

sending forth the Gospel, the Book, and the teachers, the evangel and its heralds, to the banks of the Congo, and even into the interior of that dark land, moistened, alas! already by the blood of brethren in Christ. How shall that blood be avenged at the hands of the universal Church. Not by the weapons of man, which are carnal, but by "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." (Applause.) Under whatever banner the church in its several sections goes to control Africa, let it go under the one banner of our blessed Lord, and let this inscription be inscribed upon it—not inappropriate, I think, to the character of the place whereto we go—"There the glorious Lord will be to us a place of broad rivers and streams."

Mr. Baynes in meeting some of the old notions that the negro race in Africa were not capable of being rescued from their state of heathen degradation, and raised to a condition of civilization, said:

Thirty years ago a thin, spare, almost fleshless man passed over from the island of Fernando Po, near the coast of Old Calabar, and settled himself down on the banks of the Cameroons River, beneath the great Cameroons peak, amongst the cannibal tribes that lived upon its banks. With a quiet heroism that danger could not daunt, and with an all-consuming, all-consecrating, self-sacrificing love he toiled, he prayed, he taught year after year; he reduced an unwritten language to characters, translated the entire Bible, and supplied to some extent, at any rate, elementary literature. He taught the savages the arts and trades of Christian civilisation, and founded a Christian township. Of the results of that toil, as seen to-day, a most distinguished traveller who visited that part of the coast only a few years ago, with no sympathy for mission work, and no personal regard for Christianity, wrote: "I do not at all understand how the changes at Cameroons and Victoria have been brought about. Old sanguinary customs have to a large extent been abolished, witchcraft hides itself in the forest, the fetish superstition of the people is derided by old and young, and well-built houses are springing up on every hand. It is really marvellous to mark the change that has taken place in the natives in a few years." He has become honest, intelligent, well-skilled artisans. There must surely be something 'abnormal' in this. Or, as Mr. Montiero says, "phenomenal." Yes, truly, the surprising, unknown, incomprehensible factor to the carnal mind in all this blessed enterprise is the wonder-working power of the Spirit of God, for under His blessed influence old things pass away, all things become new.

For more than half a century the efforts of various sections of the Christian Church have been directed to the fringe only of the West Coast of Africa, and all through these years noble, self-sacrificing men have sealed their testimony with their blood, "counting not their lives dear unto them." During the last few years however, a great change has been inaugurated, the discoveries of Krapf, Rebmann, Burton, Speke, Grant, Baker, Livingstone, Moffat, Cameron, and Stanley, have opened up the very heart of Africa, and attracted the earnest attention and sympathy of the Christian church to the condition of the vast peoples in the interior of this wonderful continent. Nearly all the new efforts to pierce Central Africa have taken their departure from the East coast. The venerable Dr. Krapf writes, referring to the mission of the Church Missionary Society on the Victoria Lake:—"By the establishment of missions in the centre of Africa, my urgent wish for the location of a mission chain between East and West Africa is at least fulfilled half way. The Western half will surely be brought about on the Lualaba-Congo, which Mr. Stanley in the providence of God has discovered."

#### ORIGIN OF THE BAPTIST MOVEMENT.

In May last year, nearly twelve months ago, while the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society were deliberating as to the best arrangements for extending their missions on the West Coast, a letter from Mr. Robert Arthington, of Leeds, called the earnest attention of the committee to the importance of mission work on the great Congo river, and pointed out the great advantage of San Salvador, the capital of the Congo country, as a base of operations. He offered one thousand pounds if the Baptist Missionary Society would undertake at once to visit these

benighted, interesting people with the blessed light of the Gospel, teach them to read and write, and give them in imperishable letters the words of eternal truth. It was resolved to send two missionaries to undertake the preliminary journey to San Salvador, and should their reception be favourable, and the way seem open, to make that place a base for further work inland.

It was deemed wisest and best to send those who by previous residence on the coast, had become, to some extent, acclimatised, and who, by experience of mission work in the country, would know the best way to conduct such an expedition; and as our brethren Grenfell and Comber, of the Cameroons, combined these advantages, with a most earnest longing for work further inland, the committee sent them an urgent invitation to undertake the pioneer journey. This invitation they joyfully accepted, and, in words that fully indicate the spirit in which they desire to prosecute this important enterprise, they wrote:—"We are not our own, nor are we in Africa for our own purposes or ends, and in all our movements, specially in such a deeply important one as we feel this to be, we look up to the gracious Master to fulfil His promise. While they were waiting for detailed and final instructions from the committee in England with regard to the conduct of the enterprise and the despatch of the needful stores, that, in order to make preliminary arrangements and spy out the land, they took a journey down the African coast as far as Banana, established friendly relations with the large and influential Dutch trading firm at the mouth of the mighty Congo river, went up more than ninety miles by their steamers to Embomma, crossed over to Banzi Noki, and sent a letter to the King of Congo, telling him of their projected visit to San Salvador, and seeking his offices. Should the committee receive favourable accounts from them, it is their intention, in accordance with the plan of Mr. Arthington, to make San Salvador a base for largely extended missionary work towards the interior. Mr. Arthington has further and yet wider plans in his mind for the good of this mighty continent. He contemplates placing a steamer on the Ikutu river that may traverse the Ikelemba, the Congo, the Aruwimi, and other tributary waters, and so take the heralds of the Cross right on to the heart of the continent, thus completing the great chain of missionary operations from the west coast to the east coast, meeting the missionaries of the London Missionary Society on the Tanganyika Lake. These noble plans are at present under careful consideration."

The last words of David Livingstone, when leaving England for his final journey in Africa, were:—"I go to open the door to central Africa—it is probable I may die there; but, brethren, I pray you see to it that the door is never again closed." Never since the days of the great Apostle of the Gentiles was there so great and effectual a door opened to the Church of Christ as Africa presents to-day. This "wonderland of the ancients," by whose river-music Moses, the servant of the Lord, was rocked to sleep in his bulrush ark, and in which the Lord and Giver of life Himself found a refuge and a home. This neglected, down-trodden, slave-hunted continent, looking out upon her darkness, her degradation, her agonies and wrongs—thank God the voice of the watchman is heard crying—"The day dawneth—the light breaketh."

As Baptists, if we have anything to guard, let us guard the high glory of being foremost in Christian missions. Other men have laboured, we have entered into their labours. They have left us a solemn charge to faithfully and loyally uphold the sublime heritage that with dying hands they have committed to our trust.

Our conviction and our cry is, "Christ for Africa," and "Africa for Christ"; for is it not written, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

After several other gentlemen had spoken the celebrated Mr. J. McGregor (Rob Roy), arose and was received with applause. He said: Whatever it may mean, the name of your society is a very astonishing to a great number of people. It is a great scandal to some. (Laughter.) Baptist Missionary Society—that is bad enough, but "Mission to the Central parts of Africa," well, that is folly indeed. (Laughter.) "Don't you know," some people will say on hearing it, "have you not got plenty to do with the Gospel in London, and plenty of savages in St. Giles's; why don't you go and work as

hard as you can there?" Another will say, "Ah, it's all very well to try it on a number of civilised people in England, but there's nothing like the old times when it went into the world; go abroad to the heathen and see what it is worth." The fact is we have to do both. Each one helps the other. (Applause.) Why should we go to the centre of Africa? I know when the question must have been asked with a very doubtful reply. Do you recollect the 8th of Acts, how it describes three terrible things? The persecution of the Church by Saul breathing out slaughter; it refers to Stephen's slaughter by the people, and of Simon Magus trying to buy spiritual gifts. These things in the Church; and yet at that time the Spirit said to Philip, "Arise and go the South." That is a sort of charter to this Society. (Applause.) "Go to the South beyond; leave all these things to settle themselves in the distracted Church at Jerusalem." The Spirit showed that as an encouragement. And if they could then spare one of the Apostles to go to the desert, surely we can spare some Christian missionaries to go to the South. (Applause.) Yes, and there was the advantage of reading the Scriptures. He found a man reading the Scriptures; and this missionary who has spoken to you has provided the Scriptures for many of the heathen. The missionaries are only wanted to teach and instruct, and the people are ready enough to hear. "See here is water, what doth hinder my being baptized?" (Applause.) And then I hope the answer will never be more straight than that given by Philip—"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." (Applause.) I do not hear who the sponsors were. (Laughter, and "Hear, hear.") We won't go further into that matter. (Laughter.) No doubt the society is all right on that subject, and has the charter of ancient times. Let no confusion with the Church of England, no threatenings of war breaking out to-day prevent our sending men to the South, especially as they come back with such good intelligence. (Applause.) About thirty years ago in Africa, I had a curious adventure. One night I heard strange sounds by the Nile. Turning the corner I saw a flashing light and a deal of dancing. It was, I perceived, a slaveship going on its way to Cairo. I got as near as I could, although a good many bullets were flying about. I afterwards went to bed, but when I awoke the next morning beheld one of my crew had bought a slave, and I was saddled with this young girl, a slave, which a Briton is very properly not lawfully allowed to have. I took care of her, and seeing their terrible treatment, the incident enlisted me at once against the slave trade. She soon afterwards died. Africa has been a source of much crime to England and America. Let us carry the Gospel there, and show the people its power. (Applause.) I met Livingstone, Stanley, Cameron, and others, and altogether I feel that though much has been said to-day, the importance of this mission and similar missions in Central Africa, cannot be over-stated. Therefore would I have the function of all these societies in one great everlasting mission, but as we cannot do that, and we cannot wait for more organization, let us go on friendly with one another as at present. Abiding by that book, let us remember the charter at first, and that God will bless our efforts. (Applause.)

Mr. Baynes expressed his regret that he omitted to mention at first, the gift, last autumn, by Mr. Wathen, of Bristol, of £500 towards the preliminary expedition—a very generous gift, to which was, indeed, due the setting on foot of the African Mission.

For the Christian Messenger.

#### Our Foreign Missions.

No. 4.

#### THE RELIGION OF THE PEOPLE.

It is sometimes asked by those who are interested in our Foreign Mission work, what is the religion of the Telugus, what do they worship? In the space allotted to a newspaper article nothing more than a mere outline of their religious system can be given.

The religion of the Telugus is the same as that which prevails throughout India, viz., *Hinduism*, or *Brahminism*. This is quite distinct from the religion of Burmah and Siam, which is Buddhism.

Hinduism is one of the great religions of the world. By the great religions I mean those which exert a

powerful influence, and embrace vast numbers of the human family within their bounds. The four great religions of the world are Christianity, or the Religion of the Bible, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Mohammedanism. These four systems embrace upwards of ninety-two per cent. of the entire human race. Christianity (including all nominal Christians) and Buddhism are about equal as regards numbers, each having about thirty per cent. of the population of the world; while Hinduism and Mohammedanism are also nearly equal, each making about fifteen per cent. Hinduism is professed by nearly two hundred millions of human beings.

Hinduism is a very ancient system. It goes back far beyond Mohammedanism, which began A. D. 622. It reaches away back beyond the origin of Buddhism, which is generally supposed to have taken place about six hundred years before Christ. It probably took its rise in the early ages after the descendants of Noah began to overspread the regions of the East, when, as the Apostle Paul says (Rom. 1) men thought "they knew God, glorified him not as God—but became vain in their imaginations—and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds, and four footed beasts and creeping things," because "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge."

Buddhism began in India, about 600 B. C. as a new or reformed religion, and spread with rapidity and power till it almost superseded Hinduism; but in the course of time there came a reaction, and it was driven out, and the old sway of the national religion returned in full force, and has ever since prevailed. Having a growth of thousands of years among a people so firmly attached to their ancestral beliefs and customs as the Hindoos are, it has become deeply rooted in the prejudices and superstitions of the nation.

The great sources of Hindoo theology are the *sacred books*, which, as Dr. Duff has said, are "prodigiously voluminous." The most ancient and authoritative of these are the four *Vedas*, which together form eleven huge folio volumes. They were composed in remote ages, and are regarded by Hindoos as the fountains of all true religious knowledge. They consist largely of hymns of prayer and praise addressed to the various gods, and directions for their worship by sacrifices and offerings. The second class of sacred writings includes the six *Shasters*, and the third class the eighteen *Puranas*, amounting in the aggregate to millions of lines. The *Shasters* and *Puranas* consist of treatises or a great variety of subjects, and commentaries on the *Vedas*. Then there are the *Laws of Menu*, a very ancient and extensive code of laws, having reference to almost all the relations of human life. And besides those books which are considered specially sacred, there are the two great epic poems, which are regarded as of very high authority, and are eagerly studied by all educated Hindoos, viz., the *Ramayana*, containing one hundred thousand lines, and the *Mahabharata*, containing four times that number. Concerning the extent of their writings, Sir William Jones says, "wherever we direct our attention to Hindoo literature, the notion of infinity presents itself"; and another writer says, "the longest life would not suffice for a single perusal of works which rise and swell protuberant like Himalayas above the bulkiest compositions of every land beyond the confines of India."

Now what religion do the Hindoo sacred books teach? From the *Vedas* we learn that the Hindoism of those early ages differed in many respects from the Hindoism of more recent times. In the age of the *Vedas* the worship was much simpler, the elements of nature, such as the sun, moon, stars, the heavens, the dawn, fire, air, water, &c., being personified as Gods, and worshipped. Thus the god *Varuna* was the heavens or sky; the god *Indra*, the air; *Surya*, the sun; *Ugni*, fire, &c. The praises of these divinities were sung, offerings, and libations of clarified butter, and the fermented juice of the Soma plant were poured on the fire, in their honor, and they were invited to draw near and regale themselves with the grateful savour of the offerings. Almost all the blessings which the worshippers asked of these gods were of a sensual and earthly kind, such as pleasure, long life, good crops, success in war &c.

After the age of the *Vedas*, but still in very ancient times the great Hindoo Triad, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva came to be worshipped. These are the pri-

ncipal divinities, and are generally represented as the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer. In addition to these there are many popular deities, such as Krishna, Rama, Ganesh, Lurshmi, Dooraga, Kali, and myriads of others, the universe being peopled with gods and demi-gods, fiends and demons, to the number of hundreds of millions. The principal gods and goddesses are honored by the dedication of temples and shrines for their worship, idols to represent them, festivals celebrated in their praise, and particular forms of worship given to them.

As to the character of these gods, according to the sacred books, "they are engaged all sorts of pursuits, perform actions of all shades of morality, and are mixed up with all affairs, whether in heaven, earth or hell. They delight in good and evil alike; they enjoy both war and peace; they love to preserve life, while they delight in the blood of their enemies or of victims sacrificed in their honor; they lie, they steal, they commit adultery; they are covetous, blasphemous, and quarrelsome." The above is the testimony of Rev. Narayan Sheshadri, a converted Brahmin of Bombay.

These gods being the creatures of a vain and depraved imagination, their characters are just what we might expect them to be. They correspond to the minds of those who invented them. The gods of the heathen are fictitious, nothing but myths and fancies, and these creatures of fiction are vicious, weak and absurd, and utterly unworthy of the regard or worship or imitation of human beings.

The Hindoos have no true idea of God, no conception of a being such as Jehovah the God of the Bible.

One of the doctrines of Hinduism is the *transmigration of souls*, which teaches that the soul, coming forth from Brahm at the first, passes through an almost infinite succession of animal lives, appearing in the form of men, beasts, birds, insects &c., until at last, having completed the circle of existence, it is absorbed back into Brahm.

Hinduism, like all other heathen systems, recognizes the great fact of sin, but knows of no atonement or method of pardon, except by human works and sacrifices. Hence the whole system of pilgrimages and penance, of self-inflicted tortures and works of merit which one meets everywhere in India. Men will voluntarily submit to most excruciating and prolonged physical suffering, or make long and toilsome pilgrimages to such hallowed places as Benares, the sacred city of the Hindoos, and the Ganges' holy stream, in the hope of expiating their sins. Others will expend large sums in the erection or embellishment of temples, or the digging of large tanks to supply their fellow-men with water, or the building of rest houses for the refreshment of weary travellers, and all with the hope of securing merit or favor with the gods.

Another way in which many seek to attain to holiness, is by giving them selves up to the life of religious devotees. They have no possessions and no home, and one of their principal objects is to utterly neglect the body, to crucify the flesh, as it were, and keep their minds fixed on the contemplation of religious truths. They are called *fakheers*, are very numerous, wander about the country begging, and are regarded by the people generally with religious respect. They are the most loathsome and repulsive looking creatures one can see anywhere. They profess to be too holy to think of such earthly concerns as washing themselves, combing their hair, or keeping their bodies covered decently, and even take pride in their accumulated filth, and long matted hair and beards.

Another development of Hinduism may be noticed. It is simply Pantheism, its central doctrine being that, "God is everything, and everything is God." This principle is held by many of the more philosophical and speculative of the people of India. It will be readily seen how such a doctrine does away with all moral responsibility, and obliterates the distinction of right and wrong. If you speak concerning sin and holiness to one who holds this principle, he will reply "Why everything is God; I am a part of God; therefore whatever I do is God's act, and therefore there is no such thing as sin or holiness." Though men of a philosophical turn indulge in such speculations as this, yet, as has been said above, Hinduism recognizes the fact of sin.

Some years ago a new religious movement originated among some highly educated Hindoos, who were convinced of the falseness and absurdity