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## Poetry.

### The Prayer.

FROM "HYMNS OF FAITH AND HOPE," BY HENRIETTA BONAR, D. D.

Fetch me the lightning from your frowning cloud,  
With fiery torce to break or melt this heart—  
A heart all earthly, foolish, vain, and proud,  
In unbelief and hate that bids its God depart.

Fetch me a beam from your clear star of night,  
Or yet a warmer ray from day's bright sun,  
To kindle into heat, and glow, and light,  
This soul of gloom and death, whose days  
Seem scarce begun.

Fetch me a drop from yon translucent lake,  
Or, further up, from yon pure mountain-well,  
These lips to cool, this feverish throat to slake,  
This weary frame to freshen, these fierce fires to quell.

Oh thou, my God, my being's health and source,  
Better than life, brighter than noon to me,  
Stretch out thy loving hand, with gentle force,  
Bend this still struggling will, and draw it after thee.

Return to me, my oft forgotten God,  
My spirit's true, though long-forgotten rest;  
Undo these bars, re-enter this abode,  
In thee and in thy love alone would I be blest.

Remould this inner man in every part,  
Re knit these broken ties, resume thy way;  
Take, as thy throne and altar thy poor heart—  
O, teach me how to love—O, help me to obey!

## Religious Miscellany.

### Eastern Scenes and Stories for the Young.

BY A PILGRIM FATHER.

NO. II.

Recent circumstances having afforded me an opportunity of seeing something of the

dominations of the Brahmins, and the

fully vilence, and curse of those who

sacrifice to strange gods and worship graven

images, I for the first time felt the full force

of the descriptive language used in the 20th

verse of the 74th Psalm. "The dark places of

the earth are full of the habitations of idols."

This scripture has been familiar to my

mind since my childhood, and although it

always suggested violence, oppression and

wrong as prevalent in the absence of the

light and love of the glorious gospel of the

Son of God, nothing I had ever read or

imagined approached the horror of the

scenes of idolatrous barbarity that were

enacted in my presence. If in narrating the

particulars of what came under your

gentle feelings, it will be a pleasure to

hope that I can succeed in inducing you

to esteem more highly, and to accept more

gratefully for yourselves that "wisdom

which is from above, and is first pure, then

peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated,

full of mercy and good fruits, without

partiality, and without hypocrisy." The

Churack Poojah is a religious festival observed

in honour of the god known to Hindus by

the name Shiva, the third person in their

trinity, and a deity of such dispositions as

are supposed to be gratified by the shedding

of human blood and the offering of human

meat. The ceremony connected with this

annual celebration, which occurs usually

about the beginning of April, extend over

two days, the first being called the boring

day from the fact that the devotees offering

themselves for the rite have their bodies

pierced with the second of iron

knives, and the second day, which is

known as the swinging day, because on that

day they conclude their self-imposed

indications with the torture of the swing. At

this season of the year the heat during the

day is very oppressive, and it is therefore

chiefly in the early morning and evening

that the out door festivities take place.

On this occasion I started in company with

a friend at four A. M., and on reaching the

native part of the town we found the streets

literally filled with the people, either join-

ing in the public demonstration or looking

on with evident interest and approval. The

morning was delightful. The sun had not

yet attained his scorching power. The

trees and flowers and grass, redundant in

their luxuriance and refreshed with the

heavy dews of night, were decked in many

tints of perennial loveliness, and the

nature in all her calm and pleasant features

thick cords are passed; these are eighteen

or twenty feet in length, and are held tight

by persons before and behind in the

procession, between whom the miserable victim

runs backward and forward from end to end

with the blood pushing from his lacerated

wounds. Another, and perhaps, the worse

form of such self-sacrifice, is the practice

adopted by many in the mass of people be-

fore us of boring a hole in the tongue for

the insertion of a piece of iron or wood,—

sometimes a live serpent,—which, transfix-

ing the tongue as it is protruded from the

mouth, holds it in that agonising position.—

The anguish caused by these inflictions

must be excruciating, yet no sigh is heard,

no murmur uttered, no feature distorted, as

it is considered insulting to the deity to ex-

hibit any symptom of weakness, or physical

susceptibility to pain in undergoing the or-

deal. It was very observable, however, on

this occasion, that the actors in the strange

and inhuman drama had rendered themselves

mad and intoxicated by drugs, so as not

only to deaden their sense of suffering, but

to render them frantic with delight at the

frantic with delight at the fringed

fringed spectacles they enjoyed in offering

such acceptable services to their god. In

this way alone I could account for the hil-

lariety and delirious merriment they display-

ed, as barbed and bleeding, they danced

and leaped and reeled along, while, to keep

up their endurance to pain, attendants in

yellow coats kept their throbbing and fevered

brows with fans of palm-leaves which they

carried in their hands. The voluntary vic-

tims in this horrid pageant were distinguish-

ed by garlands and festoons of flowers, re-

sembling one of the manner in which the

Lycoumians decorated the oxen brought to

the gates of Lystra to be sacrificed to

Barnabas and Paul. Some of the mad-

dened multitude were dressed in imitation

of different kinds of beasts, as if envious of

the nature of the meaner creatures, and dis-

satisfied with their own. One of these

personifying an orangoutang, wore a com-

mercial tail made of jute, a species of hemp,

on which a spark having fallen from the

fire carried by another in the crowd, the

wretched man was instantly in flames, but

he was stupified with the narcotics he had

taken he was unable to do anything for

himself, and being avoided by others from

the danger of contact, he was speedily con-

sumed on the spot. Being anxious to ascer-

tain whether the people had any idea of

propitiation in connection with their offer-

ings, we stepped inside the gate of a noble

institution close at hand, that of the London

Missionary Society. Here we were kindly

received by the Rev. Mr. Storow, one of

the missionaries, who in answer to my

inquiries, said it would be difficult to affirm

with certainty that the Hindus practising

the cruel and painful customs prevalent had

any distinct notion of atoning for their sins

by the tortures they endured. Some ac-

cepted the torment in fulfillment of vows

made in sickness or trouble of any kind,

for the heathen are exemplary in paying

their vows—some to ensure success in their

daily business, and some from no higher

motives than to obtain a few pence, or

to secure a cure for some ailment.

Others, again, were so much

intoxicated by the narcotics that they

were unable to do anything for

themselves, and being avoided by others

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## Loss and Gain.

Dr. Payson, in his dying hours, said

he could have saved himself much trouble

if he had only believed that the

Saviour's presence was enough to fill him

with joy, if all worldly comforts were

taken away. He found it so in sickness, but

could not quite believe it in health. A

poor simple man, with none of Payson's

maxims or fancy once said in a similar

spirit, with his dying words:

"I have lost all my property; I have lost

all my relatives; my last son is dead. I

have lost my hearing and my eyesight; I

am all alone, old and poor; but it makes

no difference—Christ never grows old; Christ

never grows poor; Christ never dies, and

Christ never will forsake me."

## Salvation.

When the disciples once inquired, "Who

then can be saved?" the answer was con-

clusionary, that "with God all things are

possible." It was not, however, as if the

question was proposed, "Are there few

that can be saved?" the answer was severe,

practical, and imperative: "Strive to enter

in at the narrow gate." And such should be

the mingled web of our conclusions on the

subject; a combination of confidence in the

sovereign goodness of God, and of earnest

resolution to be warned by the terrors of

his threats.—Arch. Butler.

## Religious Intelligence.

### Religion and Religious Liberty in France.

Another of the interesting conversations

held by Sir Colling Eardley, at 39, Upper

Greenwich-street, took place on Saturday

evening. One special object of the meeting

was to consider the case of Popish aggres-

sion on the Protestant Church at Arras,

brought under the notice of Sir Colling

Eardley by a communication from the

Bishop of Arras.

The following are the suggested topics

which formed the groundwork of the general

discussion:—1. Has the aid rendered to

French Protestant objects—first, by the

Church of England and latterly by the

Evangelical Continental Society, chiefly in

connection with the Scotch and Noncon-

formist Churches—done good service to the

cause of God? 2. Is it our duty to go on

giving every possible encouragement to the

Church of England and latterly by the

Evangelical Continental Society, chiefly in

connection with the Scotch and Noncon-

formist Churches—done good service to the

cause of God? 3. Is it our duty to co-operate

with them in urging their Government to

grant religious liberty? Ought we to be

opposed to any measure which would be

likely to interfere with the liberty of

worship and assembly? 4. When such

cases occur as that of Arras, can opponents





