Original Communications.

MISSIONARY LIFE IN INDIA.—ITS BRIGHT SIDE.

Rev. David Herron, of the Foreign Mission of the Old School and Reformed Presbyterian Churches, had an interview with the students of the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary, to bring before their attention the claims of the heathen world upon their prayerful consideration, and to remove, as far as practicable, the dismal and wrong notions usually entertained of the nature of missionary life in India.

He called attention to the overcrowded ranks of the ministry in all the closely-settled parts of the country. In towns of 6,000 people, where three churches would accommodate all the people who could go to church, there are often a dozen and upwards, to accommodate the much smaller number that actually did attend public worship. West Philadelphia had become known as "the ministers' dry dock," and in cities further west were clergymen in abundance, cramped in little offices up three flights of stairs, working at anything they could get to do, and, perhaps, waiting for some dead man's shoes. During a vacancy of eight months in a little church in New Jersey (which gives $1,000 and no parsonage), there were eighty applications from candidates for the pastorate. On our western frontier, indeed, there was a wide opening for many pastors, but who was "stepping westward" to occupy them?

In India, on the other hand, in the field next his own, now occupied by a solitary missionary, there were 5,000 cities and towns, some of them with over 100,000 inhabitants. The whole population of the United States would not be perceptibly missed if taken away from the 150,000,000 of that benighted land.

As to the preparation for the missionary's work, nothing in addition to the usual college and seminary course was needed, that could be obtained in this country, and the missionary might enter upon his duties at once, as the mission schools at each station use English as the sub-channel of imparting information, while each school was taught the use of one or more native languages, mostly the Urdú (or "Hindu"). He, himself, began laboring in the school the day after he reached his station, and the proficiency of his class of native boys may be judged of from the fact that, within two days after that, he had a long discussion with one of the pupils, as to whether "as" was ever used as a relative pronoun.

The language most used in preaching and conversation was the Urdú, which might be called the "Lingua Franca" of India. It is a compound in about equal proportions of Hindi, Persian and Arabic, which took its name from the bazar in Delhi, when the need of some mode of communication between the natives and their Mahommedan (Persian and Arabian) conquerors, was first felt and met. It is now being enriched by additions from the English, and will become in time, one of the most copious and flexible languages in the world. Its grammar is purely Hindi, and embodies many peculiarities derived from the state of society—as, for instance, the use of the causative mood and a double-causative, which avoids much circumlocution in a country where the simplest offices of life are discharged by upper and subordinate servants. An acquaintance with Hebrew would be of great use in learning the Arabic words which it contains, while its connection with the Sanscrit (the sacred tongue of the Brahmins), brought it into some relation to Greek and Latin. Three years were needed to obtain a complete mastery of the Urdú, but he found himself talking it before he was half an hour in India, or indeed, before he had left the ship, in hiring a body-servant or bearer, whom no one can do without in India. Urdú must be learnt, however, not more from books than from experience. The ear must be educated to its guttural sounds, and freedom from sensitiveness in regard to blunders would be a great help in its acquisition; not indeed that the natives would laugh to your face at such mistakes, for a more polite people does not exist upon the face of the earth than they are. The student has to leave his books and to go down with the experienced missionary to the bazar, that his ear may be educated, and that he may learn to have his wits about him in discussion with men of the keenest and sharpest intellect, such as these natives are. In the meantime his whole intercourse with the natives and his friends have been insensibly training him to think and speak in Urdú, as well as to read and write in it. In some villages he will find that the Urdú is an unknown tongue among those who still speak the old Hindostané, and he will, therefore, need to know this last tongue also.

Missionary life in India had most agreeably disappointed him in every expectation he had formed of it. His only notion of it was living upon rice, in a miserable hut among black fellows, in a hot climate. On the contrary the missionary lives in the English quarter on terms of intimacy with members of the first English families who had come out to India to make their fortunes as the employées of the government. These received the largest salaries in the world, lived in a style that combined Eastern magnificence with Western refinement, and after a time retired on liberal pensions. Every house had its piano and its carriage, and the "cool street" of the quarter was crowded every evening by the "turn outs" of the residents. Among these the missionary moved on terms of cordial friendship in the rank accorded by English society to "professional" men. No party was given without an invitation for them,—though it was recognized that they did not feel it consistent with duty to move much in such very gay society. The liberality shown by these residents towards the support of the missionary schools, had been wonderful. The sympathy experienced from them by Mr. H. personally, during the sorrowful days in which the partner of his toils had been taken away, was even such as could not have been surpassed, had his loss occurred in the midst of his friends at home.

The express regulations of the Board require that a comfortable home be provided for the missionary, as they wisely conclude that it is better economy to make the outlay needed for that purpose, than to pay the doctor's bill, and the cost of a return on the sick list, which a bad home might render necessary. As for "living upon rice" even when the limits prescribed by a care for health are observed, the missionary has a more varied and pleasing range of articles of diet, especially of fruits, than he would have at home. Privations the missionary must undergo in separation from friends and native land, but they do not come in the form of physical discomforts of this kind.

The climate of India has been much maligned by English residents (missionaries as well as officials) who live, in defiance of every law of health upon the diet of their own cold, damp island—roast beef and porter;—such men are never drunk, but their systems and livers are continually under the influence of malt liquor, and they suffer what they deserve. There are three seasons in the year—cold, rainy and warm. The first is, of course, not a winter, as the trees and plants never leave off flowering and bearing fruit. During this cold season the missionaries go into tents, a luxury which, in itself and in the conveniences with which it is surrounded, cannot be conceived of in a country like our own, where tent life would be a hardship. During the second or rainy season vegetation springs up in the rankest growth, and, as much of this decays, the renewed strength of the sun at its close breeds malaria, and that produces the "jungle fever" which is India's worst plague. By proper precaution, however, this could be avoided, and Mr. H. himself had never suffered from it, and only witnessed three cases of it at his own station. At every station, too, the missionary could obtain the best of surgical advice and attendance *gratis*, as there is always a military and often a civil surgeon practicing there. Mr. H. never paid a fee for medical service (except three rupees to a native doctor, while his way up the country) during several years residence in India.

The daily routine of a missionary's life in India begins before six o'clock, A. M., when his body servant brings the "little breakfast" to his bedroom as a preservative from malaria. (In India every one rises early to get through with business before the heat of the day.) Boys' school begins at six o'clock with reading the Scriptures and prayer. This school is largely attended by native children, who are wide awake to the chance of learning what will fit them for government employment. Where a government school is open at the same station, it works to the disadvantage of the mission school for a time, but the latter usually breaks it down in the end, as the natives have an inexplicable preference for missionary instruction, although the government excludes the Bible and religion from their schools in compliment to the natives. Liberal grants in aid (equal to the entire amount expended by the managers of the schools) are made by the authorities, on condition that the schools shall always be open to the government inspectors, and that the institution shall give bonds for its continuance for at least three years. Besides this a fee is charged each pupil, unless he is too poor to pay, and these fees are being gradually raised, as the people realize more fully the value of education, with a view to making the schools finally self-supporting. Through these schools the missionary is able to reach the native women, now shut up in the *zenanas*, and seeing only the faces of their brothers, husbands, fathers and sons. Seclusion by no means diminishes the natural curiosity of these daughters of mother Eve, and the young student is asked, "What did the Sahib (missionary) teach you? What does he look like? What are you learning?" These schools, however, are rapidly breaking down the native prejudice against women learning or appearing in public, and the generation rising will put their shoulder to the wheel in advancing the movement already begun for the education of women in India.

The schools over, the missionaries have family worship and breakfast at the mission home at ten, and then united family worship with all the native Christians in the chapel.

Noon is devoted to letter writing, by means of which the common business of the whole mission is carried on. If any missionary has any suggestion to offer he sends it to the president of the mission, who digests the plan into a circular, and sends it round among the brethren for their votes in writing, and should their votes not be very nearly unanimous, the circular is sent on its rounds a second time, with these opinions and reasons attached to it. In this way every member of the mission obtains a fair and full hearing from every other. More vexed questions are considered in the periodical Mission Conference, at one of which he had met Mr. Ferguson, of the now famous Chamba Mission, then a chaplain with an expectation of becoming a missionary, but not a man of apparently marked ability.

In the afternoon the schools for girls meet, and at 4 the mission family meet for dinner.

After dinner they start for the scene of their more distinctly missionary labors,—in this case a piece of ground fronting on the street which leads down to the Ganges, on which a few chairs and benches have been disposed for the purpose. Rapidly and repeatedly opening and closing his outstretched hand he points to some native on the street, who with Hindoo politeness approaches in compliance with the signal, and is asked to take a seat. As one of the highest honors which an Englishman can confer on a native visitor is to ask him to sit on a chair, this request is never refused, though if his business is too urgent to allow him to remain, he rises, and with a gesture of respect, asks "the Sahib" to excuse him. If not he remains seated and inquires what is the Sahib's pleasure in regard to him. (A little skill enables one to tell, before calling, exactly who can stay and who cannot.) A question or two as to the native's business provokes a conversation, and leads to discussion and even debate. Is he a pilgrim on his way down to the sacred river?—he is asked if he really believes that the waters of Gunga will purify the heart. Is he come from some distant village to attend the governmental law courts?—he is told of "the great excise" where every man shall "appear before the judgment-seat of Christ to give an account of the deeds done in the body." The Missionary learns himself how closely every event of life is associated, by analogy, with the great truths of the kingdom. Question leads to question; they pass from subject to subject, one truth after another is pressed home to meet a pagan error, while the crowd gathers around them filling every seat and often every place within ear-shot. Often,—especially if a Brahman's or a Moolah's reputation is at stake—the controversy grows hot and excited, and a dozen are ready to break in with their word, if the missionary does not hold them back. Sharp wits and open eyes are needed, for the war is with intellects of the keenest edge, and the swift change of topic calls for agility and dexterity of mind. If the first disputant grows tired, there are plenty more eager to take his place, from whom the Sahib chooses one. Attempts to drown fair discussion and by crying out (*more Ephesiano*), "Great is Gunga!" seldom meet with success, as native politeness forbids such foul play. Many stop but for a minute and then pass on, but they too, like the rest, will say as they pass round the *hookah* among the elders of the village about the evening fire, "I heard the Sahib to-day," and weigh and discuss the one truth they heard, as men do in a country where speech still holds the place usurped among us by the newspaper. In this way the missionary reaches many, (perhaps all in his wide field) who never come within the sound of his voice and so disseminates the truth of the kingdom which is as the "little leaven" that "leaveneth the whole lump." The result of such work cannot be fairly estimated from the number of open converts, nor until some event shall test how far Christian principle has actually pervaded the community. The native converts do not become Anglicized as they are Christianized, though there is a manifest tendency among them to adopt European usages and fashions. The missionaries neither give this encouragement, nor interfere to prevent it.

IMPRESSIONS OF EUROPE.—No. I.

THE SEA.

Take your bath room and put in it three or four coffins of the largest size. Place mattrasses in those coffins, not too soft, and provide bed-linen somewhat damp. Lodge three or four persons in the bath room, who had never met before. Cover the floor with trunks, carpet bags, hat boxes, and one or two small stools. Open a register and admit the odors from the kitchen, the cellar and the laundry. At 10 o'clock, P. M. shut the door, close the window tight, and set the whole thing in motion, from side to side, and from head to foot. Then having administered small doses of ipecac at brief intervals, with the desired effect—yourself being one of the inmates—you will have some faint, but quite inadequate conception of the condition of a landsman for the first few days after leaving the shore. General wretchedness, disgust, and amazement, that you could ever have been such a fool as to go to sea, will be your most convincing experience. As soon as you are able to get up from your coffin, you make a dash for the deck. As you pass the saloon door you look in, and observe with indignation that some people can sit at table and eat and drink. "Won't you step in, sir, and have something?" You glare on your questioner, the amiable steward, and totter on without a word of reply. Once on deck what shall you do? Although you left warm weather a day or two since, at home, you seem to have gone back suddenly to winter again, and the only tolerably comfortable place on deck is at the leeward of the smoke stack; and there you become black from the smoke and dust of the furnace. If it should rain, as it is apt to do every day, your case is pitiful. Who can hold an umbrella against such a storm? When it does not rain, you walk up and down the deck jostling your companions in misery, who are pursuing the same dreary, monotonous employment. When you get tired of walking you sit down on the flange of the smoke pipe, and try to read. You can hardly fix your attention upon any thing. You feel in your pocket for your Testament and find it not; it has dropped out in your unsteady efforts to dress. You try to repeat mentally some familiar passages of Scripture, but you cannot consecutively. You can manage the Lord's prayer; it is like the alphabet, once learned never forgotten; but try to repeat to yourself the parable of the Prodigal Son, or the 23d Psalm, or the 53d of Isaiah, or the Beatitudes, and see what success you will have. At length you seize upon a novel, and this requiring next to no fixedness of thought, you while away a dreary hour. But night draws on. What shall you do? The thought of your *state room* (why, oh why, so called?) and of last night's experience there, is horrible. And yet you cannot remain all night upon deck. You must go below. So, after waiting and waiting, and putting off the evil hour as long as possible, you summon all your energies for a plunge, and down you go again into the depths of the vessel.

If the way is clear it does not require much time to disrobe. If you succeed in getting off hat, coat and boots, you say, or *think*, "excuse haste," and dive or climb, as the case may be, into your long and narrow house. You are not likely to sleep soon, and if fond memory brings not the light of other days around you, it is more than probable that you will be refreshed with such scraps as this, for instance:

> "Oh! many a dream was in the ship
> An hour before her death;
> And sights of home, with sighs,
> Disturbed the sleeper's long-drawn breath.
> * * * * * * *
> He wakes at the vessel's sudden roll,
> And the rush of waters is in his soul, &c., &c."

Sleep after that, if you can.

But as the days pass on you recover from your misery, or you become accustomed to it,—the adaptability of human nature to surrounding circumstances is truly wonderful,—and you thank God and take courage. You begin to look about you hopefully. You are half way across the ocean; and if you don't "collide" (horrid Americanism) with another vessel in the fog, and are not struck with lightning, the probability is, that in four or five days you will "sight" Ireland. Now then, who are our fellow-passengers? Well, here are the Rev. Doctors G—— and O——, of the Baptist Church, the former from Washington City, the latter from St. Louis, both excellent men. Then here is Rev. Dr. Hills, Bishop, or Lord Bishop of British Columbia. Then we have Senators C——, of Michigan, and O——, of Florida, and two newly made brides, and as many bridegrooms, of course; then Judge F——, of Chicago, and Dr. B——, of Flushing, and three or four lawyers, from as many different parts of the country. A Jew broker from Wall St., the usual assortment of children, Canadians, Cubans, &c., &c. In all one hundred and twelve, and an equal number in the steerage. Then the officers, seamen, engineers, servants, &c., made up a total of nearly three hundred and fifty souls. There were many most agreeable and excellent people among the passengers, and after the first few days out there was a general inclination to contribute to each other's comfort and happiness. Sometimes in the evening we would gather round the smoke stack (that was the most popular locality) and sing familiar hymns. One evening the Lord Bishop *lined* one or two hymns and started the tune himself, the rest joining with him. Sometimes we leaned over the railing and listened to the steerage passengers, some of whom were good singers, and had their music books with them. They were generally of the better class, operatives in New England manufactories, going home to visit their friends, perhaps to take back some with them to America.

One evening—a Wednesday—the Bishop was invited to deliver an address in the cabin, on British America—the character and condition of the people there, and the nature of his own work, etc. He complied, and for a half hour or so, he talked of the country generally and the Indians among whom he is laboring to plant the Gospel. He seemed to be greatly encouraged—mentioned the number of children whom he had baptized (our Baptist brethren could hardly be expected to enjoy that part of his speech), the number of adults brought into the Church, and the general condition of his mission, and added that the British Government had been more fortunate in its dealings with the Indians than the United States had, for they, the British, had never had a war with the Indians. After some very kind references to the United States Government, which were heartily applauded, he closed, and the usual vote of thanks was moved in a neat speech, by Mr. M——, a Philadelphia lawyer.

Our ship belonged to the Inman Line, and, of course, was thoroughly English. When Sunday came, the first, the Captain, although he was aware that there were several clergymen on board, insisted on reading the Episcopal Church service himself. When asked if he would allow preaching, he said he had no objection to the preaching, but he must read the service himself—it was a rule he never deviated from. But the Bishop was unwilling to preach unless he could conduct the whole service, so the first Sabbath passed without preaching. When the second Sabbath came, there was a hope that one or the other of the parties might make a concession, or that a compromise might be effected; but, no, discipline and dignity could neither be adjusted nor compromised; and so the Bishop kept his room and the Captain, in full uniform, after the tolling of the bell, marched into the saloon, seated himself before an improvised pulpit of cushions on the dining-table, surrounded by his principal officers. In marched also all the seamen not on duty, and a few of the steerage passengers, and the Captain, in a very sonorous voice and strong English accent, read the full morning service of the Church of England.

But, in the afternoon, with the Captain's consent, the steerage passengers were invited to a service on the forecastle deck. A pulpit was prepared by spreading the Union Jack over the end of a barrel, and a cushion upon that. Many of the cabin passengers came forward, bringing their deck chairs, and seats were arranged on coils of rope and whatever could answer the purpose, the audience seated in picturesque groups as they could best accommodate themselves. It was an impressive scene. The hour was six o'clock. The sea was perfectly smooth, not a sail in sight—the wind just enough to fill the sails which were all set—the sun rapidly gliding to his ocean bed—the Bishop, a large, fine-looking man, without robes, and bare-headed, the wind blowing his iron-grey hair about his forehead, standing before his audience and beginning the service with those sentences so well known and so appropriate—the gentle and regular motion of the great ship, rising and sinking with the swell of the ocean, all these made a picture not easily forgotten. The service was brief; no chanting—two hymns sung from cards distributed—part of the Sermon on the Mount read for the lesson, and the sermon very plain, extemporaneous and brief, not more than fifteen minutes long. There was no reference to the surrounding circumstances, to the great ocean on whose mighty breast we had been borne more than a week; to the blue heavens above us, which for almost all that time had been obscured by fogs; nor to the hope which we all cherished of seeing land on the morrow. If the Pastor of Clinton street church had stood there, how different would have been the discourse; yet it was very good, and it was not the preacher's fault if it did not do good.

We found the Bishop very affable and intelligent. Finding that I was very much interested in the works of Archbishop Trench, of Dublin, and Dean Alford, of Canterbury, he kindly offered me letters of introduction to them. He knew them both intimately, and had been at College with them.

The next morning, we "sighted," as they say, the coast of Ireland—glad sight to all of us, and running along within a few miles of the land, we were met by a boat off the mouth of Queenstown, which took off the Irish mails and such of the passengers as chose to land. We were among them, so bidding farewell to the pleasant acquaintances we had formed on the good ship, we saw her bear away on her course towards Liverpool with something like regret.

I close, as the divines say, with two or three reflections.

1. Do not fail to take plenty of warm clothing with you to sea. In a steamer it is always cold, at least in the North Atlantic. It is well also to have an india rubber suit. It *will* rain, and an umbrella is a nuisance. If you are a lady, be sure to have a thick woolen hood. If a gentleman, whatever else you may forget or neglect, don't fail to take a woolen cap. *I* was not advised on this point and had no cap. Everybody else had. Many kind friends had suggested a variety of conveniences for traveling, but none had said: "get a cap." My head-covering was a high-crowned, pearl-colored hat. Before I left the ship the color was indistinguishable, but the identity, the individuality, were more and more striking, quite Horace-Greeleyish.

2. Take plenty of fruit—apples, figs, oranges, etc.—you will need them.

3. Determine to make the most and the best of everything about you—the ship and its appointments and your fellow passengers—and cultivate *patience*.

4. Don't believe anybody's theory of, or remedy for, sea-sickness. Keep your berth as long as you can, and then get up, and stay up as long as you can.

5. Don't wonder that sailors as a rule are not religious men. You will see plenty of reasons why it is almost strange that any are pious.

B. B. C.

—The Presbyterian Board has for two years sustained a pioneer mission in the Laos country, north of Siam. Some Baptist missionaries from Burmah explored among the Laos last year, and were surprised to find the Presbyterians before them at Chieng mai. The king has during the past year given the missionaries a suitable plot of ground, and shown himself more favorable than formerly. The people listen favorably to the gospel, and cases which promise hope for the future are reported.

—It is reported that ninety-five new church edifices are to be built in the Island of Madagascar the present season. At some stations these buildings are to accommodate from eight hundred to a thousand persons, and it is expected that they will be filled with worshippers as soon as built.