

Our India Mission.

LETTER FROM REV. J. FRASER CAMPBELL.

Madras, 4th May, 1877.

WHILE I shall try briefly to give some idea of the work in which I have been engaged, by recalling the conversations I have had with some of the natives, it will be almost necessary to begin by saying that truthfulness does not hold at all the same place here that it does among a people educated under the influence of Christianity, even among those who are not converted. Also, that the tendency of the average Hindoo is more speculative and less practical than among us, so that truth may be recognised by the intellect and admitted by the mouth, when the necessity for regulating the conduct accordingly is not at all so fully felt even as among merely nominal christians. The difficulties in the way of most young men publicly embracing Christ are very great. Add to this the character of the human heart in its dealing with God, everywhere, and it will be seen that we must not be too sanguine regarding every person whose conversations sound hope fully. But, on the other hand, much is doubtless genuine and may be regarded with great satisfaction and hopefulness.

A CONVERT.

J. is one whom I believe to be sincere, and I hope born of the spirit. The first time we met he told me he was "practically a christian." Afterwards I said to him that he was theoretically a christian, but could hardly call himself practically one so long as he did not submit himself to Christ's commands and confess him. "Yes," he said "I am practically a christian, I believe in Christ and endeavour to regulate my life by his teachings." He argued against its being his duty to confess Him, under present circumstances, and thus to forsake his family. But he does not seem satisfied; day after day we have conversations, and I hope that by and bye he will get light and strength to come out boldly. Speaking to him and others of regeneration, I asked him if he could testify from experience to the reality of such a change, and he said he thought he could. His faith in Christ seems to date back almost to the beginning of his connection with the Church of Scotland School, some three years ago. I regard him as a very hopeful case.

INQUIRERS.

Some time ago, some young men from

what was the Free Church College and is now the Christian College came and spent some hours in deeply interesting conversation, professing to be in earnest and anxiously seeking to know the way of salvation. Of course they already knew a great deal about Christ, but they were not convinced. I first asked them their own opinion. R. (a Brahmin) proposed acts of devotion & V. said he had told them obedience to the commandments. I showed them how these were only different sides of the same way, and that both were right provided we were sinless, but that for sinners, salvation *thus* was impossible, and then set before them Christ as our Head, and so our sin-bearer and our Life. They seemed very thankful, expressed themselves so, and asked leave to come again. A few days ago they came again, bringing others, and this time their question was as to the necessity of the external ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, against which they strongly argued. We are to meet again in a few days to resume the subject. One of these told me he had previously met me in company with a young Brahmin with whom I had a conversation at the door of a pagoda one evening, but who manifested a different spirit, confessing his unwillingness to come and talk with me *for fear he should be converted.*

ALMOST PERSUADED.

R. is another very interesting case, the brother of a convert and a teacher in connection with the Free Church Mission. He is a young man whom I think sincere and somewhat earnest, and almost persuaded. He has told me that he is a christian in heart, and has even come to me that I might pray with him. And yet he says there are still some points on which he is not satisfied, and he wishes to examine everything, and be sure before he takes any step—certainly a wise resolution. But he does not tell me what these points are that I might help him; perhaps if the social difficulties were removed he would not find the intellectual ones so obstinate. Here are four intimate friends, two of them Brahmin, whose father was wealthy till he lost, it is said, about \$70,000 by the failure of an English firm, and the fourth, a Sudra. They were among my earliest visitors, and three of them continue coming frequently, some times bringing a new friend. They seem very nice lads, and at least the three who continue their visits appear sincere seekers for truth; the other, who is one of the Brahmins, and the son of a Priest, has often struck me as having rather the spirit of a youthful gladiator delighting to have a