

fact. They will trust Englishmen to any reasonable amount, when they would never think of trusting any one not an Englishman,—so high a character have we acquired for business probity. Indeed the same high character is held by us all over the East. "The word of an Englishman" acts like magic. The Arab and Indian alike are satisfied by it. You say: "I will do so and so by such a time, on the word of an Englishman," and they await the time in perfect confidence. It is indeed impossible to travel in the East without being struck by the magnitude of the influence exerted by our motherland. It is seen everywhere—sometimes tending in a wrong direction, sometimes in a ludicrous, but generally in a moral and ennobling direction. Let me give an illustration or two of what I mean. (1.) No sooner did I set foot on shore at Aden than two boys came rushing up offering to fight for our amusement. "You Sayers," cries one—"You Heenan," cries the other, and in a twinkling they are at it rough and tumble—no sham sparring, but regular "hitting out" with the whole force. They seemed astounded by my immediately stepping between them and administering my yellow umbrella to their backs. It evidently struck them as a "phenomenon requiring to be accounted for," that an Englishman should stop a fight and punish rather than reward the fighters. Their look at me was certainly the sort of one you would expect to be given to a curiosity or monstrosity. "Ah! now, wonders will never cease." (2.) We see also ludicrous traits of our influence. For example; at Alexandria all the donkeys, which the traveller is pestered to hire, have English names. "Old Bob Ridley" figures conspicuously. You are offered a seat on the back of the "Young man from the Country." "Norman McLeod" and "Dan Tucker," "Gladstone" (a "woe-begone, disconsolate looking beast") and "Black-eyed Susan" are all equally accommodating. Again—English *slang* is the only portion of the English language that seems to get down to the masses, and of the way it is used I had some amusing instances, and a gentleman tells me as a fact that at Suez a little totum of an Arab girl, age probably 4 years, approached and accosted him, evidently without any idea of the meaning of the choice slang she used, "How's your poor feet? What's your little game? Does your mother know you're out? I'm a poor Bedouin little girl; please give me a half-penny." There is, however, too much pathos in this to permit it to be called merely "ludicrous." (3.) But, thank God, the influence of our countrymen is generally exerted on the side of right, of fair play, honesty and virtue. They walk among the natives as "kings among men." They defend the weak, redress the wronged, and keep in subjection the elements of violence and disorder. A great mission Britain has in these lands, and, as far as I can see, British men are working it out faithfully, honestly, and with a blessing on their labours. You do occasionally meet with men who flippantly regard our relations with, and responsibilities to, the heathen with whom we come in contact,—men who dearly love a fling at Missionaries, and talk knowingly of matters of which their ignorance is profound. "The fact is, Sir," said one of these. "it does no good but harm to these

fellows to make them Christians,—you make only beef-eaters and brandy-drinkers of them The fact is," (this given confidentially as if between ourselves,) "Christianity doesn't suit these natives at all." But these flippant wise-aces, whose characteristic is that they are willing to settle every question in God's universe, with their emphatic "the fact is," or their "it is no use," "or the right plan is"—these men form a minority—insignificant though noisy. Generally you find men thoughtful if hesitating, earnest if perplexed, as men who are in the presence of a mighty problem which they know they are called upon to solve, and believe will be solved, though as yet they know not the way of solving it. I find I have not to blush for the men of our country, as I was led to think I would have to blush, by the loud talk of the minority who everywhere represent the Europeans in India as unanimous in representing Missions as a great failure. Here is a fact: St. Andrew's Church in Calcutta has but a small congregation, yet there are not two congregations (if there be even one) in all Scotland which gives as much per annum to missionary work. Does that look like indifference? I have been in Calcutta less than a month, yet I believe if I intimated from St. Andrew's pulpit that I wanted a thousand rupees (£100 stg.) for a particular purpose, that it would be forthcoming without the least difficulty. In the meantime I do not need to make such a request; but if an opening presented itself requiring a special effort, I would make it with perfect assurance of a response.

But I find I am following my usual plan and outrunning myself. I had got no farther than Ceylon and I am talking about matters in Calcutta. From Ceylon the sail all along the coast to Madras presented nothing to call forth enthusiasm. The shore is low, flat, and sandy, affording no object of interest. At Madras I had a long conversation with Rev. Mr. Clark, formerly stationed at Gyal—one of the ablest, most original, and logical of the Missionaries of our own Church (or any other Church) in India. He gave me most cheering accounts of our native congregation under the pastorate of the Rev. Jacob David—who has long worked in faith and patience for the Master whose service he embraced long years ago, and who is now seeing the fruit of his labours in the largest congregation of his countrymen won from heathenism in Madras. The adherents—all declared Christians—now reach 300, and the increase is rapid. They are building a Church for themselves, in aid of which Lord Napier gave the site and the donation which I mentioned in my former letter. I was mistaken, however, in saying Lord Napier of Magdala. This is another Lord Napier. From Madras to Calcutta was a sail of from two to three days. And now I have reached the capital of India, and the sphere of my future labour as God spares me for it. I would that I could give you a clear idea of how matters stand here—of our own Missionary work—of the work of other Churches and Societies—of the posture of the natives, educated and uneducated, towards the religion of Jesus. But I have gossiped already to such a length that I cannot just now attempt anything further.