

spirit if thou canst, with these tender, yet futile tributes of regret: but take warning by the bitterness of this thy contrite affliction over the dead, and henceforth be more faithful and affectionate in the discharge of thy duties to the living. — *Washington Irving.*

### God's Promises True.

THE voice of every storm that, like an angry child, weeps and cries itself asleep—the voice of every shower that has been followed by sunshine—the hoarse voice of ocean breaking in impotent rage against its ancient bounds—the voice of the seasons as they have marched to the music of the spheres in unbroken succession over the earth—the scream of the suter in Babylon's empty halls—the song of the fisherman, who spreads his net on the rocks, and shoots it through the waters where Tyre once sat in the pride of an ocean queen—the fierce shout of the Bedouin, as he careers in freedom over his desert sands—the wail and weeping of the wandering Jew over the ruins of Zion—in all these I hear the echo of this voice of God, "I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it." These words are written on every Hebrew forehead. The Jew bartering his beads with naked savages—bearding the Turk in the capital of Mohammedan power—braving in his furs the rigour of Russian winters—over-reaching in China the inhabitants of the Celestial empire—in Golconda buying diamonds—in our metropolis of the commercial world standing highest among her merchant princes—The Hebrew everywhere, and yet everywhere without a country; with a religion, but without a temple; with wealth, but without ancestral possessions; with no land to fight for, nor altars to defend, nor paternal fields to cultivate; with children, and yet no child sitting under the trees that his grandsire planted; but all floating about over the world like scattered fragments of a wreck upon the bosom of the ocean, he is a living evidence, that what the Lord hath spoken, the Lord will do. True to his threatenings, Almighty God will be true to all his promises; and to both we can apply the words of Balaam—"Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor—God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it, hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

### MISCELLANEOUS.

#### Sir Colin Campbell and Dr. Livingstone

At a soiree recently given to the children attending the Tobermory schools, in a very interesting speech, of which the following is the substance, Sheriff Robertson observed that Argyllshire could boast of many distinguished men, and amongst them Sir Colin Campbell and Dr. Livingstone, the missionary and African traveller, whose grandfather migrated from Mull (or rather Ulva, close to Mull), with his family, to the south, many years ago. That these illustrious men in early life had not better educational advantages than the youth he was addressing now enjoyed. Sir Colin and Dr. Livingstone had both to fight their way through hardship to eminence in their respective walks of patriot-

ism and philanthropy. They had earned for themselves imperishable renown, and for their country benefits, the importance of which can only be calculated by future generations. The Sheriff earnestly and affectionately exhorted his interesting audience to improve the educational advantages, both religious and secular, they at present possessed, as the path to distinction and usefulness was open to them all; and having given, he added, a brief sketch of Sir Colin's illustrious career, he hoped they would soon be addressed by their kind friend Captain Campbell of Aros (once of the 42d.) and by a gentleman from a distant part of the island, a poet of their own, who had celebrated the heroism of Sir Colin and his Highlanders at the Alma in a noble and spirited lyric composed in Gaelic the most splendid that could be written.

### The Ryot in India.

THE term 'ryot' signifies simply an agricultural labourer. Bengal contains eighty millions of inhabitants, of whom fully sixty millions are of this class: in other words, more than double the entire population of the United Kingdom are in this one presidency engaged in cultivating the soil. This will cease to be matter for astonishment when we remember that not only Bengal, but the whole of India is, strictly speaking, an agricultural country, where nineteen-twentieths of the exports are of raw produce. The amount of manufactured articles is trifling; for although sugar, indigo, sal re, lac-dye, and other articles of produce undergo a certain manufacturing before being fit for the market, they do not come under the head of manufactures—they are but prepared vegetable products.

The condition of this large class of labourers, who really produce the great staples of Indian commerce, and are, in fact, the sinews and bone of the land, must be a subject of considerable importance at the present moment. Until Great Britain can arrive at a true appreciation of the position and interests of the many classes of her Indian subjects, it is scarcely possible for her to determine her future policy in regard to the country and those people.

The ryot is not merely an agricultural labourer, he is something more. He approaches more nearly to the Irish cottier in the nature of his tenure, though far below him in the abjectness of his poverty, in the hopelessness of his struggle with his fellow-man.

We must understand, then, that the ryot is neither more nor less than a farmer on a very minute scale, a small renter of a small fragment of land, sometimes equal to several acres in extent, at other times, but a few rods from boundary to boundary. The lands they hold under various tenures are in nearly all cases included in some zemindary or landed estate, the rights and privileges of which are put up for sale, just as any nobleman's estate may be in Great Britain.

It usually happens, however, that in every village in a zemindary, there are far more hands than are needed for cultivating the land upon it; at any rate, in the rough antique style of culture which they are in the habit of giving it. This surplussage of labour is often sought for in indigo or sugar districts at considerable trouble, and some costs, indeed, it often happens that the only mode by which village-labour can be secured, is by the purchase out and out of the zemindary. The people belong to the soil, rather than the soil to them; hence, the purchaser of the one acquires with them an ownership in the other. It constantly happens

that when a European wishes to commence indigo-making, silk-rearing, or coal-mining, the only possible chance for his obtaining labour is to purchase a few villages, well stocked with able-bodied men and handy women. It is the possession by sale or lease of these populous villages which leads to so many affrays and downright battles in various parts of the Indian Mofussil, as to call for legislative interference.

During the government of Lord Cornwallis was perpetrated one of the greatest blunders of that or any other period. He completed what is known as the 'Permanent Settlement,' by which government, as owners of the soil, fixed for ever the rate at which the land should be assessed to the zemindars, irrespective of any improvement which might take place. So far as the policy of this measure was concerned, it might have worked to much advantage; but, unfortunately for the real progress of the country, not a word was said in this famous settlement as to the rate at which the zemindars might assess the ryots on their land; at the same time, the most arbitrary and summary powers were given the former, to enable them to enforce their demands against their unfortunate tenants. It is quite true that the act of settlement provided that an assessment, once made, could not be altered by any zemindar or other landholder—with only one exception, which was on the occasion of an estate changing proprietors. This one exception was quite sufficient for all purposes of extortion. If a zemindar wishes to raise the assessment of his land, he has but to make a pretended sale to some friend or relative, and the screw is at once put on, and, as a matter of course, submitted to; for who has ever heard of a ryot opposing the will of his zemindar? Sometimes, indeed, the labourer will be too poor, or too broken-spirited to work on at a higher rate, in which case he will be at once ejected, to wander homeless and helpless, with no relief but such scanty charity as neighbours may care to dole out to him.

It is not merely in this way that the labouring population of Hindostan are placed at the mercy of a grasping, relentless race of men. Between the great zemindar and the people there is a little army of middlemen, and devours of other men's substance, who act sometimes as his agents or bailiffs, sometimes as sub-renters, who take the trouble off his hands for a round sum for the year. In these cases, the extortions are generally doubled, for the farmer of the rents for the time being cares far less for the welfare of the ryots on the land than the zemindar. It is difficult for any one who has not resided for some time amongst an agricultural population in British India, to form a right conception of the exactions to which they are exposed, and the utter impossibility of escape for them under the present administration of the laws. The renter has not a want in his household that the villagers are not compelled to supply. Every article of daily consumption—rice, oil, milk, ghee, cotton—all must be found him by the ryots of his district. How heavily this presses upon the half-fed, half-clad people, only those can say who know their utter poverty.

The advocates of the present system, and amongst these are to be found many Europeans, maintain that the Indian ryot is a poor degraded creature, incapable of better things, unfit for progress, and reckless of the future. Alas! he has never had a trial, under British rule, of what he is capable, nor of what he might be under a better system. We are not among those who predict a rapid advance of