

The Religious Intelligencer

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Rev. E. McLeod, {

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

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Religious Selections.

Freewill Baptist Foreign Mission Field.

The British Province of Orissa, in India, is the Foreign Mission Field of the Freewill Baptists of America. Several American Missionaries are now laboring there. Others are only waiting for means to convey them to this dark, and distant land. The condition of the people, and the necessity for effort on the part of those interested in the work of evangelizing the world, may be seen, by the following description of Orissa when the general Baptists of England first entered it a few years ago. We copy from the June number of the "News of the Churches":—

The province of Orissa lies along the coast of the Bay of Bengal, from near the mouth of the river Hooghly, southward about 300 miles, and extends inland, on an average, about 100 miles. Its population is probably about two millions, of whom 98 per cent. may be Hindus, and the other 2 per cent. partly Mohammedans and partly Hill-tribes. The province contains no large city, the population of Cuttack, its principal town being only about 50,000. Next to this, the chief towns are Pooree, Midnapore, Ganjam, and Berhampore (not to be confounded with Berhampore in Bengal,) with populations varying from 20,000 to 40,000. As there are not more than 200,000, or one-tenth of the people, in large towns, it is evident that the population must be mainly of the rural and agricultural class; and their condition does not materially differ from that of the same class of people in Bengal. But the interest and importance of Orissa as a department of the great mission-field are not to be measured by its extent, or by the numbers of its resident population. It is mainly important as being a place of resort for innumerable pilgrims from all parts of India, who go there at stated times to worship the idol Jagannath, whose chief temple is in this district. It will be necessary, therefore, in order that our readers may understand what the missions in Orissa are, and how they are fitted to tell upon the people of India generally, that we should preface this sketch with a short notice of this idol, and of his temple at Pooree, and of the great gatherings that are held there.

Jagannath (Lord of the World) is one of the many names and forms of the god Vishnu. He and his brother Bullabudra, and their sister Subudra, are very generally worshipped throughout India. In Bengal there is scarcely a village in which there is not to be seen a tall, thickened, conical shell, containing a huge ear, painted— we cannot say adorned—with many fanciful devices, and sometimes stuck round with wooden figures, in the usual style of native sculpture. These are ears of Jagannath. At a certain period of the year, near the beginning of the rainy season the idol, a shapless figure, with a rude resemblance of human features, is taken from his temple and placed upon this ear, which is then, with great shoutings and frantic gesticulations, dragged by the whole population to a river or tank. Here ear and idol remain for about a fortnight, when they are conveyed back to the places whence they severally came—the idol to his temple, and the ear to his shed.

Now what is thus done on a small scale in thousands of villages, is done on a mighty scale at Pooree in Orissa. The temple of Jagannath at this place may be regarded as the cathedral of Hinduism, and the worship as the very perfection of Hindu-worship. The wickedness that goes on within the precincts of the temple from day to day, may be imagined when it is stated that 120 dancing girls, professed prostitutes, form part of the regular establishment, and that the place is too sacred to be invaded by the officers of justice, the Government having only the pledge of the Rajah of Kurdah that it shall not afford protection to felons. We have no doubt that he keeps his promise—the term "felon" being interpreted in accordance with the good old English maxim, that every man is innocent until he be proved guilty. We cannot doubt the correctness of the epithet which a military gentleman applies to it, when he calls it "India's greatest monster of iniquity;" or of that, by which it is designated by a civilian, who probably knew it as well as any European ever knew it, who styles it "the mirror of all wickedness and idolatry."

This festival is attended by immense crowds from all parts of India, many men, women, and children, coming 1000 or 1200 miles in order to be present, travelling the whole distance on foot, and occupying many months in going and returning. There are a class of men called Pandas, whose vocation it is to go into all parts of the country, and induce persons to undertake the pilgrimage. The accounts very exceedingly of the numbers that attended from year to year, partly because there are very few people who can judge with any degree of correctness of the numbers of persons who compose a great crowd, and partly because the numbers do vary greatly from year to year. The late Dr. Suttou, one of the missionaries who long laboured in the district, states that, in the year in which he saw the largest attendance, the numbers estimated at 250,000. But we venture to think that this estimate must have been under the truth, and that such a number would more nearly represent that of an ordinary year.

It is this great influx of people from all quarters into the district that gives to Orissa an importance as a mission field out of all proportion

to its extent, or the numbers of its resident or permanent population. Although in the actual excitement and intoxication of the festival, the pilgrims are not likely to be accessible to the influence of the gospel, yet it is wonderful how eagerly even these multitudes listen to the preaching of the missionaries. But in going and returning, especially in returning, they are often willing to listen to the truth; and thousands have taken with them to their distant homes tracts and portions of Scripture, which otherwise had never found their way into so remote districts. It is scarcely necessary to say that thousands of the pilgrims die of fatigue, exposure, hunger, and disease; and many a dying one has heard, from the lips of the missionaries, of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life.

"We know," wrote Dr. Claudius Buchanan, more than half a century ago, "that we are preaching Juggernaut—and yet we are more than fifty miles from it—by the human bones which we have seen for some days strewn by the way. At this place we have been joined by several large bodies of pilgrims, perhaps 2000 in number, who came from various parts of northern India. Some of them, with whom I have conversed, say that they have been two months on their march, travelling slowly in the hottest season of the year, with their wives and children. Some old persons are among them, who wish to die at Juggernaut. Numbers of pilgrims die on the road, and their bodies generally remain unburied. On a plain by the river, near the pilgrims' caravanserai at this place, there are more than a hundred skulls. The dogs, jackals, and vultures exhibit a shocking tameness. The obscene animals will not leave the body sometimes till we come close to them. This Buddhuck is a horrid place. Wherever I turn my eyes, I meet death in some shape or other. Surely Juggernaut cannot be worse than Buddhuck."—Buchanan's Christian Researches.

But a few days after he wrote:—"I have seen Juggernaut. The scene at Buddhuck is but the vestibule to Juggernaut. No record of ancient or modern history can give, I think, an adequate idea of this valley of death; it may be truly compared with the valley of Hinnom."—Ibid.

In this latter extract he refers to the practice of self-immolation, which was accomplished by the devotees throwing themselves prostrate before the wheels of the immense car. This has happily been prevented for many years by the British government. But no government can prevent fever and cholera from breaking out among such hosts of pilgrims, congregated in a comparatively small town, where there is no adequate accommodation for them. The voluntary deaths never bore but a small proportion to the involuntary; and as these latter remain undiminished, Jagannath may still claim the title of "Moloch horrid."

"The writer of this article," wrote Dr. Suttou, "attended on that occasion (1825), and witnessed such scenes of cruelty and misery as no time can ever obliterate from his memory. In one small space of ground (about an acre), he with a bevelled colleague, now no more, counted upwards of 140 dead bodies, and in another place 90. The latter especially were exposed close by the highway, on each side of it, naked, swollen, and putrefying in the open face of day; while the numbers which might be seen in other places, and on the road-side many less from Pooree, defied calculation."

"Were I to detail facts which came under my observation, of husbands losing their wives, wives their husbands, children their parents, and parents their children, I could almost fill a volume. Let it suffice to quote the language of a journal written on that occasion:—'We have relieved many a child of misery, by administering medicine to the sick, clothing to the naked, food to the hungry, and money to the destitute; but what we have been able to do falls short indeed of the wants of the miserable. Many a heart rending scene we have been called to witness where we could afford no relief; many poor creatures we have dismissed with partial assistance, under a full persuasion that they would soon want again, die; and many a scene of death have we endured, and turned away with a heavy overflowing heart from many a dying fellow-creature, without God and without hope, the victims of this wretched superstition. The same wretchedness and mortality annually occur; but I have not since that awful year witnessed them to the same extent.'—Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the Mission at Orissa."

Confessing Jesus.

No. 1.

In an ordination "charge," delivered by our Saviour to his disciples, we find the following strong language which might form a very suitable meditation for these times of awakening and revival:—"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

Dear reader, let me ask you, are not these very solemn and searching sentences? If you confess Christ now, "before men," He will confess and own you "before his Father in heaven;" but if you deny him before men in this world, He will deny you before his Father in the next! You may, perhaps, say: "I confess Christ,

for I profess the Christian religion. I am not an infidel, an atheist, or a scoffer. I am connected with Christ's Church, I receive his Word, go to his table, and surely that must be a sufficient confession of Christ as my Saviour." These things, my friend, are all very well in their own place; but you are surely aware that, in this age of public profession, they may co-exist with a systematic and every-day denial of Christ. Most people who have any regard for the good opinion of their fellow-men array themselves in the garments of an external profession. Thousands there are amongst us who learn religion as men do any other profession. It has become fashionable to say, "Lord, Lord;" but very many who do so do not confess him by doing the things which He commands. They receive the Scriptures, and give their most cordial assent and credence to all their contents, but their lives are in no wise influenced by their belief. "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him." Their profession is good, but their practice nullifies it. Profession and confession of Christ are not then to be regarded as identical.

What is it to confess Christ? It is to receive himself as Master, own him, stand by him and his cause, and suffer for him, when others are despising and rejecting him. The man who truly confesses him will stand by himself, his truth, his cause, his ordinances, and his people, although the whole world should be against him. An old writer has well said: Confession is a living testimony for Christ in the time when religion suffers; profession may be only a lifeless formality in the time when religion prospers. Profession may arise from a feigned love to the ways of Christ; but confession springs from a rooted love to the person of Christ."

Profession of his religion is easy, but confession of himself is as difficult as ever it was. Confession of Christ is, as in the days of the apostles a continual swimming against the stream. In fact, the world as really hates Jesus, his disciples, and his truth, as when, in the days of his flesh, they lifted up their voices and cried, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him." Confess Jesus in a worldly company, and you will very soon find out that the world, with all its wisdom, refinement, improvement, and cultivation, has as little relish for the testimony of Jesus as it had eighteen hundred years ago. The world's enmity to Christ has been stereotyped, and "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God," and is not of the world; and those only who are possessed of that God-given faith which overcomes the world, and renders Christ's commandments "not grievous," and who feel the constraining influence of his dying love, will cordially confess him "before men."

Many profess to have a regard for his privileges, but they show an utter aversion to his cross. The come into his house regularly on his own day, but they forget to "go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach," on the other six days of the week. But the true confessor stands up for him irrespective of days, persons, places, or seasons. Unless we feel, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus has redeemed us from all iniquity, that we may be to him a peculiar people, it is not likely that we shall witness a good confession in trying circumstances.

We must Confess Jesus personally.

No. 11.

How are we to confess Christ? If we would truly confess him we must do it personally, believingly, frankly, freely, fully and continually.

It must be done personally. My neighbours cannot do it for me. I must do it myself. There are some things which I can do by a substitute or representative; but confessing Christ is a duty which, from its very nature, demands that I perform it in person. We may elect and send representatives to Parliament to conduct civil affairs, and we may choose our representatives to conduct our ecclesiastical or civil affairs; but we cannot thus confess Christ—it must be done in our own proper persons, and not by means of any representative. His own word "whosoever" teaches us our personal responsibility in this matter.

Noah was a man who felt the weight of this responsibility, and nobly confessed his Lord, and dared to continue to be "a preacher of righteousness" in the face of a whole world of ungodly and unrighteous men. No doubt the venerable patriarch had been regarded by the men of his day as a singularly obstinate man to persist in preaching righteousness when he stood alone, and "all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth," and when the "giants," the "mighty men," the "men of renown," were all against him. But he was not obstinate; they were; he was only "faithful among the faithless." He walked with God although he had none to join him, and he testified before men for God although none regarded him.

It is in this way we, too, must act, if we would confess Christ. It is a personal duty, and we ourselves must perform it, even although we may have to stand alone in so doing. Whatever others may think, say, or do, our duty is plain: we must confess our Lord "before men," let them be ever so wicked, scoffing, or corrupt.

Simple Faith.

The following instance, demonstrating the simplicity and power of faith, and the way of salvation, was communicated by Dr. Palmer to the Wesleyan Times:

"For several evenings past, the chapel and the vestry being so crowded, the penitents have been invited to the adjoining school-room, where many have been converted. Last night, after the meeting in the school-room had closed, I was pressing my way out, when I was asked to speak to an old gentleman, who I was told, had been seeking the Lord several years."

"Are you a sinner?" I asked, with trembling emotion.

"He replied: 'I am.'"

"Is Jesus the Savior of sinners?"

"He is."

"Then he is your Saviour, is he not?"

"Yes."

"Then why not call him your Saviour?—Why not say just now: 'Jesus, thou art my Saviour?' Presently he began to say: 'Jesus, thou art my Saviour; I thank thee that thou hast died for me; thou hast borne all my sins in thine own body on the tree; thou wast wounded for my transgressions; thou wast bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon thee; and with stripes I was healed.'"

Jesus, the crucified, now revealed himself, and joyously he said: 'O Lord! I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.' The seeking sinner and the seeking Saviour had now met, and blissful was the recognition. 'O! this is a most happy evening for me,' exclaimed the man with whitened locks, as we unitedly joined in the joy of his new-born spirit and sang the chorus:

O, he's taken my feet from the mire and the clay.
And he's set them on the Rock of Ages."

Only Believe.

THERE are many who grope blindly and are long on the way to Jesus. Perhaps you have met some of these; you can see it in their faces; they have an anxious, desponding look. Your pity has prompted you many times to think, and sometimes to speak out, "My dear friend, what is your grief?" And you have had for answer, "Sir, I would see Jesus! Oh, that I knew where I might find him!"

I met with one of these lately. Some questioning was necessary to find out the hindrance.

What keeps you from Christ?

"I don't know."

Have you ever tried to come to him?

"Oh yes; many times. Several times I thought I had found him, and given myself to him; but I don't think so now."

Why don't you think so now?

"Because I don't love the Bible; I don't take any interest in it; I don't love prayer. There is no change in my life."

Do you mean to say, that you are filled with the amusements and gaieties of the world? or with business cares? and wish to have it so?

"Oh, no! I have no comfort in life; and no desire for either gaieties or business no particular desire to cherish serious thoughts; but I can't keep them out of my mind; and I should be afraid to do so if I could."

In short, there is a dreadful sound in your ears, the never dying echoes of our Saviour's declaration, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." Well, why not repent, and come to Christ now?

Can't you come to Christ? Why can't you? Can't you say to Christ, Here, Lord, I give myself to thee? Can't you say to Him,

"Just as I am—without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou did'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come."

Can't you say that, and feel it too?

"It would not do any good; it would not make any change in my life; if it would, I'd do it."

Ah, I see. So you have been waiting, before you would give yourself to Christ, to be sure that that would make a change in your life; and when you can see that there will be a change in you, then you are going to do it. You have never believed in Christ; you do not believe now in Christ; you do not leave any place at all for faith; you wish to be saved, not by faith, but by sight. My dear friend, this is natural enough, but it is not God's way. You cannot be saved in that way, but only through faith in Christ. Christ deserves your trust, for he gave himself for you—the innocent for the guilty. He knows the famine of your soul, and stands before you, saying: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. Whosoever cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. He, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest—rest unto your souls."

You think you are to be pitied because you cannot see your way quite through all this, and cannot realize the consequences of doing this before you have done it. No you are to be blamed; not blamed because you cannot see, and do not feel, the consequences of an act you have

not performed; but blamed because you do not give your trust and love to Christ. You trust me, though you know very little of me; you have love and confidence for the servant who brings you the message; but none for the Master who sends him. You are not required to trust and love without knowledge; the most ample knowledge of your Lord is given to you. Do you call for proof that he is good? "I lay down my life for the sheep;" that he is loving? "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee;" that he is pitiful? "I have compassion on them because they are as sheep without a shepherd;" that he will pardon? "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world;" "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Would you be encouraged by instances of Christ's readiness to save? Remember the leper; the sick of the palsy; the storm on the lake; the possessed with devils; the blind and the lame; the ruler's daughter; the Syrophenician woman; the centurion. Did not the blind receive their sight? the lame walk? Were not the lepers cleansed, and the dead raised up? Did not the poor have the gospel preached to them? Is it hard to love and to trust such a benefactor as this?

Only believe. Only commit your soul to Jesus—trusting Him with it; making no demands. Give yourself to Him, stipulating for nothing. When questions arise in your mind, give yourself to Him again. Are you joyful? give yourself to Him. Are you sorrowful? give yourself to Him. Are you blind? give yourself to Him. Leave all to Him.—And, remember, his answer is in his Word.

"Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."

Just as I am—without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou did'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am; and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot—
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
With fears within and foes without—
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yes, all I need, in Thee I find,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe—
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—thy love unknown,
Has broken every barrier down;
How to be thine, yes, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Death-bed Repentance.

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY, in his "Future Revelations," seems to take the ground that there can be no repentance upon a dying-bed. His argument may, in a word, be summed up thus: Life is then practically ended; there is nothing left to be given to Christ; we cannot in fact, be said to be on probation; and therefore, to talk about repentance under these circumstances, is utterly to misunderstand and misuse language. Without expressing an opinion as to the obligation for these reasons to deny the possibility of conversion in our dying moments, are there not other considerations along with these, that should compel us to distrust the reality of a spiritual change at such a time? It would be sinful to declare that there are any whom the mercy of the Saviour cannot reach; and it certainly can extend to and save any who will receive it. But it is not wrong to say that sinners may be so situated that they cannot accept the offered grace of Jesus. Whether this is necessarily the case with every one who is unreconciled to God when death is just upon him, we do not positively affirm, though we fear there is little reliance to be placed by us in their professions of faith, or by themselves in their feelings of peace and security in that awful hour. The only practical test of the idea thus advanced may be found in the instances of those who repented, when they supposed themselves dying, but recovered; and with singular and startling coincidence, they cut away any hopes we might build upon our purpose to turn to God when there is nothing else we can trust in.

An instance in my own experience before my entrance into the ministry made an impression upon me which will never be effaced. I was called, early one morning before sunrise, to see a woman who it was thought could live a very little while. I had frequently visited and prayed with her, and though respectful to religion, I saw evidences of nothing more. Her extreme illness was very sudden; and to the surprise of all, in the few hours of pain through which she passed, it appeared as if her faith and hope were as strong as they had ever been in the case of any child of God. She suffered much, but the name of Jesus was often on her lips, and all around thought we had witnessed a triumphant depar-

ture. Perhaps it was so. But I shall never forget my revulsions of feeling when hearing some time after, that up to the day of her death she was living in impurity, and in violation of God's holy law. I was with her several times in her brief but fatal illness, and though ample occasion was afforded to declare herself repentant it was not done; yet she was decided and even rapturous in her expressions of assurance that she was safe for heaven. The heart, always "deceitful above all things," should be more than ever distrustful in the hour of death. As Job fled in vain to the altar, the sinner may vain seek for refuge from God's wrath when vengeance is thundering against him. There is little time then to think of love for God or Christ: it is only the fear of hell that drives him to prayer, and there need be no wonder if he dies in delusion, or is mocked in his calamity.

Jacob before meeting Esau.

To-morrow Esau and Jacob are to meet. There was a quarrel of long standing between them, which had all the bitterness of a domestic feud. Jacob had foully deceived and deeply injured his brother. He had not seen Esau for many years, and, dreading his vengeance, he now heard of his approach, at the head of four hundred men, with fear and trembling. Greatly alarmed, he cried, God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, the mother with the children. Pattern to us, when temptation threatens, or dark misfortunes lower, Jacob, having done all that man's wisdom could devise, or his power could do in the circumstances, flies for help to God. He will prepare for to-morrow's trial by a night prayer. Sending off his wives and children across Jabbok's stream, to place them as far as possible out of danger, and leave these innocent ones to forget it in sleep's sweet oblivion, he seeks himself a solitary spot. With deepest silence all around him, and the bright stars above his head, he is on his knees alone with God. Suddenly, as if he had approached with the stealth of a creeping savage, or had sprung from out the ground, some one grasps him. Folded in his arms, Jacob cannot cast him off. Now it becomes a struggle for the mastery. Looked together, they wrestle in the dark; they bend; they try each to throw the other; and, in some mysterious commingling of bodily and spiritual wrestling, the night passes, and the conflict lasts till break of day. Let me go, said the other, whose eye had caught the gleam of morning, for the day breaketh. Jacob but held him faster. He had found out the other wrestler; danger gave him boldness; faith gave him confidence; and, clinging to God with the grasp of a drowning man, he replied, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And when he had prevailed, and got the blessing, "Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."—Guthrie.

BACKBITING.—The spirit of the Bible forbids that we should make the failings of other men a source of amusement to ourselves—and now I am coming to it. I will admit that there is a playful, good-humoured kind of badinage that is harmless. The reprehension or exposition of a man's faults in a light, genial spirit, is often the best way of telling him of them. I do not, therefore, say that all innocent raillery and good-natured reprehensions are to be disallowed. It must be genuine, however, producing good and not pain. But he that makes the mistakes, the foibles, the faults, the misconceptions of men—the ten thousand infelicities of human life—the subject-matter of comment, of jest and social enjoyment, and personal amusement, is simply a barbarian. He is not a Christian; he does not belong to the category.

It is one of those things that are monstrous in the sight of God. Could you do it to your children? A mother may tantalize her child; she may frolic with it; she may do a thousand things with it, causing it to hover vibrantly between a tear and a smile, sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, just for a moment; but she instantly presses it to her bosom, and covers its face with kisses, so that there are no shades left upon its spirits. And there is such a thing as innocent raillery. But to watch to see what is awkward in others; to search out the infirmities of men; and to go out like a street-sweeper, or a universal scavenger, to collect the faults and failings of people, to carry these things about as if they were cherries or flowers, throw them out of your bag or pouch, and make them an evening repast or noon-day meal, or the amusement of a social hour, enlivened by unfeeling criticisms, heartless jests, and cutting sarcasms—this is devilish! You may call it by as many pretty names as you like, please, but it is devilish!

DECLINE OF HEATHENISM.—An English Baptist missionary in Orissa, makes a remarkable statement in regard to the great idolatrous festival of that part of India. His words are:—"You may remember my mentioning, when at home, that the last time I attended the Juggernaut festival, the car was abandoned by the people and left on the road. A few days ago I went to the same spot, and expected to see two cars, and was told that one is too old, and with regard to the other, it was said the proprietor could not afford the usual fee to the Brahmins. But this is all a blind. The truth is, that the people have