now at least *eighteen*, remained perfectly cool, collected, and calm. To their questions he meekly replied—to their arguments he intelligently responded—to their abuse and revilings he answered not a word, but maintained an unbroken silence. At length I begged of them to ask him plainly whether he wished to stay in my house, or go away with them; that if he wished to stay he was welcome to do so; and that if he wished to go he was free to go. They did so again and again; and again

and again he told them, in the clearest and most emphatic manner, that of his own free-will and accord he came to our house, that it was his own free desire to remain; and that he did not wish to return, and would not return with them. "I am a believer in Christ Jesus," he said; "I trust in him alone for salvation; and by the grace of God nothing will prevent me from publicly embracing him by baptism." At last, when all efforts failed, the father, who had hitherto kept within reasonable bounds, lost all temper, patience, and sense of propriety. He stood up, and with uplifted arm and vehemence of gesture, he advanced towards his son, looking like a person fairly infuriated. For a few moments it seemed as if the swelling tumult of passion could find no vent, and then it impetuously burst forth into something like a volcanic eruption. With a rapid, fearful, and overpowering energy, he poured upon his son "the curses of a father, and the curses of a father's fathers for a thousand generations; and the curses of all the gods, whether in heaven, or in earth, or in hell.—And you'll be smitten," said he, "with every disease, and overtaken by every calamity. You'll be deaf, and you'll be dumb, and you'll be blind, and you'll be a leper, and you'll pass through innumerable births of loathsome monsters and reptiles. Every pain and every misery will be yours. You will be an eternal disgrace and reproach to your kindred and your country; all that bear of your name will load it with execrations; and the very depths of hell will everlastingly receive you."—These and other similar curses, uttered in the Bengali language, and in a tone of unearthly vehemence, made all present instinctively quail & shudder. At length, as if exhausted by the effort, his voice stopped; and seizing his son by the hand, he meltingly implored him to come away. His son could only reply: "Father, forgive me, as I forgive you; but my mind is made up and I cannot go with you." Shortly afterwards all went away; and peace and quietness being restored, we commended ourselves in the reading of the Word, and prayer, and praise, to the mercy and protection of a covenant-keeping God."

It is interesting to observe that this is the first instance in this part of India, of a respectable Hindu and his wife being both admitted at the same time on a profession of their own, into the Church of Christ by baptism. Although the baptism as has been intimated, allayed the violence of Umesh's friends, this conversion made a deep impression on the Native Society in Calcutta, which has been greatly extended and strengthened by the events which followed, but which we can only advert to. On the 7th of May a young Hindu named Bykanta Nath, came to Dr. Duff respecting baptism. He had been upwards of eight years in the institution.

"In the case of this convert the trials have been peculiarly severe. Threats, allurements, entreaties, tears,—every variety of persuasion which human ingenuity could devise, was resorted to, in order to withdraw him from those with whom he found grace to cast in his lot. At length, by stratagem, he was decoyed to the gate, and by main force, and in open day, carried off by his heathen relatives. For about three weeks he was kept in such seclusion, that the most active search which the missionaries, who had obtained a writ of *habeas corpus*, could cause to be instituted, was fruitless. A later communication, however, conveys the pleasing intelligence of his restoration. He is now with those who have been honored to lead him to Christ.

"This case, from the peculiarity of its circumstances, and coming so closely on the back of Umesh's, made a prodigious noise, and lighted up afresh all the fires of an exasperated bigotry. Nor was this all. On Sabbath the 10th (the Sabbath immediately following Bykanta Nath's abduction) another nice young man from one of our senior classes, made his appearance, applying for baptism. His name is Banko Behari Basu. On Tuesday, the 13th, at the evening prayer-meeting in the Free Church, he was baptized by Mr. Ewart. This, of course, furnished fresh fuel for the flames already blazing all around. Nor did the matter stop here. On Sabbath, the 18th, another of our young men came forward with a similar application; and on Sabbath, the 25th, was publicly baptized in the Church by Mr. McDonald. His name is Hariah Chandra Mitra. More still. On Saturday last, the 31st ult., another candidate for baptism appeared, in the person of a young man