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THE CHRISTIAN REGISTER.

"ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD-WILL TOWARD MEN."

VOL. I. MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1823. No. 2.

We have no reason to doubt, but that our readers will rejoice with us, that we are enabled thus early, to increase the pages of the Christian Register.—It will hereafter contain sixteen pages, instead of eight.

FOREIGN NEWS,

A member of our Association has just received a number of the "Monthly Extracts from the correspondence of the BRITISH and FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY," for September; from which we draw copiously. It commences by stating, that eight new Auxiliary and Branch Societies and Associations have been formed. Among these, we are happy to observe, are three Ladies Associations. This certainly speaks powerfully in behalf of the Institution, to which, such general exertion is made; and we sincerely hope, that this example of the Ladies of England and elsewhere, will not be neglected by our benevolent ones in the Canadas—Then follows a brief abstract of the Report of the HIBERNIAN BIBLE SOCIETY, which we cannot in justice curtail.

From the Sixteenth Report of the Hibernian Bible Society.

The total number of Bible Institutions of every description now in connexion with your Society throughout the kingdom, is, ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN, being an addition of thirty-one since your last Anniversary. This steady progress towards the occupation of the whole country by these beneficent Institutions, is highly encouraging. Still much remains to be done. There are yet six counties which possess no Insti-

tution in connexion with your Society, and eight more in which the Bible establishments are confined to only one town, and its immediate vicinity.

The sum received in free contributions amounts to £2,616 10s. 6½d. making an excess over that of last year, of £1,437 13s. 9½d. This sum, however, is considerably diminished by sales of the Scriptures to subscribers and donors, at the reduced prices of the Society.

The receipts from the sale of the Scriptures have been £2,978 14s. 0½d. and from the sales of Monthly Extracts, &c. £84 7s. 3d. making the total receipts of your Committee, for the last year, £5,679 11s 10d. being £1,745 16s. 5d. more than the receipts of the preceding year.

The issues from the Depository of the Society have been, during the last year, 8,701 Bibles, and 11,964 Testaments, making a total of 20,665 copies. These numbers, added to those distributed in former years, make a total of 295,695 copies issued since the commencement of the Society.

In one district of the county of Louth, where the Irish Testament is much sought after, the return made by the Secretary of that Society mentions, that persons from different parishes, some five or six miles distant, came to purchase these Testaments, and that one of them, after making his purchase, pulling his Testament out of his breast, where he had carefully deposited it, and, looking on it with seeming pleasure, said, "I know well, that the price I am charged for this book is not the price of the paper: God bless those that paid the rest for me."

The following extract from the P-

port of the Cookstown Ladies' Association, will be heard with interest:—"The reception which the ladies met with in their visits, as collectors, was most encouraging. They were almost uniformly received with gratitude, and in many instances followed to the doors with repeated blessings. The whole number of names obtained on the first day was 290, nearly one half of whom were free contributors of one penny per week, to the funds of the Society, and the remainder, subscribers of small weekly sums, for the purchase of the Scriptures."

The following fact will prove that poverty is no bar to subscribing for the word of God, and should encourage those who engage in the work to visit every habitation, however apparently wretched. "In canvassing one District in the city of Dublin, a person was applied to, of rather decent appearance, who declined subscribing, alledging that he could not afford it. The Collectors asked him if there were any lodgers in the house, to which he replied, 'There are several, but they are so miserably poor, that you may save yourselves the trouble of going up to them. They however went up; and although they found the report not exaggerated, they obtained three subscribers for Bibles. On telling the man below of their success, he said, 'I am ashamed of myself, and put his name down as a subscriber.'"

At the Anniversary of the Dublin Auxiliary Bible Society an interesting anecdote of a Reverend Gentleman respecting a Convict, now at Botany Bay, was not narrated in vain. The incident having been mentioned among a few female convicts, produced a considerable impression: five of them immediately came forward with voluntary subscriptions of a penny a week out of their small earnings, and since that time, THREE more have added their contributions to circulate that volume which is so peculiarly adapted to bind up the broken hearted, to set the captive at liberty, and to speak peace to the wretched & guilty. The Report thus concludes—"The

Committee are persuaded that the best answer to every objection with which the Society can be assailed, is, to recur to the fundamental principles of its constitution. It is a voluntary association of private individuals, for the procuring and disseminating of the pure unalloyed word of God; which lays claim to no authority, which offers violence to no man's conscience; but which, in the spirit of Christian meekness, solicits the assistance of all who approve of its object, and leaves others without censure or uncharitable judgment, to follow the dictates of their own consciences. It seeks to combine the efforts of Christians of every denomination; because any difference of opinion among the individuals that compose the Society, can have no tendency to alter the books, which they merely purchase and sell again, or distribute gratuitously. It depends solely on the liberality of the public, from year to year, as it has no fund laid up for permanent support, nor any other resource than the spontaneous benevolence of Christians; which circumstance, furnishes the most effectual security for the prudent, conscientious, and economical employment of the fund entrusted to it.

"Your Committee, in resigning the office entrusted to them, would again solemnly commit the interests of the Society into His hands, who alone can command prosperity; and their earnest and united supplication is, that in His own time, and by instruments of His own selecting, He may cause His name to be known upon earth, and His saving health among all nations."

We next have the ninth Report of the Frome Auxiliary, and the first Report of the Ladies' Association, in connexion with the same. Success appears to have propitiously crowned their exertions.

The following is one among the many fruits of their labours.

"A poor woman, who was herself unable to read, was induced to subscribe for a Bible for her children, and, upon being urged to attend an Adult School, and obtain instruction, promised to con-

sider the subject. It was not till some months afterwards, that the same lady visited this district; the first thing that struck her attention, on entering the house of this person, was an evident increase of comfort in its appearance; something like cleanliness and order might now be seen, where formerly the greatest want of such recommendations existed. After a little conversation, the woman earnestly requested the loan of a Testament, till she should have completed the subscription for her Bible, as she said, from having attended an Adult School, she was now able to read many easy chapters, and she and her husband were very anxious to become acquainted with the Holy Scriptures. It is almost unnecessary to add, that her request was granted with the greatest readiness. The Visitor has had the satisfaction, not only of receiving the most grateful acknowledgements, but of finding that the husband is now actually learning to read of his wife, who but a few months since did not know her letters."

Among their foreign correspondence, is given, first, an abstract of the sixth Report of the American Bible Society, which strikingly evinces the unwearied exertions, which are made on this side of the Atlantic, for the spread of the Bible; and the cheering results, which have succeeded such devotedness. The sixth Report of the NEW-YORK FEMALE AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY, for 1822, we likewise have, containing much interesting matter. It appears it had distributed the preceding year 780 Bibles, & 100 Testaments: this Society, is composed of more than 180 members.

"In one of their Reports the Collectors state, "We have found our employment not only gratifying, but edifying. In making the visits, an opportunity is afforded us of observing the diversity of character and circumstances among the poor. Among the humblest, piety the most elevated has been discovered; and among the poorest, liberality the greatest; the ignorant have appeared eager to receive instruction, and the uniformed to

take advice. A poor coloured woman, when engaging to subscribe for a Bible, said "she had never paid any money so freely; it was hardly earned, but could in no other way be so well spent." On the first call, she paid two shillings, and respectfully requested to have a chapter read to her, to which she listened with eager attention; if oppressed with hunger, she could not apparently have received necessary food with more avidity.

A coloured woman said she was already supplied with a Bible, but was very happy to have it in her power to contribute a little towards placing so good a book in the hands of the destitute, and was quite sure she could pay one shilling quarterly, and never miss it.

A letter from Middletown states, "It was from Bibles sent to this place for distribution from the New-York Female Auxiliary Bible Society, that the spirit for forming an Association first emanated. Those who received them having been fully impressed with the importance of the gift, earnestly desired to impart it to others according to their ability, and entered with alacrity into the scheme when proposed to them. The case of a young woman is mentioned, who was first induced to learn to read by the receipt of a Bible from one of the Associations; and, as she was far from any place of worship, this Bible, with the Spirit of God attending it, was her only teacher. Three years it was her constant study; it enabled her to perform her duties in an exemplary manner, and she died praising God for it. Shortly before her death, she placed it, in the most solemn manner, in the hands of her husband, charging him to preserve it carefully as her best legacy to her children, at the same time praying for a blessing upon those who had given it to her."

Following we have the Report of the Osnaburg Bible Society, for the year 1821, (Osnaburg is situated in one of the principalities of Germany.) Its labours are confined within the principality of Osnabruck, containing a population of 150,000 souls, although its operations

are not extensive, it has during the period of six years, distributed 6,332 Bibles, and 627 Testaments; the latter chiefly Catholic.

"The traffic between this town and the adjacent districts is very considerable. This gives life to our distribution, and instances occur which afford us great satisfaction: Parents often bring their children with them, a distance of several miles to obtain Bibles. Sometimes a child is then brought to the town for the first time; and therefore, the few words which may be addressed to him on first receiving a bible, are calculated to leave a deep and salutary impression. It is certainly interesting to observe the delight with which a child receives the first of treasures, the Bible, neatly bound. He confides the precious burden to no one,—nor will he even allow his parents to carry it; he leaves the busy city behind, and joyfully returns to his peaceful hut. Indeed, our peasantry begin to feel a warmer interest than ever in the cause; the contributions increase, legacies are bequeathed or handsome donations presented; one for instance, of fifty dollars from a farmer, and twenty dollars from another person. In short, the Biblical cause is the work of God, and a powerful means of opening the way to the hearts of men, whether in the cottages of our own peasantry, or among the most distant nations."

Next succeeds a Report of the Württemberg Bible Society, for 1821, giving a most satisfactory account of its operations, during the preceding year. Within that limited space, it had put into circulation, upwards of ten thousand Bibles and Testaments. The King and Queen had exhibited their favourable opinion of the institution by making very liberal donations to it.

"A female servant contributed 10 florins from her savings; one lady sent us 100, and three others 50 each; and several desirous of doing good even after their decease, bequeathed on their dying beds to this institution various sums."

The number concludes with a communication from the Secretary of the

Sumatra Auxiliary Society, dated Fort Marlborough March 1st 1822. (Sumatra is one of the Islands of the Indian Ocean,) nothing of a peculiarly flattering nature is given.—The Society had generously presented to the Baptist Mission, of that place, 800 Rupees to enable it to print the Gospel of St. John, in the Malay tongue. The Gospel of St. Matthew, had been previously translated; many Copies of which had been put into circulation.

— BRAHMANS —

To give our readers some Idea of the abject State of the Hindoos; we have extracted from a QUARTERLY PAPER, of the Baptist Missionary Society, an important article relative to their Brahmans, who are regarded as a kind of DEITIES, by the Common People:—

"The Hindoo writers affirm that the brahmans proceeded from the mouth of Brumha, their supreme god. Agreeably with this fable, none but persons of this caste are admitted to the priesthood, or have any thing to do with making laws; and they have taken care to turn these privileges to good account. No brahman can be put to death, by their law; for any crime whatever; while, on the other hand, to kill a brahman is one of the greatest sins that can be committed; and every offence committed against them is to be punished with rigorous severity. If one of inferior caste give frequent molestation to a brahman, (a very uncertain sort of crime,) he is to be put to death. If, through pride, he spit upon a brahman, his lips must be cut off. If he listens to reproaches against a brahman, boiling lead must be poured into his ears. And, as if all these horrible punishments were not enough, the wrath of the brahmans extends to the future world. Their writings teach, that if a shoodru do not rise to receive a brahman with due honour, he will, after death, become a tree; if he look angrily at a brahman, his eyes will be put out!

Nor is the principle of *fear*; powerful as it is in the minds of the ignorant and superstitious, the only one by which these crafty men have endeavoured to secure their dominion over their helpless countrymen. The shasters, or religious books, teach, that a gift to a learned brahman possesses infinite merit; feasts to brahmans are considered as very meritorious: a poor man entertains two or three; a rich man invites hundreds. If a man has been entertaining a number of brahmans, a neighbour says to him, "Ah! you are a happy man! you can honour so many brahmans!" A covetous man is sometimes thus reproached; "He is very rich, but he cannot bring his mind to part with a mite, — no, not to entertain brahmans: he does not even invite a few brahmans to his house, and wash their feet." To present gifts to brahmans, at the hour of death, is extolled in the shasters as a work of merit, destroying all sin, and followed in the next world with imperishable happiness.

To drink the water into which a brahman's toe has been dipped, is considered a very great privilege. Persons may be frequently seen carrying water in a cup, and intreating the first brahman they meet to put his toe into it: after which they drink the water, and prostrate themselves before the brahman, who bestows his blessing on them. Others are found who endeavour to collect the dust from the feet of a lack (100,000) of brahmans; one mode of doing which is, by spreading a cloth before the door of a house where many are assembled at a feast; as each brahman comes out, he shakes the dust from his feet upon this cloth. Many miraculous cures are said to have been performed on persons swallowing this dust.

From these statements, some idea may be formed of the despotic influence exerted by this class of men. But this is not all; the system is so artfully contrived as to meet the Hindoo at every point, and constrain him, on almost every possible occasion, to feel and acknowledge their vast superiority.

No person may teach the vedu but a brahman; — a spiritual guide must be a brahman; — every priest must be a brahman; — the offerings to the gods must be given to brahmans; — no ceremony is meritorious without a fee to the officiating brahman; — numberless ceremonies have been invented to increase the wealth of the brahmans: several fees are exacted by them previous to the birth of every child; at the birth, when the child is a few days old; again when it is six months old; when two years old; again at eight or nine; and again at marriage; — in sickness, the brahman is paid for repeating forms for the restoration of the patient: — after death, his son must perform the shradhu, or funeral feast, the offerings and fees at which are given to the brahmans, twelve times during the first year, and then annually; — if a shoodru meet with a misfortune, he must pay a brahman to read incantations for its removal; — if his cow die, he must call a brahman to make an atonement; — if he lose a piece of gold, he must do the same; — if a vulture have settled on his house, he must pay a brahman to purify his dwelling; if he go into a new house, he must pay a brahman to purify it; — if a shoodru die on an unlucky day, his son must employ a brahman to remove the evil effects of this circumstance; — if he cut a pool or a well, he must pay a brahman to consecrate it; — if he dedicate to public uses a temple, or trees, he must do the same; — at the time of an eclipse, the brahman is employed and paid; on certain lunar days, the shoodru must present gifts to brahmans; — during the year, about forty ceremonies are performed, called vrutus, when the brahmans are feasted, and receive fees; — when a person supposes himself to be under the influence of an evil planet, he must call four brahmans to offer a sacrifice: — a number of vows are made, on all which occasions brahmans are employed and paid; — at the birth of a child, the worship of Shushtee is performed, when brahmans are feasted; — at the

time of the small-pox, a ceremony is performed by the brahmans;—they are paid for assisting the people to fast; to remove cutaneous disorders, the brahmans pray to one of the goddesses; and receive a fee;—brahmans are employed daily to offer worship to the family god of the shoodru;—the farmer dares not reap his harvest without paying a brahman to perform some ceremony;—a tradesman cannot begin business, without a fee to a brahman;—a fisherman cannot build a new boat, nor begin to fish in a spot which he has farmed, without a ceremony and a fee;—nearly a hundred different festivals are held during the year, at which brahmans are entertained, and, in some villages, feasts are celebrated at a hundred houses at once. At the house of a Raja, at particular festivals, sometimes as many as 20,000 brahmans are feasted. Instances are mentioned of 100,000 brahmans having been assembled at one feast. At a shradhū performed for his mother, by Guṅga-Govindu-Singhu, of Jamookandee, near Moorshudubad, who was in the employ of the late Governor Hastings, six hundred thousand brahmans, it is said, were assembled, feasted, and dismissed with presents.

Thus every form and ceremony of religion—all the public festivals—all the accidents and concerns of life—the revolutions of the heavenly bodies—the superstitious fears of the people—births—sicknesses—marriage—misfortunes—death—a future state, &c. have all been seized as sources of revenue to the brahmans; in short, from the time a shoodru is conceived in the womb, to his deliverance from purgatory by the brahmans at Guya, he is considered as the lawful prey of the brahmans, whose blessing raises him to heaven, or whose curse sinks him into torments;—and thus, their popular stories, their manners, and their very laws, tend at once to establish the most complete system of absolute oppression that perhaps ever existed.

We have given you this particular account of the Brahminical System, Christian friends, because it is, in fact, the very

pillar on which the whole fabric of Hindoo superstition rests,—the strong hold in which the god of this world has entrenched himself among them. Surely it will lead you to pity the millions who are thus fatally enslaved, and fill your minds with generous indignation against such mercenary and unfeeling oppression. Some, perhaps, may be ready to think that it is in vain to expect that such delusions can be scattered; or at least, that this will be effected by the ordinary methods of preaching the gospel. But we have great pleasure in saying, that among several hundreds of natives who have embraced the gospel, some brahmans have been included. The names of *three* individuals of this caste occur in a list of the native preachers in India, furnished us by Mr. Ward when in England; and one young man of great promise has been lately baptized by our junior brethren in Calcutta. Others have been removed by death. Respecting two, who were well known to Mr. Ward, he gives the following pleasing testimony:

“KRISHNOO-PRISAD, the first brahman who was baptized in Bengal, died a few years ago. He was most exemplary in his life, sought to bring his wealthy relations to the faith, and died full of hope, leaving behind him a name embalmed in the memory of all his brethren.”

“RAM-MOHUN, a converted brahman of the highest caste, and who, when a heathen, set fire to the pile in which his living mother was consumed to ashes, has been the means of the conversion of several persons, and he is now such a persuasive preacher of the gospel, that I have seen his congregation drenched in tears.”

FROM THE BOSTON RECORDER.
RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETIES.

No method of doing good is more successful, or meets more generally the approbation of the friends of God and man, than the circulation of *Religious Tracts*. We know they do good, because we know that God blesses *his truth*, whether it is proclaimed by his servants, or sent forth among the nations,

in the volume of the Bible, or in the form of a Tract. Facts too, shew that God has abundantly blessed them. Tidings are continually coming to our ears of good effected by this cheap, easy and inoffensive manner of spreading the glad news of salvation.

It must be highly interesting to all friends of religion and Religious Tracts, to know what Societies are now engaged in circulating them, and how extensive are their operations.

The Society in England for promoting Christian Knowledge, has been ever since its formation, in 1698, more or less actively engaged in publishing and circulating Religious Tracts. In 12 years previous to 1816, this Society distributed 2 millions and a half of Tracts.

I shall mention no others, of many societies, which were long since engaged in this effectual mode of doing good, as *auxiliary* to their benevolent designs. At the close of the last century, some friends of Zion in England, discovered the power of this engine, which infidels had already, with such alarming success, turned against religion, and resolved on establishing a Society for this immediate object.

The London Religious Tract Society was instituted in 1799. It distributed the first year after its establishment 200,000 Tracts—the next year 600,000; and though it was involved nearly £2,000 in debt, it carried on its noble design with vigor. The eyes of Christians were opened to see its usefulness and excellence; it was relieved from its embarrassments; and in 14 years published 17,000,000. The bounty of British Christians was poured in upon it, and it has since published, on an average, 3,500,000 annually, making its whole number at the present time, 45,000,000 of Religious Tracts.

These it has published in many languages, and circulated to the ends of the world. It has printed in English, 168 different numbers; in Welsh, 1; in Irish, 7; in French, 18; in Dutch, 12; in Spanish, 4; in Portuguese, 8; in Ger-

man, 7; 3 in Danish, and 1 in Swedish. It has aided in printing Tracts in many other languages, and has bountifully aided in establishing new societies in almost every nation of Europe, in India, and elsewhere. It has in England, 124 auxiliaries—and its receipts the last year, were more than 41,000 dollars. Thus this greatest, oldest, parent society is marching onward; and by circulating its millions and millions, is doing good to our world, which we shall never fully estimate, till we see the innumerable multitude of the redeemed in another world.

The Tract Society, at Stockholm, Sweden, was established in 1809. In 1813, it had circulated 400,000 Tracts—in the Swedish, Lapanese and Finnish languages; and from the best information we have, has now circulated 1,500,000. A society which has lately sprung up in Finland, promises even to rival in zeal and usefulness the society in Stockholm. In Russia, 500,000 were printed and circulated in 1819, and 1820.

The church of England Tract Society, instituted at Bristol, in 1811, has circulated more than a million and a half of Tracts; and the Liverpool Tract Society, has done as much, or more.

In our own country, many Tracts were printed and circulated by benevolent societies and individuals, before any important Tract Society was formed. But this mode of procedure was seen to be far less useful, and far more expensive, than the combined efforts of the churches in one large institution; which being devoted to the object, surveys the whole ground, and spreads itself as far as the wants of men, unless limited in its operations by the want of means.

Three important Religious Tract Societies now exist in our country. That at New-York, was instituted in 1812, and has printed 1,200,000 Tracts. Its series in English, contains 46 numbers; in French, 15; and in Spanish, 9. The Baltimore Religious Tract Society was instituted in 1815; and

printed the last year, 40,000 pages.

The *New-England Tract Society* was established in 1813. 4,000 Dollars were then given for its establishment. —

It is now the largest Tract Society in the world, except the London Religious Tract Society. It has printed three millions of Tracts:—and 144 different numbers. Its general depository is in Andover, Mass.; and it has 80 depositories in 18 different States. Its plan of operation is formed with great simplicity and beauty. Its general depository is the fountain from which all the others are supplied. And each of the others has around it in every direction societies and individuals which are continually drawing from it the water of life.

A Tract Society has arisen the last season in France, at Paris; and from the zeal exhibited by the Parisians, in behalf of the Bible Society, we have every reason to believe it will prosper.

One has likewise been established in Montreal during the past year, Auxiliary to the London Religious Tract Society. Since the commencement of its operations, it has distributed about 9,000 Tracts, in the PRISON, HOSPITAL, and SUNDAY-SCHOOLS of Montreal, at Quebec, Three Rivers, in the Eastern Townships, on the Grand River, and in various parts of the Upper Province. About 3,000 Tracts, in French and English, were put into circulation, by a few pious and active individuals, prior to the establishment of the Society. — Ed.

JOHN HUSS, THE BOHEMIAN MARTYR.

John Huss was born of poor parents at a village, called Hussinez, in 1373. Having received some education at the public school of a neighboring town, called Prachatiz, he became servant to a professor at Prague, who lent him some books, and assisted him in prosecuting his studies. Among other useful pursuits, he particularly delighted in church-history; and in the accounts of the old

martyrs. In his twentieth year he became master of arts, and soon after was appointed professor of divinity in the University of Prague. A citizen having just at that time built the church, called Bethlehem, with a view to the preaching of the gospel both in the German and Bohemian languages, John Huss was nominated minister of the same, in the year 1400. He was also chosen by the queen to be her father confessor.

The writings of John Wickliff were introduced into Bohemia about this time. In the beginning Huss was prejudiced against them, because they had been condemned as heretical by the pope. But the more carefully he perused and compared them with the holy scriptures, by which he was accustomed to prove all things, the more his belief of, and insight into, evangelical truth, and his conviction of the evils attending the superstitions and errors of the established church increased. — As long as he only preached against the sins prevailing at court and among the people, the clergy held him up as an excellent man, by whose mouth the Spirit of God himself would speak. But when he began to protest against the power of the popes, their sale of indulgences and their excommunications, and to insist upon a thorough reform of a corrupted church; declaring the scriptures to be the only rule of faith and life for a Christian, and proving that the Lord's supper ought to be administered to the people according to the institution of our Saviour, he was immediately denounced by them as a mad heretic. In the beginning of his ministry, some courtiers of rank, who felt themselves offended by his free censure of their vicious conduct, complained of him to Wolbrant, archbishop of Prague, in presence of king Wenceslas. The prelate then answered, "that Huss had taken an oath at his ordination, that he would speak the truth without respect of persons." But when he began boldly to attack the vices of the superior and inferior clergy, the archbishop himself applied to the king to silence him.

Wenceslas, however, shrewdly answered by repeating the prelate's own words:—"Huss, you know, has promised, at his ordination, to speak the truth without respect of persons."

In this manner Huss zealously contended for the truth, defended Wickliff's evangelical principles; and recommended to the students to read the Bible and Wickliff's works. Archbishop Shinek, successor to Wolbrant, a man so very ignorant, that he took his first lessons in reading, on his promotion to the see, caused Wickliff's works to be publicly burnt, in order to render himself more acceptable to the pope.

Huss retained, as heretofore, the love and respect of all the people, both on account of his pious conversation, and his zeal for the salvation of his hearers. In 1409 he was chosen rector of the University; and, as the Bohemian students had hitherto been oppressed by the Germans, who were wholly devoted to the pope, he procured for them their original privileges.

The opposition raised against Huss, led him into a more close examination of the scriptures; by which his faith in the truths of the gospel became more firmly established, his growth in the love and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ more apparent, and his testimony more unequivocal and efficacious: the rage of the pope and his followers against him, of course, increasing in proportion. In 1412, pope John XXIII. proclaimed remission of sins to all, who would assist him in his wars against two anti-popes and the king of Naples. John Huss most strenuously opposed this scandalous measure, and published doctrinal theses against it. He was now summoned to appear before the pope's tribunal at Rome; and when, by the persuasion of his friends, he declined it, the pope not only issued a decree of excommunication, against him but by a dreadful interdict prohibited all religious worship in the city of Prague. Huss met this heavy stroke with firmness; commended his cause to Jesus Christ, the only Head of the Church, and wrote a solemn appeal to

HIM. That he might however put a stop to the deplorable confusion which took place at Prague, in consequence of the popish excommunication, he quitted the city, and preached with great blessing in towns, and villages, and in the open fields. Thus the knowledge of the gospel spread more and more; as the natural and never-failing consequence of the banishment of true believers.—See Acts viii. 1-74.

At length he was cited, in 1414, to appear and answer for his conduct before the general council at Constance. To this end, he obtained from the Emperor Sigismund, a letter of safe conduct, by which a safe passage to and from Constance, was solemnly promised to him. Before he set out, he exhorted his friends in Bohemia, steadily to persevere in the truth, to remain immovable in the faith of Christ, and to continue in prayer for him; for he immediately expressed his apprehension, that he was going to meet heavy sufferings, and perhaps, even to die the death of a martyr. He set out on his journey, with cheerfulness and courage, but had scarcely arrived at Constance, when in spite of the emperor's letter, he was thrown into a filthy dungeon, on pretence that no man was bound to keep faith with a heretic: but even in this dark abode, Jesus, whom he loved and revered, remained his light, his comfort, and strong support; when awake, he was occupied with the contemplation of Christ's love unto death, and his precious promises to his church, and even when asleep, his mind often dwelt upon the same glorious subject. Of this, a remarkable instance is recorded; he dreamt, that he was in his church called Bethlehem, and had drawn a figure of our Saviour upon the wall, which, however, was immediately obliterated by a stranger. Soon after, he saw some experienced artists coming in, who restored his drawing, and completed it in the best manner, insomuch that though the Romish bishops and priests did all in their power to erase it, they could not succeed; upon which, in the midst of his joy, he awoke. History afterwards fur-

nished the following interpretation of his dream: "Huss preached in the church called Bethlehem, and unceasingly portrayed Jesus before the eyes of his hearers, according to the best of his knowledge. After his death, his enemies seemed to succeed in obliterating the impressions made by his teaching, by expurgating the doctrine of our Saviour; but there arose from among his true followers, the unity of the brethren, who by the instruction of the Holy Ghost, obtained still clearer views of the great doctrine of the atonement, and have not ceased even to the present day to set forth Jesus Christ, both among Christians and heathens, after the example of the Apostle Paul, Gal. iii, 1, as crucified among them. And may we not add, that this picture, the doctrine of the cross of Jesus, has become clearer and more distinctly exhibited through the power of God, even by the very opposition of those, who attempted to obliterate and destroy it."

Amidst the suffering scenes of his imprisonment, Huss did not cease to write to his friends and adherents in Bohemia, and his numerous edifying letters sufficiently prove his great love and care for them, his humble opinion of himself, and the comfortable assurance he felt of the favor of his God and Redeemer. He exhorted them, for the sake of Jesus' passion, to stand firm in confessing the truth, and to pray to God, powerfully to strengthen and enable him to suffer martyrdom and death for his sake.

Having been left to linger above half a year in confinement, he was at length, thrice presented to the council, and put upon his trial; he could scarcely utter a word, on account of the tumult and uproar made by his adversaries and judges on his appearance. No sooner did he open his mouth, than they cried him down with insulting and railing vociferation: he was accused of many errors, which had never entered his mind, much less his writings; for instance, that he had given himself out to be the fourth person in the Godhead. He de-

clared, that what he had really taught, he believed from his heart, and begged earnestly, that, if he was wrong, he might be better instructed out of the word of God, and his errors confuted by the testimony of the holy scriptures. The council, however, would not enter with him upon the Bible, but sometimes by threats, and at other times, by friendly admonitions and promises, sought to extort from him a solemn recantation of his doctrines. He declared that he would rather submit to be burnt alive than deny what he knew to be divine truth. His firmness being ascribed to obstinacy, he was condemned to the flames, as an incorrigible arch-heretic.

John von Chlum, his faithful friend and a Bohemian baron, did not forsake him in this extremity. After Huss had been cast out and declared an heretic, he gave him, in presence of the emperor & the whole council, the right hand of fellowship, and accompanied him and the turnkey to the door of the dungeon, encouraging him in these words:—"Be of good cheer; suffer yourself rather to be robbed of your life, than of the gospel."

When on the day of his death, the sentence was read to him in the Cathedral of Constance, in presence of the emperor and council, he knelt down, and after the example of our blessed Lord, and the first martyr Stephen, prayed God to forgive his enemies. Being asked for the last time, whether he persisted in maintaining his doctrines, he answered; "I now stand before the face of God, and I never can do what you require, without a violation of His honour and my own conscience." Before he was led to the place of execution, he was solemnly presented to the whole council in his priestly habit, with the chalice in his hand, that he might be disgraced with special infamy. Being stripped of his habit, amidst dreadful imprecations, and the chalice snatched from him, he was pronounced an accursed Judas. — He replied, "I place my trust in my Lord Jesus Christ, and know that he will never take from me the cup of salvation;

yes, I firmly believe that he will give it unto me this day in his kingdom."

A paper mitre, upon which devils were painted, being placed upon his head, he comforted himself with the reflection, that Jesus had been, in mockery, crowned with thorns. He was then delivered to the magistrates, with these words: "We deliver your body to the secular power, and your soul to the devil!" upon which he exclaimed: "O Lord Jesus! I commend my soul unto thee, for thou hast redeemed it." On the road to the stake he sung psalms and hymns, with such cheerfulness and firmness, that his enemies themselves confessed, that he went to death as if he were going to a wedding-feast. Thus this faithful confessor of the gospel ended his race in the flames, July 6, 1415, and sealed his testimony by martyrdom, in the 42d year of his age.

His faithful friend, Jerome of Prague, was also condemned by the council, on account of his open avowal of the truths of the gospel, and on May 30th, 1416, burnt alive on the very spot where Huss had suffered.

From the London Jewish Expositor.

MISSIONARY CATHOLICISM.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Thelwall, Missionary, written while at Amsterdam, June, 1822.

I thank God that his blessing is not limited to one particular church or form of worship, but I can experience the influences of his Spirit, giving life and power to the word of his truth, wherever and under whatsoever variety of outward circumstances it is preached. And I find it both a duty and delight to cherish a spirit of the most enlarged tolerance, being inwardly convinced, that wherever too much stress is laid on particular forms or doctrines, upon which real Christians in all ages & nations have more or less differed, we suffer in reference to the life and power of religion in the soul. The harmony and dependence of divine truths is disturbed, and whatsoever is given in

one measure to circumstantials, must needs be taken from essentials. And this I conceive to be especially needful to remark, if we would labour to any good purpose among the Jews; for our differences on lesser points are a great stumbling-block to them. I would, therefore, endeavour to bring forward on every occasion the great points on which we are agreed, and to show that these far surpass in importance those on which we differ. And so to insist mainly, and in the first instance, upon a view of Christianity which I have been accustomed to sum up in four texts of Scripture, Jer. xvii. 9. John iii. 3. iii. 16, and Heb. xii. 14. and to make this the only text of what I preach, and what I hear, "Does it tend to humble the sinner; to exalt the Saviour, to promote holiness? And when men heartily agree upon these views, and give due importance to them, however they may differ on other points, they get into a brotherly spirit and Christian temper upon the sure foundations which are common to them, before they discover that there are any points upon which they differ at all. And I believe, these views have been a great cause, under God's blessing, of the brotherly regard with which I have been received by Christians in this country.

From the London Eclectic Review.

PROSPECTIVE TRIUMPHS OF CHRISTIANITY OVER MAHOMEDANISM.

The Mahomedan countries, comprehending South-western Asia and Northern Africa, are estimated by Mr. Douglas to contain a hundred millions; and this calculation includes the Turks of Europe, the Mahomedan Tartars, and the Moslem east of the Indus. The proportion they bear to the nominally Christian population of the world, he thinks to be not more than one half, and even that proportion is rapidly diminishing.

These countries present much greater difficulties in the way of the propagation of Christianity, than heathen countries.

every convert being almost certain of death, as soon as his conversion is openly known. Preaching to the Mahomedians would, in the first instance, be a hopeless undertaking. But the life of Henry Martyn shows what an impression may be produced by conversation alone. His work shows, moreover, that temperate and learned apologies for Christianity will be better received by Mussulmans than might be expected. — 'Of all creeds,' remarks Mr. Douglas, 'that of Islam has been found the least compatible with philosophy. The Koran cannot bear inspection. And here the adage of infidelity is true; for the Moslem, when they begin to reason will cease to believe.' This opinion corresponds with that expressed by a very intelligent writer, who had ample opportunity of personal observation, that 'the conversion of the Mahomedan world, when it begins, will spread with astonishing rapidity, and that but a short stand will be made for the Koran.' Abdool Messel is an illustrious instance of the triumph of the cross over the crescent by means of preaching. We agree, however, with the Author of the Hints, that this is not the first or the best method to be adopted; that is, as addressed to the Mahomedans themselves. — But, in two-thirds of these countries, there are sufficient numbers of nominal Christians, with whose creed the Moslems do not interfere, who present a sufficient surface for the small efforts which Christians are, at present capable of, and who themselves by proper training, may become the missionaries of future years. This is a hint which highly deserves to be followed out. The existence of nominal Christians in the heart of Mahomedan countries, and their toleration by the governments of those countries, are circumstances which admit of being turned to excellent account. Hitherto, however, they have had a decidedly unfavourable effect, because the deteriorated religion of these nominal Christians, has been worse than that of the Mahomedans, or worse on account of its nearer af-

finity to idolatry, worse in its moral influence. The Mussulman has had his prejudices fortified and his self-importance increased, by a well-founded sense of superiority over the Christian dogs, with whom he has come in contact. It is impossible to calculate how much this contributed to strengthen the force of prejudice, and to retard the progress of Christianity. The Mahomedan, when he began to reason, might, and generally did, become an infidel; but he could never, with such a representation of Christianity before him, become a Christian. He might throw away his Koran; but he would in vain have sought at the hand of a Greek or Romish priest, the Bible in its stead. The case is now, blessed be God, greatly altered. Their intercourse with Europeans is now daily forcing upon the Moslem, the unwelcome conviction of at least the intellectual superiority of the Franks. The different treatment which English travellers now meet with in many parts of the Turkish empire, from what they did a few years ago, when it was hardly thought safe to venture any where in a European dress, is very striking. Policy, is, no doubt, the occasion of this change. The Englishman's money has made his name respected, and he may now travel safe from insult. It matters not, however, what has wrought the change. Commerce has often been, and it is her noblest office, the harbinger of Christianity. An opening is being made for the introduction of European science, which will silently but effectually undermine Islamism; and whole nations cannot remain unbelievers. The Bible is finding its way; and as prejudice decreases, curiosity will increase, and truth must be the gainer by the result. In time, the associations now connected with the names of Greek and Frank, will give way in the mind of the Mussulman, to respectful and even deferential feelings; and native converts will complete the work which foreign exertions shall have begun.

Of all the Mahomedan countries, Persia is by far the most interesting, and perhaps the most important. It is also that in which the downfall of Islamism may be expected first to take place, and in many respects, it presents the most hopeful aspect. The Soffies are a very numerous sect: they have been computed at two hundred thousand in Persia. Their creed is older than Mahomed. They may be divided into fanatics and infidels; and among the latter, Christianity may hope at least to obtain a hearing.

THE KORAN,

In the grand Library at Lyons, in France, written in the Turkish Language.

This book of remote antiquity, and so venerated by the major part of the inhabitants of Asia, is in Turkish Arabian, every page having an embellished border, and containing eleven kinds of text.

The Turkish dialect, formed from the Arabian, has five letters less; the character was fixed by the Vizier Melech, who about the year 933 wrote out the Koran in such a beautiful and correct style of penmanship, that his letters were regarded as types.

Sale, Garnier, Roland, Chardin, Prideaux, D'Herbelot, Turnefort, Marucci, Du-Ryer, and Turpin, have particularly descanted at large upon this Bible of the Mussulmans. It is written in verses, the chain of which is frequently broken, so that at the first inspection it seems to present nothing but a series of laws, or detached moral precepts. Beside a very trivial maxim, is found a most sublime image; and near a sterile dogma is a glowing description of human virtues.

The word Koran signifies the Book of Books as the term Mishna of the Jews. According to its believers, it was sent from heaven during the night of the 23d or 24th of the month of Ramadan; but the work was not given to the world and vested with public authority, until the thirtieth year of the Hegira under the Caliph Omar, second successor of Mahomet. The first transcripts were in the

Coptic; but it is not ascertained whether the manuscript now under review is written in those specific characters.

The work consists of 114 chapters, of which the Mahomedan doctors have counted the words and letters, in order that neither ignorance nor malignity should add or retrench a syllable. The number of words is 77,639. It is written in a harmonious and flowing rhyme; the metaphors are luxuriant, but the conciseness of expression frequently renders the sense obscure and mysterious.

Mahomet wrote his work in the Korajitic dialect, which was the purest of the east. Some coadjutors have been given to this eastern prophet during his composition of the Koran, namely, Hertebe the Arabian, Salman the Persian, Bepsalem the Jew, and Sergius the monk, with whom Mahomet was closely allied when he conducted his caravans into Syria.

The Caliph Al-Mamun published an edict, which subjected all mussulmans to believe the Koran eternal, which ordinance produced many dissenters and martyrs, as it uniformly happens when force is resorted to in cases of theological discussions. The devotees for the Koran never touch or open it without previous ablution; and in order to give timely notice, to prevent writing these words on the first page:—"Do not touch this book with polluted hands," they are even scrupulous as to carrying it under their girdles, and upon the leaves of this work their oath is administered.

MONTREAL, JANUARY 15.

MISSIONARY SOCIETIES.

We were very fortunate in finding an article upon Tract Societies, already made up to our hands, which we have taken the liberty of extracting from the Boston Recorder, a valuable religious Paper. Documents are at this moment wanting, to enable us to give an account of

the Society for Promoting CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, one of the oldest and most considerable in point of funds, now in existence. We hope however, to have it in our power to give it an insertion in our next number. The Missionary Societies are asserting an influence, at once commanding and important, but it would be next to impossible, with the materials now within our reach, to detail their spread and operations.—We shall, nevertheless, make out something in the shape of a Skeleton of them, to be filled up in our future numbers.

The "SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL," is the oldest benevolent institution, now in existence. It was established in England in 1647—Its receipts for the year 1821, were £15,430 11s. 6d. Sterling; and its expenditures for the same period were £21,989 10s. 5d. Sterling—"The actual number of missionaries, now in the service of the Society, is eighty-six." These are employed in South Africa, India within the Ganges, and in British America.

The SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, comes next in Chronological order, of which, we shall treat more fully in our next.

The SOCIETY FOR PROPOGATING THE GOSPEL AMONG THE NORTH-AMERICAN INDIANS, was instituted in Scotland in 1709.

The DANISH MISSION COLLEGE was established in Denmark in 1715.

The UNITED BRETHREN were extremely active in sending labourers into foreign parts, at a very early period—no public meeting is held by them in behalf of their Missions; but an annual Sermon is

now preached, in aid of the Association, formed in London, for the support of these Missions.—The following is extracted from a notification, which appeared on the cover of the Baptist Magazine, for 1822.

The Church of the United Brethren (or Moravians) has been recognized by Act of Parliament as "an Ancient Protestant Episcopal Church."

Their Missions among the Negroes, Hottentots, American Indians, Greenlanders, and Tartars, were commenced nearly a Century ago, and now consist of THIRTY-ONE STATIONS, supplied by nearly ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY MISSIONARIES, and contain more than 32,000 Converts. The Annual Expenditure is above £9,400, while the Brethren cannot raise £2,000, which is scarcely sufficient to maintain the decayed Missionaries, and the Widows and Orphans, so that, notwithstanding the liberal aid from other Sources, a Debt of above £4,000 has arisen, and is still increasing.

The METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY was instituted in England, in 1786—Its receipts for 1821 amounted to £34,451 5s. 11d. Sterling—It has Stations, 1st, in Europe—In Ireland, Gibraltar and France—2nd, in Asia—In Ceylon and Continental India, and upon the Islands in the South Sea—3rd, in Africa, in the western and southern part—4th, in America, in the West Indies, and in the British Dominions of America—It employs between seventy and eighty Missionaries.—

The SOCIETY FOR PROPAGATING THE GOSPEL AMONG THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS, was instituted in the United States of America in 1787.

THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY, was instituted in England in 1792. Its annual income as near as we can learn, is about £14,000 Sterling, and it employs about thirty Missionaries. It has a College established at Serampore (in India,) for the education of native Missionaries.

THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY, arose in England in 1794. The nett receipts of the last year ending in May 1822, amounted to £29,437 Sterling, being an increase of the previous year, of £9263 Sterling. The expenditures however, had exceeded the income by nearly £11,000 Sterling. It employs between eighty and ninety Missionaries.

THE SCOTCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, was instituted in Scotland, in 1796. Its annual income, we believe to be about £4,000 Sterling.

THE NETHERLANDS MISSIONARY SOCIETY, was established in Netherland in 1796.

THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, was established in England, in 1800. Its receipts for the year ending in 1822, were £32,975,9,7 Sterling. Its expenditures for the same period were £32,896,18,2 Sterling. It has Missionary stations in the following places.— West Africa, Mediterranean, Calcutta and North India, Madras and South India, Bombay and Western India, Ceylon, Australasia and the West Indies, employing about thirty two Missionaries. This Society has a College established in India, at Calcutta.

THE LONDON JEWS SOCIETY, instituted in England in 1809. Its annual receipts are about £12,000 Sterling.

THE AMERICAN BOARD FOR

FOREIGN MISSIONS, was established in the United States in 1810. Its annual receipts are about £10,000. This Board have seventy one persons employed among the heathen, of whom twenty eight are ordained Ministers of the Gospel, and seven licensed preachers. Besides these, there are fifty four female helpers, a few of whom are single women, but most are wives of the Missionaries.

THE BAPTIST BOARD FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS, was instituted in the United States in 1814. Its annual income is about £5,000.

THE UNITED FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY, instituted in the United States in 1817. Its annual receipts are about £4,000.

THE CONVERSION OF NEGRO SLAVES SOCIETY, established in England.

THE HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY, was established in England in 1819. Its receipts for the first year were £716,6,1.

THE METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY, in the United States was established in 1819.

THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY, was instituted in the United States in 1820.

THE FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY, of Switzerland was instituted in 1820.

THE JEWS SOCIETY, of Switzerland arose in 1820.

It is very probable we have not enumerated many of other Societies, now in existence. — Indeed we have extended this article to such a length, that we can only state in closing, that Foreign Missionary Societies, have been organised in the Society-Islands, and West and South Africa, by converts from heathenism.

NEW CHAPEL OPENED.

(SINGULAR CASE.)

A New Chapel, of all Denominations of Orthodox Christians, was opened at Heworth-shore, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on Sabbath the 24th ult. Mr. Turnbull, Presbyterian; Mr. Gibbs, Independent, and Mr. Pengilly Baptist, (all of Newcastle) preached on the occasion.

It was built chiefly by a contribution from twelve chapels, the ministers of which are to supply in rotation. No one denomination is to have more right in it than another, till all "shall see eye to eye" and shall "all be of one mind."

This looks like a step toward that promised union of the whole church of Christ, the prospect of which is so delightful to the mind of the humble Christian. **QUERY.** Might not many populous districts in the vicinity of large towns, be thus blest with places of public worship, where no one denomination would undertake their erection? and would not the ministers of those towns, with equal readiness and harmony, engage in supplying them? Pleasing, indeed would it be to see such a plan widely acted upon.

R. P.

DUELLING.

Two friends happening to quarrel at a tavern, one of them, a man of hasty disposition, insisted that the other should fight him next morning. The challenge was accepted; on condition that they should breakfast together at the house of the person challenged, previous to their going

to the field. When the challenger came in the morning, according to appointment, he found every preparation made for breakfast, and his friend with his wife and children ready to receive him: their repast being ended, and the family withdrawn, without the least intimation of their purpose having transpired, the challenger asked the other if he was ready to attend? "No, Sir," said he, "not till we are more on a par: that amiable woman, and those six lovely children, who just now breakfasted with us, depend, under Providence, on my life for subsistence; and, till you can stake something equal in my estimation, to the welfare of seven persons dearer to me than the apple of my eye, I cannot think we are matched." *"We are not indeed!"* replied the other, giving him his hand. These two persons became firmer friends than ever.

ANECDOTE.

A certain Missionary, once describing the character of God to a collection of American Indians, said to them, God is every where present, around, above us, and sees all our conduct. One of the Indians, after listening with great attention, replied, "We no want a God so sharp-sighted, we choose to live with freedom in our woods, without having one over our heads, watching all our talk and actions." — *Query.* Are there not many in Christian lands, whose wishes resemble those expressed by this heathen?

Ch. Almanack, 1823.

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