

Missionary Intelligence.

From the London Patriot, Feb. 3.

THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Proposal to appoint Twenty Missionaries for India.

On Tuesday afternoon, the Ministers and Deacons of the Baptist Churches in and around London, assembled in the Library at the Mission-house, Moorgate-street, to receive a communication from the Missionary Committee. The attendance was very numerous. When the company had partaken of tea, the chair was taken by S. M. Peto, Esq., M. P., one of the joint-treasurers of the Society. After singing and prayer,

The Chairman introduced the business of the evening in a few observations. The state of the Mission in India had engaged the attention of the Committee for some time. The appointment of the Rev. Messrs. Russell and Leachman as a Deputation to visit that country, had placed them in the possession of full information on the subject; and, proceeding upon their Report, the Secretaries had given the subject their close attention, and brought it in all its breadth under the consideration of the Committee. The result of their deliberations was, that the time had come when a greater concentration of their efforts was indispensable,—an object which, as the statements which Mr. Underhill, one of the Secretaries, would now submit to the meeting, would show, could be accomplished only by making a large addition to the number of the Missionaries.

Before his colleague proceeded with his address, the

Rev. F. Trestrail begged permission to read a letter from

W. B. Gurney, Esq., the senior Treasurer, in which that gentleman, after regretting his inability to be present, expressed his cordial concurrence in the proposed augmentation, and declared his intention to give towards the necessary outlay a donation of 250*l.*, and a subscription of 50*l.* a year to his present subscription. (Cheers.)

Mr. Underhill then rose to make his statement. The numerous attendance, he began with observing, was exceedingly gratifying, as a clear proof of devotion to the Missionary cause. With respect to the immediate object of the meeting, he might say that India had long been a subject of anxious consideration with the Committee. Other portions of the Missionary field had, however, absorbed their attention and the funds at their disposal. Now, however, those causes of solicitude had been removed; and they had had time for examining into the state of their India Mission. Before the embarkation of Messrs. Russell and Leachman, they were fully convinced of the importance of attending to the wants of that portion of the field of labour, and only waited for the return of those brethren, to complete, with the aid of their Report, their plans, and fit them for presentation to the public. The time for doing this had now come. No plans, however well devised, could be carried out, it was obvious, without the cordial co-operation of the churches throughout the land. But he felt confident, that, when their plans were known, they would command the ready assent and zealous aid of both ministers and people. India was the first scene of the Society's labours; and neither the great men who began the enterprise, nor the results which had flowed from their exertions, could ever be forgotten or disregarded. From a variety of causes, however, as already intimated, the committee had been obliged to intermit their attention to that part of the world. It would be interesting to detail these results, but that would occupy them too long, and the principal facts might be found in the Missionary Herald for the current month. He would confine himself, therefore, to such facts as might suffice to illustrate and prove the necessity for the proposal, which as the organ of the Committee, he was about to lay before them. As the general result of Missionary labor in India, including Protestant Societies of every denomination, it appeared—that among a population of from 130,000,000 to 140,000,000, there were about 450 missionaries, with upwards of 19,000 converts, and 112,000 hearers. Looking at the Baptist Missionary Society alone, the showing was not so favorable. In Bengal, with a population of 39,000,000, there were 78 missionaries, in

all; but among 19,500,000 of these there was not one resident missionary. 7,000,000 of those who have Missionaries, are supplied by the Baptist Missionary Society alone. These figures give but one Missionary to every half-million of souls. In the Presidency of Agra, with its 12,000,000, the Baptists and others labour among 2,500,000, the Baptists alone, among 700,000, and all other societies among 7,500,000. The disparity between population and Missionary agency was greatest in reference to Baptist agency. In Calcutta even—among 600,000 there were but 5 Missionaries; only one, or at most two of whom gave their whole attention to Missionary labor, the rest being engaged on the press, or in translation and other duties. Here, where the proportion of Missionaries to Population was larger than in any other part of India, there were but 25 Missionaries of all denominations. Further, of the 6 or 7 Free Church of Scotland Missionaries, one only was able to preach in Bengali, and extremely few of other denominations were occupied in direct labors among the natives. Even in Calcutta, then, it would be apparent, the Society's agents were too few to carry on the work of Missionary preaching. In the Hooghly district, where the Baptists were alone, they had but three Missionaries. Of these, Mr. Robinson was occupied with public duties as Government translator, giving only spare time to Missionary labor; Mr. Denham, was connected with Serampore College; and Mr. Trafford, also, was assistant in that institution. This was all that was done at Serampore. As to the district around Calcutta, three only could pay it any attention, and there was but one resident European, the rest being native preachers. In Jessore, where, amid a population of 1,000,000, Mr. Parry had formed nine or ten little churches, numbering 200 members, he was the only resident Missionary of any denomination. In the country east of Jessore, there were but two Baptists and no others. In Dacca, with 800,000, there were but two Baptists, and one of them quite aged. In Chittagong, 1,000,000 souls had but one missionary—a Baptist. In Dinajpore the same was the case, except that the population was greater (1,200,000). In short whichever way one turned, it was impossible not to feel how extremely incommensurate and disproportionate the supply of Missionary agency was to the stations attempted to be occupied. In the Northwest Provinces, for example, four Districts, comprising 4,250,000, had but five Missionaries. Rungpore, with 2,500,000, had no Missionaries; Pooneah, with 1,600,000, none; Bograh, with 900,000, none; and so on, almost indefinitely. In 18 districts, comprising a population of 19,000,000, there was no Missionary, although they were closely contiguous to Mission stations. Let any one take the map of Bengal, which the Committee had ordered to be prepared, and mark the stations; and their extreme isolation would be manifest. They are so remote from each other that the brethren can scarcely ever communicate; and they are so sparsely supplied with laborers, that in case of death or incapacity from any cause, no successor, no substitute can be found. (Hear, hear.) And in the mean time the brethren were cut off from all opportunity of mutual counsel and encouragement, which experience proved to be so often necessary. Calcutta and four other stations excepted, there was no station with two Missionaries; the rest had but one each. What was cause for grave solicitude, of the 31 Missionaries employed, not more than six or eight could be considered as young men; the rest were either aged or getting into years. The question was not therefore, of extending the mission simply, but of saving it from extinction, in many instances, at least. (Hear, hear.) What then was to be done? Should they plant their Missionaries closer and make no increase of their number? This would involve the abandonment of a full third of the stations, with the work of 25 or 30 years.—The Society at home he was persuaded would countenance no such thing. Yet they must consolidate their stations some how, and at the same time extend their efforts. No other course then, was open than to reinforce the feeble stations with additional help, and to bring the whole closer together. It was proposed, accordingly, that each station should have, at least, two Missionaries; that Calcutta should have three added to the present number; Benares, one; Agra, two. The whole plan would require from 20 to 22; for three new stations, where contemplated in central Bengal, along the Great Ganges—

Bauleah, Pubna, and Fureedpore had been named; but the places were not definitely fixed. The aim would be so to plant the new stations, as best to consolidate and connect all the stations, new and old. It was moreover proposed to revive the station at Patna on the Ganges, and also that at Delhi,—which had been vacant these two years.—Less than 20 Missionaries the Committee could not ask, in order to effect their object,—to strengthen their present standing, and to carry the Gospel as widely as possible to the districts all around.—Mr. Underhill then assigned several reasons in support of the project of the Committee.—It would be wise to concentrate their efforts on Bengal, as being the richest part of India, the most densely peopled, the most easily accessible, and with least trouble, expense, or peril. Here they had the encouragement of success beyond all other denominations. There was a large amount of Native piety and of intellectual culture. The people were to a great extent prepared for the Gospel. Things had wonderfully changed of late years. Now the Christian Missionary could preach uninterrupted to large and attentive audiences. The Missionaries, in their letters, said it would sometimes be a relief to them to be involved in a little controversy. It was now quite common to hear the Hindoos say, "It is all true; some day we shall all be Christians." Mr. Wenger's opinion was, that in ten years all Bengal will be, outwardly at least, Christianised. The advanced state of the work of translation furnished another reason and encouragement. They had the scriptures in the vernacular tongue. The Bengali Testament it was agreed was the best in India. Indeed it might be regarded as the standard of the national literature. Dr. Carey was doubtless the founder of the Bengali as a literature.—(Hear.) That language was, thus, formed much as the English language was formed at the period of the Reformation. (Hear.) It was of incalculable moment that Christian sentiments and Christian ideas should be thus embodied in the language and literature of a nation. (Hear, hear.) Again, the course of public events bore strongly upon the progress of the Gospel. The Government which once proscribed, now protects it. (Hear.) Much of the legislation was in its favor. If the laws had become more just, it was because they were imbued with Christian principle.—Freedom of conscience had been established—a thing unknown to Mahomedan and Hindoo law. Distinction of caste had been overthrown, by opening public employments to persons of all classes. Infanticide, Suttee, and other abominations had been put an end to,—practices wrong on Christian, but not on Hindoo principles. The current of Legislation was, therefore, decidedly favorable to the diffusion of Christianity. Another advantage arose from the fact, that, under the whole district under contemplation, no other than Baptist Missionaries were to be found. They were therefore, not entering upon, or interfering with, the labors of other men. With respect to things at home, the Committee were led to think the time peculiarly favorable. No great question agitated the denomination. The churches were at peace—never, perhaps, so peaceful as now, and never so ready to listen to such an appeal. The commercial prosperity of the country afforded another encouragement. Their friends had doubtless had a fair share in it; and, making every abatement on account of emigration and other circumstances, it might be presumed that the means of their churches had increased, while the Society had not yet appealed to them for any portion of that increase. Other reasons might be assigned; but these, probably, would be sufficient. It might be inquired, however, where the twenty new men were to be found. The Committee proposed to find half the number in India (without the aid of Serampore College,) and the other half here. It was felt desirable, that those sent out should be men of a higher grade than ordinary. Experience had shown, that to send out very young men was not the wisest course. It was a work which might well employ the finest abilities. Why should it not be undertaken by pastors of some years' experience in England? Was it not a duty, to which the interest of Christ's cause summoned them? He was of opinion that volunteers of this description might be reckoned on. It was an obvious advantage to secure tried men; men whose spirit, and temper, and character were known; men whose

appointment would inspire confidence, both at home and abroad; men to whom, as being well known, the Committee could safely entrust a wider discretion than could prudently be allowed to young and untried men. As to the pecuniary cost, which would be an addition of 5,000*l.* a year, it was proposed to spread the effort over a space of three years. But that topic he would leave to be handled by his colleague. In conclusion, he hoped that he had said enough to bring out distinctly the greatness, importance, and necessity of the work, and that the conviction of the meeting would be, that the proposal of the Committee was one which ought to be carried into effect. (Hear, hear.)

THE BIBLE.

How comes it that that little volume, composed by humble men in a rude age, when art and science were but in their childhood, has exerted more influence on the human mind and on the social system, than all the other books put together? Whence comes it that this book has achieved such marvellous changes in the opinion of mankind—has banished idol worship—has abolished infanticide—has put down polygamy and divorce—exalted the condition of woman—raised the standard of public morality—created for families that blessed thing, a Christian home—and caused its other triumphs by causing benevolent institutions, open and expansive, to spring up as with the wand of enchantment. What sort of book is this, that even the winds and the waves of human passions obey?—What other engine of social improvement has operated so long, and yet lost none of its virtue? Since it appeared, many boasted plans of amelioration have been tried and failed, many codes of jurisprudence have arisen and run their course, and expired. Empire after empire has been launched on the tide of time, and gone down, leaving no trace on the waters. But this book is still going about doing good, leavening society with its holy principles—cheering the sorrowful with its consolations—strengthening the tempted—encouraging the penitent—calming the troubled spirit—and soothing the pillow of death. Can such a book be the offspring of human genius? Does not the vastness of its effects demonstrate the excellency of the power to be of God?

VALUE OF A MINUTE.—A minute, my friend, is something. A minute! How many years must it seem to somebody standing on a scaffold in the chilly morning, with the spectre of a white night-cap grinning over his shoulder, with the hands of St. Sepulchre's Church pointing to one minute to eight, and with but that minute plank between him and the deep sea of eternity? A minute! Will not the thousandth part thereof, consumed in a nimble spring to the right or the wrong side, decide the odds between your being landed safely on a well-swept platform heaped with Christmas hampers, and hung round with jovial banners, or placards respecting Christmas excursion-trains, and your being crushed to death beneath the remorseless wheels of that same excursion-train as it glides heavily along the treacherous rails into the station? A minute! In that subdivision of the day how many words of hope, or love, or murderous accusation, or frenzied anxiety, or kindly greeting, will throb through the sentient wires of the telegraph, over marsh, and meadow, and less through hills and tunnels, across valleys and deep rivers? A minute will break the back of the strong steamship, and send her with all her freight of mailed warriors, and weather-beaten mariners, and restive chargers, down to the coral reef and the pearls that lie in dead men's eyes, to be no more heard of till the sea gives up its dead! All these lie within the compass of a minute—of less than an infinitesimal particle of a minute!—Dickens's Household Words.

GUARD AGAINST VULGAR WORDS.—There is much connection between the thoughts and the words; the latter are not only the expression of the former, but they have a power to re-act upon the soul and leave stains of corruption there. A young man who allows himself to use a profane or vulgar word has not only shown that there is a foul spot on his mind, but by the utterance of that word he extends that spot and inflames it, till by indulgence, it will soon pollute and ruin the soul. Be careful of your words, as well as your thoughts. If you can control the tongue that no improper words are pronounced by it, you will soon be able to controul the mind and save it from corruption. You extinguish the fire by extinguishing it, or by preventing bad thoughts bursting out into language. Never utter a word anywhere, which you would be ashamed to speak in presence of the most religious man.—Follow this practice a little, and you will soon have command of yourself.

"Seekest thou great things unto thyself?" says Jeremiah to Baruch; "seek them not." Let me reflect, in the light of Scripture and observation, on the vanity of worldly things, the unprofitableness in possession, their perishing in the using, the many and hurtful lusts to which they expose the owner; and let my conversation be without covetousness; and let me be content with such things as I have, for He hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.—Jg.