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Poetry.

[The following poem—a production of the last century—beautifully describes the Associational gatherings of Baptists of similar day in England. It is no less appropriate to those fraternal assemblies of the present time. Dr. Rippon's *Baptist Register*, from which Rev. Dr. Cramp has kindly copied it for our columns, was the denominational periodical of that time. It was succeeded by the *Baptist Magazine* in 1809.—Ed. C. M.]

THE ASSOCIATION.

BY THE REV. BENJAMIN FRANCIS, A. M., (DIED, 1790).

As the glad tribes through Judah's happy land
In Zion met, at the Divine command,
With sacred joy, on stated solemn days,
To pay Jehovah their united praise;
So yearly meet, from parts remote, in thee,
When summer smiles on every herb and tree,
Th' associate brethren, pastors, deacons, friends,
And the full crowd that in thy train attends.
When pleasure springs in each fraternal breast,
Glowing with love, caressing and caressed;
How blessed the throng, how beautiful the sight,
Where each inspires, and each receives, delight!
Where grace and nature shed their blending rays,
To warm devotion, and to enven praise!
West of Sabrina, oft mine eyes have seen
Thy sons assembled on the spacious green,
'Midst solemn hills that echo back the song,
And seem to listen to the preacher's tongue.

America, where native freedom reigns,
Views thee conveyed through her extensive plains,
Diffusing light, and peace, and joy around
The various States, that know the Gospel sound.

In thee, benignant supplication leads
The sacred service, and with ardor pleads
Before the throne, whence grace and glory flow,
For the wide world, involved in guilt and woe.

In thee, thanksgiving, from a thousand tongues,
To heaven ascends in ev'ngelic songs,
While love and joy in every bosom glow,
And form a transient paradise below.

In thee, are read epistles richly fraught
With truths sublime, in sacred Scripture taught,
And various tidings of the churches' state,
That prompt our grief, or pious joy create.
One letter mourns the faithful pastor dead,—
Or names disowned—or love and concord fled;
Another, in a thankful strain, declares
How Israel's shepherd for his Israel cares,
How Jesus' sheep still multiply and thrive,
And how the stray'd safe in the fold arrive.

In thee, the heralds of salvation sound
The trump of grace, diffusing joy around,
Celestial fire flames on the preacher's tongue,
Illumes and warms the wide attentive throng;
The frozen heart dissolves in pious grief,
The contrite mind receives divine relief.

In thee, the guardians of the churches' weal
Whose bosoms glow with unabating zeal,
With balmy counsel their disorders heal,
And truth and love and parity promote
Among the sheep, Immanuel's blood has bought.

In thee, impartial discipline maintains
Harmonious order, but aloud disclaims
All human force, to rule the human mind,
Impose opinions, and the conscience blind.

In thee, endearing fellowship imparts
Her sacred pleasures to congenial hearts:
A fellowship, resembling that above,
Where all is joy, perfection, praise, and love.

From thee, as once from hallowed Zion flowed,
In crystal streams, celestial light abroad,
Proceed collected rays of truth divine,
Which in the page of inspiration shine,
To guide our feet, and cheer our drooping minds,
'Midst hills of mental and corporeal kinds,
May thine epistles, like their sacred source,
Bid deserts smile, through their extensive course,
Bid virtue flourish where profaneness grows,
And fair religion blossom like the rose.

O blest assembly, formed to deal around
The balm of truth, to heal the mortal wound;
Convened to fan the flame of zeal divine,
And the soft bands of sacred love, intertwine;
Long hast thou strove, nor hast thou strove in vain,
To strengthen Zion, and her peace maintain.
Thy watchful eye has oft descried the foe,
Thy valiant arm has oft repelled the blow.
Heaven crown thy labour, aid thy willing hand,
And bid thee shine the glory of the land!
Where'er thou meetest, to the end of time,
In fair Britannia, or some foreign clime,
Still may'st thou meet, bless'd with abundant grace,
Beneath the smiles of thy Redeemer's face,
And join, at length, the ransomed host above,
In the full vision of the God of love!

Dr. Rippon's *Baptist Register*, 1790.

*The Severn.

Religious.

BABOO KESHUB CHUNDER SEN.

INDIA is now passing through a most interesting phase of religious experience. The religious leader and popular preacher in Calcutta whose name appears at the head of this article, is now in England. Perhaps no movement has been made better calculated to operate on, and eventually uproot, the idolatry of that benighted land, than that of which this man is the representative. We trust it may be the precursor of a wide diffusion of evangelical truth.

A *soirée* was recently given in London to welcome Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen. The room and platform were crowded by an enthusiastic auditory, comprising ministers and lay representatives of all religious creeds. A large number of Hindoos were present. The *soirée* was promoted by the British and Foreign Unitarians Society.

Dean STANLEY, who was received with loud cheering, moved the following resolution:—"That this meeting, composed of members of nearly all Protestant Churches, offers a hearty welcome to Keshub Chunder Sen, the distinguished religious reformer of India, and assures him and his fellow-labourers of its sympathy with them in their great and praiseworthy work of abolishing idolatry, breaking down caste, and diffusing a higher moral and intellectual life amongst the people of that vast Empire.

LORD LAWRENCE, in seconding the motion, said he was in some degree instrumental in inducing Keshub Chunder Sen to undertake the—for a native Hindoo—serious step of crossing the seas. He was now in our midst, and a few particulars respecting him might be gratifying. He was the descendant of a respectable and well-known lineage in Calcutta, and his grandfather was the friend and coadjutor of one of the most profound Sanscrit scholars in this country—the late Dr. Gilchrist. He belonged to the section of the Hindoo community which represented the physician caste. As an orphan he went to an English school and afterwards to a Calcutta college, where he gained a full knowledge of the English language, literature, and history, with which it was impossible he could remain in idolatry. Early in his career he therefore learned to dispise the worship of idols, and by degrees, by thought and prayer, he came to believe in the One God. He then joined the party which was known in Lower India as the Brahma Somaj (Church of God). After a short time he became the head of the Reforming party; in him we saw the representative of the most advanced section of the great Reforming party which had now arisen in Bengal. This movement was leavening Hindoo society, especially amongst the middle classes. It was impossible for these reformers to remain idolaters, and at present they consisted of two classes—one of whom was Rationalistic, the other Theistic. In course of time he (the noble lord) believed this class of reformers, reinforced by large numbers of the educated youth of the country, would progress in theological knowledge, and before a very long period had passed away a large number might be reckoned as fellow-Christians.

The resolution was supported by the Rev. J. Martineau, the Rev. Dr. Mullens, and the Rev. Dr. Marks (a Jewish clergyman).

BABOO KESHUB CHUNDER SEN, who, upon rising at the call of the chairman, was received with prolonged cheering, said:—"I did not come to England for the sake of business or pleasure; it was not to satisfy idle curiosity or make money that I came amongst you. A most important duty brings me here; I have a mission to fulfil. I came from India to tell you English men and women what you have done in my country. I bring to you the heartfelt thanks of 180 millions of my countrymen for the great work which you have commenced there, and which you

have carried on during the last few years. It is not the opening of railways, nor the conversion of forests into smiling fields, to which I allude. It is no partial reform to which I draw your attention. The great work which is going on in India under the auspices of the British Government is a work of revolutionary reform—of thorough-going radical reform. (Cheers.) You are not lopping off the branches of corruption and evil; you have cut at the root of the tree; you are carrying on a crusade against all the evils from which India has been suffering for several ages. This is not a man's work, but a work which God is doing with His own hand, using the British nation as His instruments. When India lay sunk in the mire of idolatry and superstition; when Mahomedan oppression and misrule had extinguished almost the last spark of hope in the native Indian mind; when Hindooism, once a pure system of Monotheism had degenerated into a most horrid and abominable system of idolatry and Polytheism; when the priests were exceedingly powerful, and were revelling in their triumphs over down-trodden humanity, the Lord in His mercy sent out the British nation to rescue India. (Cheers.) In obedience to God's injunction, England came and knocked at the doors of India, and said, "Noble sister rise, thou hast slept too long." And India arose. The invitation was providential, and the response too. India rose from her lethargy of ages and saw the degraded condition to which she had been sunk, and asked England for help, and the help so much needed has been given. Certainly the earlier British rulers in Hindostan were corrupt, certainly the means often employed by the early settlers were questionable, but I look not to the human agency that was employed, but dive beneath that, and see the finger of the Allwise Providence working for the redemption of my country. I forget and forgive all that England did to injure the cause of Indian redemption in individual lives, and standing upon the universal basis of humanity see how in history God employed special agencies to elevate and exalt my countrymen. (Cheers.) England and India became thus connected by an overruling Providence. I am one of those who have profound respect for the doctrine of God in history. As he takes care of individuals so does he take care of the interest of nations, and when impoverished India, degraded spiritually and morally, looked with tears in her eyes towards the Omnipotent Father, He, out of the riches of His inexhaustible mercy, came forward to relieve her,—even as in times gone by he had rescued other peoples. In the course of time England felt the responsibility of her position as the ruler of India, and became connected with her in the closest ties of relationship. A stream was opened which connected England and India intellectually, socially, morally, and religiously; and all the refined and liberal ideas of the west came through this channel into the east, into India. It is beginning to work wondrous changes. There are signs of new life on all sides in India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. You see a new nation rising up as it were in aspirations, holier and loftier thoughts, pursuits, and speculations. When we came to receive English knowledge into our schools and colleges we learned to respect your Shakespeare, Milton and Newton, until in some measure they have become our own. We can now sympathise with you in all your intellectual pursuits and speculations. Your philosophy and science are ours. We are one in thought. It is not merely the same Government that rules over us, it is not merely the same generous-hearted and noble Sovereign whose sway we all acknowledge, but we are at the same time one in heart and thought—politically united. We are also intellectually united. (Cheers.) When I say "Long live her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria," I feel that my words are reverberated throughout the length and breadth of India, for we all feel that from her we have received many and rich blessings. England has already achieved wonders in correcting prejudices

and dispelling the ignorance of my country. England's intellectual conquests in India are of a remarkable character—just as on a fine morning all the mists of ignorance and prejudice are being scared away by the rising of English knowledge, Western literature and science, and the material prosperity that has been promoted. The railway and the telegraph, those great pioneers of civilisation, have already commenced their work, and are showering upon the people advantages and blessings of which we had no idea a century ago, of which we could form no idea while we were surrounded by our traditions. On all sides the inexhaustible physical resources of the country are being developed; and, although India is rich, and has made many rich, there is a great future before her of vast material prosperity and aggrandisement. India has not been neglectful of social reformation. Her great curse is caste, but English education has already proved a tremendous power in revealing the injurious distinctions of the system. The Indian man who has received a liberal Indian education finds it impossible to retain his allegiance to caste, and although many, through fear of man, do not practically show their principles, their convictions are deep. The speaker then spoke of premature marriages and polygamy as vices which education would no doubt destroy. The highest achievement of all however, was the moral and religious reformation which was proceeding. When England embarked in the work she, of course, went out with the Bible in her hands. That wonderful book, he continued, has been received and studied, and in many cases, I am happy to say, appreciated by the educated natives of India. Whatever their religious denominations may be, whatever their peculiar prejudices may be, I am certain, and can confidently say it in this large public assembly, that if any of my countrymen ever feel a real hungering and thirsting after spiritual comfort, they must necessarily open the pages of the Bible now and then. However proud we may be of our own religious books, however great the value may be which we attach to those priceless volumes inculcating pure Theism bequeathed in many instances by our forefathers as a precious legacy, still I cannot conceal from you the conviction, which must be admitted by all candid men that India cannot do without the Bible. (Cheers.) There are certain things in that great book which are of much importance to my country in its present transition state. The spirit of that wonderful book comes into contact with the native Indian mind. After paying a high tribute to the self-denial of the missionaries who introduced the Bible into India, the speaker traced the history of the religious reformation, of which he was the acknowledged representative. The movement originated amongst a small band of Reformers (the Brahmas), who took from the Hindoo Scriptures the principle of the worship of the One God. Their object was to restore Hindostan to its original purity, to declare in point of fact a pure form of Hindoo Monotheism, as opposed to the idolatry and superstition which had crept in. In ten years this was found to be a mistake, as the native Scripture which they adopted contained not only some of the highest forms of truth, but some of the worst forms of native worship, and some absurd doctrines and ritual. The Brahmas consequently threw away their books and took up the bolder position of a pure Theism. It is impossible (the speaker explained) to for a Theist, whatever may be said to the contrary, to feel any aversion to Christ or His disciples. There are thousands, I know, who do not like to see Christ preached the population of India. Christianity first came to India in a foreign and repulsive form. Christianity in its founders, in its earliest traditions, in its earliest labourers, was Oriental and Asiatic, and there is no reason why it should, in the present day, be to presented to the Indian population in any other form. (Cheers.) Leave us to ourselves, and let us study the Bible ourselves. (Cheers.) Do we not find there imageries, precepts, and the manner in