

profoundly unconscious of the near presence of a power which, as the climax of the advanced intelligence of the age, silently proclaimed that their long and doleful reign was fast drawing to a close.

Then, no one but the amateur geologist thought of the undeveloped mineral resources of India; even coal and its uses were wholly unknown to the natives; a few years ago, in the jungly hills between this and Mirzapore, a company of ascetics, having lighted their sticks or dry cow-dung where veins of coal were out-cropping, the black stone (as they regarded it) caught fire; astonished beyond measure, they circulated the report of a new miracle; the very stones were burning! What could this indicate but a special manifestation of Agni, the god of fire! The report was the means of directing some Europeans to the place, who soon ascertained the real miracle, and turned it to profitable account by digging and working a mine, which since has been supplying the Ganges' steamers in upper India with coal. Now, the whole of India is in course of being accurately surveyed by scientific gentlemen at the expense of Government; iron ore of the highest quality, and other useful minerals, have been discovered in large quantities; already coal mines, in distant and different parts, have been successfully and profitably wrought; and companies are being formed for the excavation of other mineral treasures, which have lain undisturbed, through popular ignorance and prejudice, from the days of the deluge. It is scarcely possible to imagine the distinctive and combined influences, which all these innovations, discoveries and improvements, even of a general kind, are destined to exert on the hitherto stationary and reputedly immovable masses of India's population.

Then, there was not a single native Christian capable of greeting me in my own tongue:—now, in the employment of our own mission here, there are three ordained ministers, one licentiate, nine catechists, several teachers, and some dozens besides, male and female, who hail me as one of their fathers in the Lord; while, scattered throughout the country, and variously occupied, there are others who send to me their warmest written congratulations on my return. Then, there was not a single pupil anywhere to welcome my arrival; now, in the Central Institution in Calcutta, upwards of eleven hundred are actually present,—being by far the largest number in any institution in India—who rise up joyously to salute and welcome me back again; with six or seven hundred in Chinsurah, three or four hundred in Bansbaria, and two or three hundred in Culnah; while scores, or rather hundreds of old pupils, now occupying useful and important situations under Government and otherwise, have been calling or writing to felicitate me on my return; and to pour out their tribute of grateful acknowledgments.

Then, the Government of India, home and foreign, looking strangely and suspiciously askance at missionaries, for the most part ignored their labors as either fanatical or worse; now, the supreme government at home has formally and officially recognized them as benefactors of India, and pronounced their labors in the educational department, as worthy of being encouraged by grants in aid; while in the Government Committee appointed to frame regulations for the Indian universities about to be established, will be found the once despised missionary alongside of Government secretaries, members of the Supreme Council, and other high State functionaries.

In a somewhat similar strain I might go on to other contrasts, and note especially the gradually growing sentiment with reference to the necessity of female education among the more intelligent natives, as well as the efforts that have actually been made in connection with this unspeakably important object; but enough, surely, has been stated to indicate that changes, great and momentous in their bearing on the ultimate of India, are in rapid progress.

Having the state of things a quarter of a century ago vividly before my mind's eye, and looking abroad now on the considerably altered, and hereafter still more rapidly altering state of things, I confess that an inexpressible feeling of awe creeps over my spirit. I feel somewhat, though in a higher and more peculiar sense, as I felt about this time two years ago, when standing on the verge of the mighty St. Lawrence—when the thaws of latter spring were acting with visible effect, and there were unmistakable signs that that vast icy pavement which concealed the dark depths beneath was about to break up amid the thunders of splintering and crushing fragments, and the mind in wondrous amaze was racked

in striving to realize the rush and the roar of the restless cataract of waters, and the tossing and dashing hither and thither of the rapidly accumulating and rapidly dis-severing masses, wondering, ere the floods settle down again in their wonted channels, what cities and districts might be strewn with the wreck and ruin of all that was stateliest in architecture, and goodliest in the products of the field. For ages and ages has the mighty stream of Hinduism been moving on slowly, silently, and sluggishly in its dark, deep channel; bound, solidly bound, with the frost and the ice of endless, nameless, boundless, polytheism, idolatries, and superstition. Now, however, we are on the mighty verge of mighty coming changes. The whole vast incrustation seems gradually loosening and softening under the thaw of widespread knowledge and improving enterprise. Intellect, slumbering for ages, is awakening out of sleep; mind, so long sluggish and dormant, is stirred up into multiplying activities; new tastes are created, subversive of the old order of things; new passions are excited; new objects of ambition presented with luring attraction; the spirit of devoted superstition is fading, and giving place too frequently to the spirit of a rampant secularism; and where the old moorings and anchorages of Vedantic pantheism and Puranic idolatry are shaking into weakness before the blasts of innovation, we are threatened (if the Lord in his mercy interpose not,) with an outbursting flood of wildest and most undefinable infidelity; and if so, what havoc may there not be of all that is goodliest, fairest, best, ere the rational soul, purified as well as liberated, settle down in the peaceful channel of gospel righteousness and peace! But the Lord reigneth! that is our hope—our stay—our support. O, what a time for stronger faith, more fervent prayer, more energetic effort! Help, O Lord, help—do we feel with increasing intensity—help, for vain is the help of man! Ours it is to employ the means—thine, O Lord, thine alone it is to energize them all with the breath, the living breath of thy Holy Spirit! Never was a time or place when or where an institution like our own was more needed—as a beacon of light amid the gathering gloom, a pillar of testimony amid the descending floods of error.

### Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, DECEMBER 10, 1856.

THE "CHRISTIAN MESSENGER" will, in a few days, have completed the 20th year of its literary existence. Dating its commencement from a period when the Baptists of these Lower Provinces had so far increased in numbers and influence as to have undertaken enterprises of the highest importance to their future prosperity, both in a spiritual and temporal view, it has, we trust, been made, to some considerable extent, an instrument for their promotion and final accomplishment. Looking at the measure of success which has hitherto attended our Journal, the steady support it has met among the wisest and best of our denomination, and the increasing favour with which, we are happy to say, it continues to be viewed, we have some right, we hope, to believe that it has not materially failed in the advancement of those objects for which it was originated. The paper has, during the past year or two, in some sense passed into other hands than those originally engaged in it. Its spirit, and principles, and objects are, however, the same—at least we fully intend they should be so.

The great interests of Evangelical piety, of Missionary effort, and of Education, are as near our hearts as ever, and identified as we are with the usefulness and success of a large and yearly increasing body, we feel it both our duty and our pleasure to minister with our utmost ability to their spiritual, their intellectual and their moral wants.

But it would be ungrateful in us, while we thus record the measure of success that has attended our labours, were we to omit acknowledging the substantial help we have also received in the numerous rich, original contributions that have been made to our columns, giving ample evidence of an increasing thirst among our churches and people for the advancement of piety and learning.

The many warm and flattering expressions of approbation which we have received during this period have greatly cheered us in our labours, and although they may in a great measure owe their origin to a love for the good cause in which we are mutually engaged, we feel none the less indebted to

our brethren and friends who have so willingly tendered us these encouraging tokens of their approval. We should be greatly deficient in gratitude and a proper sense of duty did we not appreciate as we ought, the expressions of entire satisfaction which, we may safely say, all the best and most judicious men of the Denomination have bestowed on our labours. We, nevertheless feel that we have in many respects fallen short of what we would willingly attain, if in our power. Thus for instance we have not been able to refer so fully as we could wish to the literature of the Religious world, as well as to the proceedings and progress of other Denominations. We shall hereafter endeavour to give our readers the fullest advantage of our opportunities in these respects, in order to keep them fully instructed of the progress of the age.

And now, while we look back with gratitude for good effected, and regret for many shortcomings in the conducting of our Journal, we would bespeak from our brethren and supporters a continuance of their valuable aid in adding to our list of subscribers, as well as their kind indulgence, and will close with observing that the great purposes we have all in view can only be attained by prayerful, united, and unremitting endeavours, and with an humble assurance that God will continue to prosper our cause, if only we strive with a single eye to His glory.

#### Mission to Australia.

We find the following editorial notice of this mission in the last number of the Christian Visitor:

POSTPONEMENT OF AGENCY.—When Rev. I. Wallace returned from Nova Scotia, he expected, in accordance with the decision of the Board, to prosecute his agency through the New Brunswick churches, in behalf of the Australian Mission, but he has written us to say that he has prayerfully re-considered this matter, and has been led to the conclusion, that for the present, it is his duty to continue his labours with the Churches at the Grand Lake.

These Churches, as will be seen by their letters to the Board, which we publish to day, are very unwilling to dispense with his services, and he fears if he leaves them, under present circumstances, that their interests will materially suffer. This consideration, together with the want of harmony of sentiment and feeling in the denomination on the question of the Mission, has induced him to postpone any further application to the churches until he shall see the way more clearly to enter upon this important work.

He says he has not come to his present conclusion without painful conflict in his own mind; and so strongly does he feel upon the subject, that should there be found an unwillingness on the part of the denomination, to sustain the Australian Mission, he may ultimately feel it his duty to go out independent of any Board.

We have only to add, that from first to last, we believe our Brother has acted conscientiously in this matter, and all things considered, it seems only the part of prudence to do as he has done. Justice to ourselves demands that we should say, that we have had but one desire in regard to this movement, and that is, that the denomination, with which our sympathies and interests have been so long identified, should perform its part with fidelity to its Maker, and to the world, in supplying the far off Australia and its dependencies, with a faithful and efficient ministry. No part of this wide world opens a wider or a more hopeful field for missionary culture than does that rapidly rising division of the globe; and in our hearts we believe, that the Baptists would act wisely in sending fifty or a hundred missionaries there with the least possible delay.

We understood our contemporary a week or two since, that after the tour made in this province by Brother Wallace he felt quite encouraged, and had met with more success than had been anticipated, so that the change in his intention must have arisen from something which has subsequently taken place in New Brunswick. We quite agree with our brother that "it seems only the part of prudence to do as he has done."

The remark made about "unwillingness on the part of the Denomination, to sustain the Australian Mission," and "Brother Wallace feeling it his duty to go out independent of any Board," must have reference to something which has occurred of which we are unconscious. Mr. DeMill's letter in the Visitor, had not appeared when the above was written. No appeal has been made to the New Brunswick churches, and only an in ro luctory visit paid to a few of the churches in Nova Scotia, besides we were told a few weeks since that "the action of the Denomination" had sustained the mission. Why then have we an intimation of doubt about the matter, even before the Minutes of Convention are in our hands? If it is the action of the denomination, as we are informed, we suppose the denomination will be willing to sustain it. Let us not build up a project with one hand and the next week tear it down with the other. We give the denomination credit for more consistency,

at least in their benevolent and missionary operations, and are not satisfied that there should be such exhibitions of weakness charged upon our churches before all the world.

We should be glad, however, to know as early as convenient whether the Board will be prepared to treat with any other person who may offer himself for the work, or whether the engagement made with Brother W. is only postponed for some definite period. It is right that our churches should know whether their contributions will be soon required or not, as whenever the mission is begun in earnest, there will be a demand for funds to a considerable amount. It should not be left until a spasmodic and hasty appeal is demanded, so that other objects are required to be held in abeyance that the Board may be saved from embarrassment and the denomination from disgrace.

Far be it from us to offer any impediment to missionary labour, more particularly to encourage any of our friends "to array themselves against the action of the denomination" in any of their benevolent operations; nay, we should consider ourselves recreant to the principles which have ever animated that part of the christian church with which we are more immediately connected, if we withheld our most cordial encouragement and support, from any prudent and feasible effort to send the gospel forth to "all the world" and preach its blessed truths "to every creature."

So soon as it can be shown that we have "a hundred missionaries" or even one desirous of going whom we are able to send out, whether to a people speaking our own or a foreign language with a probability of his being sustained in a field of usefulness, and of there bringing souls to Christ, we shall not hesitate to press the matter with all our powers upon our readers.

Further, we think it a duty of all christian churches, and of every member, to contribute towards carrying out the command of our Lord and Saviour at home and abroad, whether there has been action taken by the denomination or not.

We confess that as regards our own province there has been far too little concerted action, of a missionary character, and we do hope, most sincerely, that some one or more of our experienced ministers will soon bring forward some plan of systematic effort to give the bread of life to the hundreds of our own "neighbours" who are "perishing for lack of knowledge." Whilst we have the destitution around us so clearly shewn by Brother Wallace and others, and whilst we hear the calls for ministerial labour which are being made from every quarter we should consider it an imperative duty to "Pray the Lord of the Harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" as well as to contribute of our own means to effect that great purpose. We who have the great blessing of a preached gospel should also learn to value it more highly than we too often do. When we properly appreciate it ourselves we shall be willing to make more effort to send it to others.

We find a letter in the C. Visitor, from Rev. E. B. DeMill, justifying us in the course we took in admitting "Vix Aona" to our columns of the 18th ult. We are glad to be set right before our New Brunswick brethren, and beg to acknowledge our indebtedness to the worthy pastor of the Amherst church for this act of kindness, as well as to our esteemed brother for inserting the same.

THE "Tennessee Baptist," sent to us by some friend, informs us that,—

"Brother Francis, Agent for the Revision Association, is still in our midst, winning more of our confidence, more of our love, and more of our money. Such agents are positive blessings."

We were sorry, however, to see in the same paper an advertisement, dated Nov. 8th, offering a liberal reward to any person who would stop a runaway slave. He is described in language similar to that we are accustomed to see used for burglars and murderers. He is said to be of "very white complexion, and will try to pass for a white man, but any person noticing his features will readily discover the negro."

"He is about 22 years of age and has tolerable good use of carpenter's tools." If a man had had his coat stolen, and found it in the hands of the thief he would feel quite at liberty to take it, but because "my boy Bill", takes himself away from those who have had possession of twenty-two years of his life, without his permission, he is to be hunted as a common vagabond. A strange land of liberty! We wish him a safe passage to a land of real freedom.

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