

eat up by political squabbles or public meetings. There have been two lectures in Kandy since I came to it, one of which was delivered on the subject of the Indian Mutinies by a missionary from Benares, and the other by myself. We are tolerably free from petty annoyances, and as there are very few ladies at this station, there is not much social visiting, so that if one is really disposed for study this is not a bad place for retirement. I was lately at Colombo, for the first time since I came up, and I was very much struck with the bustle and stir of this modern capital of the country, after the quietness of the interior. It seemed to me that the low country looked beautiful after the hills, and the sight of the sea again was charming. Not content with the sight of it, I got a boat with a friend, and went out to a vessel some miles off, where we had tiffin and a most refreshing talk with the skipper and his wife, who were from Irvine, and "discoarsed," the lady at least, in the purest Doric. Colombo is a fine specimen of a walled town, and the country around is very pretty. The mountainous scenery in the interior is grand, but there is a great sameness about it, and nothing whatever of human interest to throw any sublime or touching associations around it. From Colombo to Kandy, a distance of seventy miles, you do not see a single relic of the past, and scarcely one decent human habitation. Sir Emerson Tennant has recently published a very able work on Ceylon, which appears to be all the rage at home just now; but from the extracts I have seen I should think it is looked at through the imagination, and that were one to write a review of the book on the spot, he would be strongly tempted to take a less favorable view.

The object of my visit to Colombo was to meet the new Scotch chaplain there, and the several ministers of our Church and the Dutch Church in the Island. Altogether we now number four, and for some time we have been talking about union. Our meeting was very satisfactory, but there are some difficulties in the way, and of course any steps that we take in the matter are subject to the approval of the Church at home, as we all take the true church ground, that not having had any ecclesiastical authority committed to us beyond our own congregations, we do not possess any public authority. In the meantime Mr. Palm, the minister of the principal Dutch Church in the Island, and the only one who is professedly a Dutch minister, the other being of the Synod of Ulster, intends going home on a visit immediately, when he proposes to apply for reception as a minister of the Church of Scotland. The chief difficulty we have is the fact of one of the ministers of the Dutch Church being properly of the Synod of Ulster, and he naturally would not do anything to affect his position with his Church at home. As for uniting simply with the Dutch Church, and allowing full promi-

nence to their articles and usages there would be no difficulty, as since the Reformation, there has been a sister Church of the Church of Scotland. The only difference of any importance is that they have prescribed formularies for the sacraments almost similar to those in use in Scotland after the Reformation, and organs in their churches. But in this last respect we resemble them here and in our Indian churches; and if any of your musical people want an argument for church authority as to the use of instruments in public worship, they have rather a good one in this fact, that organs are to be found in all our Indian churches which form an integral part of the church at home, and are as much under the supervision of the General Assembly as any church in Edinburgh.

We feel the want of one or two native ministers, or rather ministers belonging to the Burghers or Dutch descendants, and we have two in training now, one of whom has been reading with me for the last eighteen months, and who goes very soon for theological instruction to an institution at Madras. The other has been studying with Mr. Palm and proposes going to Scotland next year. There is a strange mixture of races here, and it is often difficult to know who is who. I attend occasionally a meeting of Kandy young men for literary purposes, where we have represented British, Dutch, Portuguese, Tamil and Singhaiese, and various mixtures of them all. On account of the early missionary efforts of the Dutch, and the efforts made by ourselves, there is a great admiration of European civilization, and Christian knowledge among the population of Ceylon, and this is constantly increasing. Every thing tends to further it, not only direct missionary work, but education, commerce, roads, and the electric telegraph. This last makes I am told, an extraordinary impression upon the native mind. They say, "we never saw the like of this, we never could have dreamed of such a thing. The men who can do this, must have the right knowledge, and all our ideas must be merely old wives' fables." The chief opposition to Christianity in Ceylon, is religious indifference, and not any devoted attachment to Buddhism, about which the people are very lukewarm.

Eleven natives from Kandian villages were recently sentenced to death by the supreme court here, for the common crime of the country, gang robberies, resulting in fighting and murder; and though I suppose, they heard nothing of Christianity before their capture, they all during their imprisonment professed to become Christians, and were baptized by the Roman Catholic priest. This shows, at least, what a weak hold Buddhism has on them as a religion to die by.

I am extremely sorry that our church is not represented here by a native mission, or indeed any Presbyterian church, which is the more melancholy, as a hundred years ago