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"SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY GO FORWARD."—Exodus xiv., 10.

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CONTENTS.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.	PAGES.	RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.	PAGES.
India—Lodiana Mission.....	161	Series of Toronto and Fam	
Land of Ham.....	161	hoods—Disruption of Rev.	
Country of the Gabbon.....	162	Mr. McClure.....	169
Country of the Zulus.....	162	ORIGINAL ARTICLES.....	
Country of the Zulus.....	162	Reason or Revelation.....	162
Jerusalem, Palestine, Syria.....	163	United Presbyterian Church His-	
Letters from Jerusalem.....	163	tory.....	170
Jews in China.....	165	Kammacher's Parables.....	172
Social condition of the English		Faith, a means of Sanctifying	
Jews.....	165	the Soul.....	173
Inhabitants of America.....	166	MISCELLANEOUS—	
Red River Settlement.....	166	Poetry—Yet there is Room.....	171
New York In Lane.....	167	Sanctification of the Sabbath.....	174
Defence of Texas Seminary.....	167	Profane Swearing.....	175
Novæ South.....	167	Founder of Ragged Schools.....	175
Opening of Bible Burning.....	167	The way to be Saved.....	175
EDITORIAL NOTICES.....		Father and his three Sons.....	175
To Subscribers.—Meeting of		A word to the Young.....	176
Syaoi.—Meeting of Presby-		licans, Receipts, Advertisement	176

Religious Intelligence.

INDIA—LODIANA MISSION.

AN EVENING AT JWALA MUKH.—SIGHTS AMONG THE HEATHEN

The Rev. J. H. Obison is the writer of the following paper. No one who begins to read it will leave it unfinished. Our missionary friends help us to see the heathen as they are:—

Quitting an account of the journey from Lodiana, and many other details, let me present some of the scenes witnessed one evening at Meia of Jawa Mukh last year. The city of Jawa Mukh is the eastern part of the Panjab, situated at the foot of one of the ranges of the grand Himalaya chain of mountains. The city takes its name from the shrine, and the shrine is called Jawa Mukh—Mouth of Flame—from the fact that thin, lambent flames of burning gas issue from the mountain side.—The Hindus say and believe that these flames are but the manifestations of one of their most popular goddesses. Here they have built a temple enclosing the Devi, and here millions present their offerings. It is given out by the Priests, and believed by the people, that no combustible material will burn in this flame. But this is woeefully accompanied with a proviso that the material must be brought in contact with the flame *erotunately, underrigally*. Countless numbers of absurd and contradictory stories about this infatuation of gas receive full credence by this poor deluded people.

The scenes of one evening are sufficient to show how much the gospel is needed to humanize, elevate, enlighten and save. Other means have all brought forth miserable fruits. Imagine the multitudes gathered here, thickly covering a vast area, swaying to and fro, a living sea of humanity, and the noise of mingled murmuring and roaring, like the noise of many waters. As the day draws to a close the shadows come down from the mountains, and the darkness gathers around the multitudes.—Then here and there and everywhere throughout the vast assemblage the Fakirs light their little lamps in imitation of Jawa Ji, ring their bells, and gather their circles of deluded followers. It might seem that such a vast multitude of human beings in various costumes, with the robed guests' twinkling lamps, unknocking bells, and devout cries, would appear grand, but all other feelings are lost except sadness and disgust. The fully and blasphemous wickedness is so very, very palpable.—Approaching one of the lights we see a Fakir in a long robe, with a bell in his hand, which he rings as he sings and genuflects, ever and anon bowing to the lamp which represents, or rather is, through the miraculous power of the priests) the goddess. The people sitting round in a circle, bow and clime in with a chorus. A poor wet-head-looking votary who has just joined the circle, presents a few pice to the flame of the lamp, placing them upon the lamp-stand from which they are

conveyed to the Fakir's pocket. The Fakir mumbles over a prayer for the benefit of the offerer, at the close of which all the circle shout "Victory to the Devi!" and bow their foreheads to the ground.

At another pace we find a large company gathered around a Fakir, who has a large lamp on each hand. Holy music is kept up by some musicians. The Fakir dances, whirling around on one foot, balances the lamps on his fingers, waves them to and fro, and singing, applies the flame to a sheet stretched over his head without burning it. The people murmur inwardly, "Is not a god?"—and they are robbed of their pice by imposture.

A little distance further on, a Fakir is dressing and ornamenting a boy like a girl. Having completed all the arrangements, the music strikes up, a burning lamp is placed in the hand of another boy not disguised—and the newly-made girl begins to dance and bow and twist about. Then the boy with the lamp moves around the dancing one, presenting the flame to his face as gracefully as possible, and the simple people sitting by gaze with a stupid, superstitious wonder at the pantomimic representation of some of the deeds of the gods.

Ascending some steps to a kind of platform on the side of the mountain, we behold a kind of shrine. Before it is a burning lamp, on one side sits the musician, ringing bells, striking cymbals and singing. Two Fakirs profess to be fired with the spirit of the Devi and to have the power of divination and giving oracles. One had been overpowered by the spirit of Devi and now stood motionless with his hand bound. Coming to himself a little, his hand was loosed. He then took his long iron tong, with short bits of iron like lashes at one end, and beat himself terribly over the back until he wrought himself into a high state of fever, then bowing before the flame, gazed at it for some time with a fixed, stupid stare, until suddenly he gave a shriek and a jump, and he was dispossessed of the Devi. The surrounding multitude cried, "Victory to Devi!" The other, who had long, matted, dirty hair, and his almost naked body smeared with some kind of mixture, had placed himself on all fours between the legs of the first during the time of his non-leaving, where he twisted himself about most awfully. Then he rolled himself in contortions upon the hard stony ground. Rising upon his hands and knees he crawled towards the lamp; and gazing at the miniature Jawa Ji as if to drink in some supernatural influence, he began to shake his head rapidly and fiercely, and twist his body like a serpent. In this state he was prepared to utter oracles for the benefit of any who wished information. One person from the crowd asked if there was any person at the Meia who owed the Devi anything. "The duty, but anxious oracle still shaking his head, mumbled forth, "Yes, there are many, but some *teill pay to marriage*." Another question put was, "My wife will not speak to me; what is the reason?" In the midst of the noise I could not catch the broken answer. The poor stupid fellow, after crawling about again, and after some more contortions, returned and gazed at the flame. Then wringing his neck almost off, he gave a loud shriek, and the spirit of the Devi had left him. The stupid people immediately shouted, "Victory to the Devi!"

Such are a few of the scenes witnessed one evening. Similar scenes, and perhaps more revolting, were at the same time being enacted at all of the other hundreds of twinkling lights.—H. & P. Record.

THE LAND OF HAM. OR AFRICA—HER CURSE AND HER CURSE AND

{CONTINUED.}

Long and dreary has been the night which has hung over the race of Ham. More than four thousand years has been the "servant of servants." From generation to generation has he dragged out a miserable existence under the "curse." Though the curse seems to have descended primarily and temporarily through the lineage of Canaan—"Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be"—yet it seems to have been entailed principally and perpetually on the whole race of Ham. To the Canaanites it was death and extermination—punishment signal and immediate. To the other branches of Ham's family it has been long and lingering—slavery, oppression, degradation. The annals of history afford no other such example of a people so long and so sorely trodden down and oppressed. Be it that they have, during all this dark and protracted