

agents. The future growth of the Mission must depend largely on the development of native talent and liberality. Hence the great importance of the step now taken, which the Committee now feels assured, will have the fullest sanction of the Assembly and the Church.

Three Hindoos are now working under the supervision of the Council, viz., Charles Ragbir who is stationed at Diamond, one of the outlying sections of Mr. Grant's field. The people raise £20 for his support and the Committee grants this year £90. Rev. Lal Behari, who is Mr. Grant's assistant, and has a salary of £100 and a house, and C. C. Sooden, whose labours are divided as occasion requires between the Princetown and Tunapuna field, and at a salary of £100 and a house. Reports from these brethren were received at the close of the year, and are of the most interesting character. They show how diligently their work is carried on and how thorough has been the instruction which they received from the missionaries and which they are now in turn imparting to others.

A SERMON BY REV. JOHN McNEILL.

NAAMAN THE SYRIAN, 2 KINGS V. 1-14.

Leprosy, of course, is a type of sin. How much teaching is in type, you and I scarcely know. When I had the honour to preach in Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle on "The cleansing of one of the New Testament lepers," I said that I thought the sight of a leper would greatly tend to quicken, and give practical meaning and force in our minds to all Bible teaching about the exceeding sinfulness of sin. I have since seen a returned foreign missionary who almost wanted just at that point to set me aside, and to stand up for five minutes himself and describe to the audience what leprosy really is, and the awful effect which the first acquaintance with it has upon English eyes and English hearts and understandings. I will not attempt to set it forth. I cannot. I have not seen it, neither have the bulk of us seen it; but let us understand that leprosy is one of the Bible's representations of the intense malignity and defilement of the mortal malady that has attacked you and me, namely, sin. Naaman, then, was a typical man, a man afflicted and covered with this typical disease; and we have to follow the turnings and windings of the narrative, which he made somewhat unnecessarily protracted, in order to see how this typical sinner fares when he comes into contact with the Lord God Almighty, the only God of grace and salvation for a leprous sinner.

Notice how, in the very first verse, then, the Bible puts this doctrine of the *depth of our need* as represented in the disease of leprosy. Many people are stumbled at it. The vision of a leper is a sermon to every one who sees him, as to what sin is in its insidious, but mortal, and, but for one cure, incurable ravages upon the inner man, the soul within us. I am stating the doctrine roughly, harshly. I may so put it as to state it, as you think, in a somewhat unbalanced way. Do not blame the Bible. The Bible is wonderfully considerate. As it states the case of Naaman, so it is willing to state the case of every one here. It puts it, but see how softly it puts it: "Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria"—it admits that he was a captain—"was a great man"—the Bible admits that—"because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria"—quite a special man. The Bible admits that—"he was also a mighty man in valour";—good general: perhaps the only general. The Bible admits that; but making all admissions, and taking in everything by the way, it does say, and it dares to say, and it insists upon saying—"but he was a leper." As it is put there, so I would like to put it here. You are amiable. I grant that you are amiable, I am willing to admit it; but at the bottom, the last analysis of all that you are, yields this, that you are a sinner: you are a leper. That is the last analysis. Taken into God's scales, tested in His crucible, weighed in His balances, here is the end, "*but he was a leper.*" Amiable, but an amiable sinner; refined, a refined sinner; wealthy, a wealthy sinner; a peer of the realm, a sinner as regards your spiritual condition.

The Bible makes all allowances. It is not rude; it takes everything into consideration, but it will not speak false words. It will not say "Peace," when there is no peace. It will not give a clean bill, and allow you to come into port, when you ought to be riding quarantine because there is infectious disease on board. The Bible will be honest with you: and while it makes all admissions, on certain grounds, as to what differentiates you from other people who are dishonorable and dishonest and every way broken down outwardly and visibly, it goes straight into the conscience, and says, "After all, however, you may differ: you are a sinner. You are smitten with an incurable disease which knows no remedy save one, the knowledge of which, and the experience of which, come not from earth, but straight and miraculously from heaven.

"And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife." Now, does it