

[THE MISSIONARY HERALD,
MARCH 1, 1884.



HIS EXCELLENCY THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR, THE MARQUIS TSENG,
*Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to Russia, France, and
England.*

(From a Photograph by W. BLACKALL, Folkestone.)

THE MISSIONARY HERALD.

Death of the Rev. Quintin Wilson Thomson, of Victoria, West Africa.

WITH feelings of the deepest grief, we inform our readers that, by the last West African Mail, letters were delivered announcing the sad tidings of the death of the Rev. Quintin Wilson Thomson, who, after more than nineteen years of devoted and self-sacrificing toil on the West Coast, fell asleep at Victoria, on the evening of Saturday, December 29th, 1883, after little more than a fortnight's illness of fever congestion and bronchitis. Only two letters have been received—one, dated Victoria, Sunday, 30th December; and the other, Cameroons, January 10th; the former from Mr. Thomas Lewis, the latter from Mr. Samuel Silvey, further details being promised by the succeeding mail. Mr. Lewis, writing on Sunday evening, December 30th, from the Mission House, Victoria, says:—"I am, indeed, deeply grieved to inform you of the sad news in connection with our mission here. You will be deeply pained to know our dear brother, Mr. Thomson, is no longer with us. He was taken very ill about a fortnight ago, and last night, about 9 o'clock, he passed from us. He had severe attacks of bronchitis and fever. He was buried this afternoon in our little burial-ground. Our hearts ache, and there is a great blank here.

"Mrs. Thomson feels it terribly; she is in but poor health, and does not deem it wise to leave at once, but may leave for England about the beginning of March.

"We must have *immediate reinforcements*. I do not see how the work is to be carried on without two more men *at once*.

"For the present I take charge here, and Mr. Silvey at Cameroons."

Just at the present moment it seems almost impossible to realise the full meaning of this mysterious providence; for, humanly speaking, at no previous period of the West Coast Mission has the continued presence and

counsel of the faithful worker, now at rest, appeared to be more urgently and indispensably necessary. In his own words to Mr. Baynes, written only three months ago—referring to his work—“I am sustained and upheld amid many and heavy anxieties by the growing conviction that the dear Master is, in His great condescension, using me here for the settlement of many difficulties, and I look forward to the future with more hope than I have known for years. I believe the work here, by the continued blessing of God upon the new plans laid down by the Committee, will soon assume a better and brighter aspect; and my heart glows within me as, by faith, I see the time. I am full of hope, although sensible, too, of a growing weight of responsibility and daily anxiety. Oh! for more and more of grace to cast all our burdens upon the Divine burden-bearer. Our hope and trust are in Him alone; are they not, dear brother?”

And so, in the inscrutable providence of God, in the midst of these plans and in the height of his usefulness, our brother has been suddenly called away, leaving the mission on the coast without any senior or experienced missionary to carry on the work, our brother, the Rev. J. J. Fuller, being just now in England. “He doeth all things well,” and so, in simple trustful faith, we desire to bow in humble submission to the Divine will that has so ordered events, cherishing yet more deeply than ever a feeling of dependence and resignation; knowing that He, whose work it is, can so overrule this sad and mysterious dispensation as to bring about the furtherance of His kingdom and the wider extension of His glory.

For the sorely-stricken widow and the fatherless children, for the aged parents, and bereaved relatives, we would humbly and earnestly supplicate Divine help and compassion, that, in this hour of bitterness and grief, they may be abundantly supported and upheld by the special presence and grace of the Divine Saviour, and by the blessed anticipation of a joyful reunion in the everlasting home. The Committee desire very affectionately to commend them to the special sympathy and prayers of the churches throughout the country, and to the tender solicitude of the denomination at large.

As we only received these distressing tidings just before going to press, it is impossible to say all that should be recorded of the faithful and devoted worker now passed from us. Soon, however, we hope to place before our readers some further particulars of a life of no ordinary interest, and of a self-sacrificing, unobtrusive devotion to duty under difficult and trying conditions, such as is rarely found, even on the mission-field. In the words of Mr. William Dixon, late school teacher at Victoria, who was associated with Mr. Thomson all the time he was in Africa:—

“Ever calm, quiet, and collected, full of faith and reliance upon the

Unseen, when circumstances looked grave and dark, he always met trials and reverses bravely.

“Of his long and lonely journeys far into the interior, prosecuted with dogged and quiet endurance, all can tell who know anything of the West Coast Mission. His knowledge of the people, their language, their customs, and their peculiarities, was, indeed, remarkable; far surpassing that of any other European resident in that part of Africa.

“The financial and business affairs of the mission were conducted by him in a most masterly manner, for he was one of the most intensely practical missionaries ever connected with the Society; while his tender, gentle spirit, especially in sorrow or difficulty, can never be forgotten.”

“Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. He being dead yet speaketh.”

The Chinese Ambassador to us.

THE ordinary names by which the Chinese call China are “The Middle Kingdom”—implying that they are in the centre of the universe, and every other kingdom outside; or “The Heavenly country,” by which we are to understand they consider *they* are under an especial care of Heaven, bestowed on them as not on others. Hence we call them “Celestials,” and hence, too, their pride as a nation, they being surrounded only by peoples vastly inferior in most things to themselves.

During the present century, however, China has been woken up to the fact that there were other powers in the world she had not reckoned with before; and now, after successive wars, she receives ambassadors from Europe and America, who are not, as formerly, treated as bearers of tribute to the Emperor of China. She also sends out ambassadors to Western nations.

The engraving we present this month is an excellent likeness of one of the present ambassadors—the Marquis Tsêng (pronounced Dzung—the *u* as in wrung). He is the son of a very celebrated member of the Chinese aristocracy—a great minister, statesman, and general of some twenty-five years ago, who was a marquis in his own right in perpetuity. His uncle is the late Governor of the Province of Shan-si, with whom Mr. Richard had so much intercourse during the famine there.

The present marquis is about forty-six years of age, and married. He is a man who has come very much into contact with foreigners in his own country as well as in Europe; and, judged by the standards of his own country, is a man of rank and culture, apart from any want of knowledge he may seem to show as to the etiquette of our diplomatic intercourse.

In a speech recently made at a banquet in Hastings, he gave expression to some very enlightened views; not hesitating to remind us that, as many of our ideas had an Oriental origin, so might we still find in the *far* Orient many a neglected lesson of wisdom to learn.

Let us all be frank with ourselves. Let us acknowledge the impatient and harsh way in which we have treated the Chinese nation in time past. Even if they have been overbearing, let us still, above all and beneath all, maintain our ground upon the fact that they are men as we are; that they are our brothers; and endeavour, by everything we can contribute towards this attitude, to convince them of its reality. We know it is hard to deal with the child who will not sit down at his father's board among the others; but even be it so, let us bear and forbear, and seek, increasingly, to model national relationships by the rules of personal virtue. A. G. JONES.

Notes of a Bible Tour

FROM ROME OVER THE APENNINES TO PESCARA AND BACK BY ANCONA AND FOLIGNO.

BY THE REV. JAMES WALL, OF ROME.

WE left Rome—Mr. Shaw and myself—on Tuesday (October 16th) morning at six o'clock. Reached Tivoli soon after eight, where we had time to get a cup of coffee, when we started in the diligence for Avezzano. We had scarcely left the city when the conductors had to dismount to repair the break, which almost stopped the vehicle on level ground, and thus gave little promise of service when needed in the descents of the hills. With us in the carriage were two gentlemen, of whom one turned out to be my neighbour—an agnostic, and, as far as such a person can be, in favour of the political and social influence of the Gospel. When in a college at Naples, he had received a portion of the New Testament. When the masters found it in his possession they gave him confinement on bread and water for a week. He seemed interested when he heard that I had had

something to do with the distribution of those gospels so many years since in Naples, and gladly accepted the offer of a copy of the whole New Testament. The ride up the valley of the Anio was very fine. The old river still rolls its waters past the ruined roads, and aqueducts, and wayside tombs of the Empire. Horace's farm still sends its rippling tribute to the Anio, but desolation dominates the scene. Papal misrule ruined the very rocks. Not only have the sacred woods disappeared from their summits, but also the soil. A red Indian has passed by and scalped them. At Arcoli the diligence stayed to change horses. The mountain air had sharpened our appetites. In the wayside inn half a dozen women were sitting round a table. A large pot of *polenta* had been poured on to the clean boards, and then covered with chopped sausage. Of course they invited us to partake, and, of course, the invitation

was accepted. The people seemed delighted. The *polenta* was good, and we left the simple home refreshed in body and mind.

CARSOLI.

Carsoli, a small town among the mountains, is well worth visiting. Mediæval houses, so small that they seem fit only for a race of pigmies, are found in their pristine form, queer as the woodcuts of our oldest Bibles. Filth, priests and pigs everywhere. On the top of the Apennines we stayed at a small inn. An old tinker had made a hole in the ground, put some charcoal into it, and was blowing away, making small lamps. A traveller who left the diligence at that point to go to a town several miles off, carried with him a large revolver, because, he said, there might be a brigand in the way. There were wolves in the woods, and even bears in the mountains. When we had commenced the descent, horses and driver were changed. The two horses behind were only old and lazy. The leader seemed mad; the driver almost foolish. Shouting, kicking, swearing, blaspheming. At last we start. The enraged driver lays on with all his might, not only to the horses, but to all he met—pigs, sheep, and women. The passengers look with alarm as they fly past the precipices, and swing round the sharp curves. No amount of shouting suffices to arrest the attention of the driver. At last one of the passengers knocks a pane out of the carriage window, and the man, who cares little for life and much for glass, moderates the speed at once. The country now changes, and, as we descend, cultivation becomes general, and the state of the people greatly improved. This part of Italy was never under the Popes. The scenery, too, is very fine. Monti Velino rises to a height of 8,792 feet, and the Gran Tasso to 9,813 feet.

We reached Avezzano, a town of six or seven thousand souls, at about eight o'clock the same evening.

AVEZZANO.

We had brought with us three hundred New Testaments, and intended selling them all at the highest price we could get for them in the short space of time we had allotted to ourselves. Avezzano is a central town, where roads cross, and far inland, away from evangelistic influence. It seemed desirable to leave as many testimonies of the Truth as possible in that centre. After reconnoitring the place, we decided to sell a hundred copies of the New Testament in Avezzano. The first thing was to find where to sleep. There was no room in the inn, which only seemed to possess an extra bed or two, but the host sent a man with us to a private place. Down a narrow street, dirty and sloppy, we were led to an almost empty room, in what seemed to be a haunted house. The people in the street were nearly all engaged in making wine. In nearly each shop persons in long white smock-frocks were engaged treading the grapes, others were boiling the must in large cauldrons. Singing was heard in all directions; and, there being no chimneys, clouds of smoke were issuing from the upper part of the shop doors; and, here and there, men were crossing the street with pails of wine on their heads, and their legs stained black red with the juice of the grape.

Early next morning we began our work at the inn. We unpacked our books and the sale commenced. The landlord and the waiter each purchased a copy, and the former offered us a room for a meeting if we stayed for the evening. We went from shop to shop, from house to house, offered to all we met; went upstairs, when we could, into public offices, barracks, prisons; indeed,

visited the whole town, and in two or three hours sold one hundred copies of the New Testament. Many touching incidents were crowded into that morning's work.

SALMONA.

By eleven o'clock we were in the diligence on our way to Salmona which we reached in the evening. This is a large place with a cathedral and colleges. We decided to sell the same number of Testaments here as in Avezzano, and therefore went out early, going from street to street. Here the sale was much more difficult. The people told us plainly they did not want religion. One of this class, quite a gentleman, who had been persuaded to purchase a copy, began to read it to a number of his friends. When I returned that way he called out to me and said, "I like it, and am beginning to believe." Notwithstanding the reluctance of many to purchase, having redoubled our effort, we sold the second one hundred copies of the New Testament in Salmona and started the same evening for Pescara, a small fishing-town on the Adriatic. We were now in the ordinary Italian town, with its politics, art, vice, and seething under-swell of socialism and atheism. We went through the whole town, and spoke individually to hundreds of persons; but our hearts were saddened at the desolations of atheism. One man, a fine-looking carpenter, told me that he had now no religious need, and that if he felt any he would quench it. When I told him that if he read the Gospel it would be different with him, he said, for that very reason he would not read it. This was no isolated case. The men who spoke to us thus, seemed to me to be among the more honest, and, therefore, the more hopeful. We sold about forty New Testaments and

then started for Loreto, which we reached about sunset on Friday evening.

LORETO.

Loreto is a kind of Catholic Mecca; it is a creation of superstition. We expected to be thorns in the flesh of the people here, and therefore resolved not to let the object of our visit ooze out before the morning. On the ground floor of the hotel where we stayed was a shop, full of little images and other objects of worship, kept by rather an accomplished lady, who, in a variety of ways, tried to induce us to make purchases of her. At last, I promised to enter her shop on the morrow. Not only the hotel where we stayed, but the whole street in which we were, is supported by the tens of thousands of pilgrims who annually visit the holy stones of this Mecca. When we sat down to supper, the waiter recognised me at once. He was an old hearer in Lucina. After supper we walked round the square and the immense church which rises above the house in which superstition holds our Lord was conceived.

The enormous masses of masonry rise from the crest of the hill, and frown, in gloomy grandeur, on one of the loveliest scenes on the face of the earth. Within, art has wrapped the fairest forms about the deepest degradation of the soul, and the potentates of the earth have there put their seals to the foulest lies. Long before light the next morning crowds were tramping past our hotel to the prostituted shrine. When we entered, hundreds were prostrated in the nave, and hundreds, also, in the side chapels. The *holy* house beneath the dome was crowded. With difficulty I wedged my way through the poor victims who stood in ecstasy before the window the Madonna had looked through; who thought miracles might sweat through the walls she had

touched, or salvation be obtained by looking at the hearth of the kitchen in which she had cooked for the sacred family.

AT WORK.

We now began our work. In the first place I entered the shop in the ground floor of the hotel, with some New Testaments in my hands. The lady referred to was there, but marvelously changed. She scowled at me, and drew herself up as if to strike from a greater height. Her tragic finger pointed through the door to some imaginary place where I could buy a soul for a *centime*. Without giving me the full direction, she began to shriek, "Go, go!" In the next shop things looked rather more serious; a tall, strong man, who recognised the book I carried, ordered me, with a threat, to quit immediately. All down that long street there was not a single desire manifested by anyone to hear the Gospel or obtain the Scriptures. Here, as elsewhere, we went through the whole of the town, offering to all. Among other classes we found some who had desires after truth, and who purchased the Scriptures, so that we left about twenty copies in about the most Catholic place in this part of

Italy. We then took train and returned by way of Ancona, reaching Rome on the Saturday evening.

In five days the distance travelled was more than three hundred miles—the number of Testaments sold, two hundred and eighty-three—money taken from sale of Scriptures nearly seventy francs, travelling expenses about one hundred and forty.

REFLECTIONS.

Such a visit, occasionally needful to the missionary, is always a help to him. It shows not only the immense need there is of the *Bible* in Italy, but also proves that Bible work can be done on a large scale and comparatively small expense. It is certainly discouraging, after all that has been said about evangelisation in Italy, to find one can travel two hundred miles through dense populations which are unsupplied with a single evangelist. If this is not a call from God, I do not know what is; and I can hardly conceive a field where labour could be more profitably given, or life more usefully spent, than among the interesting pagans and disheartened sceptics of the Central Apennines.

JAMES WALL.

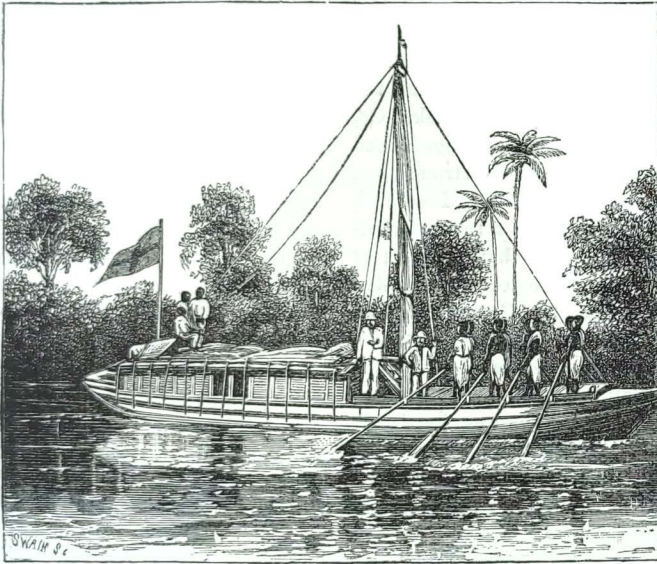
Rome.

Our Mission in Eastern Bengal.

BY THE REV. THOMAS MARTIN, OF BARISAL.

THE Barisal Mission Boat, *Zillah*, from a photograph by Rev. T. R. Edwards, which is shown on the next page, is one that has been in use for a long time. The writer of these lines has lived and travelled much in it during many years. *Zillah* is the name of the only daughter of the late Rev. John Sale, a good and faithful missionary who lived many years at Barisal. *Zillah*, his daughter, is now the wife of James Young, Esq., a good man and a good friend of the native Christians of Backergunge. (Backergunge is the name of the district, and Barisal is the name of the chief Mission Station where the missionaries live.) When the boat needed

repairs, some fourteen years ago, Mr. Young gave a liberal donation to help to repair it. Hence the missionary, out of gratitude to his son-in-law, and to perpetuate the memory of his daughter, had the name *Zillah* put in large letters on the stern of the boat, and the missionaries who succeeded Mr. Sale retained the name. Two young European missionaries are standing on the deck of the boat near the mast with their faces towards you. The name of the taller one is Rev. Arthur Jewson, and I think the name of the other is Rev. Robert Spurgeon; but the faces are not distinct, and cannot be easily recognised. The men standing at the oars, ready to pull, are natives, and most likely they are native Christians, for we generally employ



THE BARISAL MISSION BOAT "ZILLAH."

(From a Photograph by Rev. T. R. Edwards.)

native Christian boatmen. You will see that each has a cloth tied round his waist, which falls down a little below the knee, while another cloth is thrown loosely over the shoulders, leaving the arms and most of the back bare. One of those standing on the roof of the boat is the "manjee," or steersman, who holds the rudder, and the other two are, no doubt, servants. It appears the missionaries have been to Calcutta to attend the Missionary Conference, for those dark lines which you will observe across the venetian windows of the boat are pieces of bamboo suspended from the roof and falling down to within a few inches of the water. On the way to and from Calcutta they have to pass hundreds (I might say thousands) of native

boats, laden with jute, rice, sugar, and other articles of produce, and the bamboos are put over the venetian windows to protect them from being broken, if they should come into collision with native boats. The Mission-boat is nice and comfortable inside. It has two large rooms, a sitting-room and a bed-room, and behind the bed-room, at the stern, there is a bath-room—a very necessary and convenient thing in a hot country like India. As you go inside the boat from the deck, there is a nice little compartment in which the food is cooked. There are about 5,000 native Christians of all ages scattered over a part of the district—that is to say, about twenty-five miles in length, and about the same in width. During the rainy season, this part of the district is eight or ten feet under water for about five months every year, and then the missionary spends about three months of this time in visiting the native Christian churches, and in instructing the people. The boat goes from chapel to chapel over the rice fields, and through the tall-growing rice crop. It is propelled, or pushed, over the rice field, by long bamboo poles; but when there is a favourable wind the boatmen hoist the sail, and the boat goes along at a wonderful speed. Few boats can keep pace with this Mission-boat under sail. During the cold season, and a part of the hot, the missionary travels in this boat to other parts of the district for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the heathen in the markets and bazaars. It is thus a messenger of peace and goodwill to Hindoos and Mohammedans as well as Christians. Besides carrying the missionaries and native preachers to these places, it always carries a large number of Scriptures and tracts in Bengali, to be sold to those who can read, and who are willing to buy them and take them to their homes.

THOMAS MARTIN.

Barisal, Eastern Bengal.

Work in the Delhi District.

WE are indebted to the Rev. James Smith for the following extracts from a recent letter he has received from the Rev. Herbert J. Thomas, of Delhi:—

“Just before going down to Calcutta to attend the Conference, I went for my first missionary tour with Bernard. I went with you last year to Palmal, but then, as you know, I could only look on and learn, not speak; this time, however, I had the joy of sharing

in the work. We went in a baili into the northern district, as Bernard had just returned from a journey into the southern, and Dr. Carey was planning another in that direction. Bernard started off with the baili and baggage on Tuesday, 6th November, and went

as far as Loni; I was detained at home that day by the sudden arrival of Mr. Dillon, of Poona, but next morning walked out early to overtake him. On the way I preached at Ghaunda, and also to a small group of men resting under a tree by the roadside. I did not stop at Loni, as Bernard had preached there the previous day, so we walked or rode on to Khekrah for our first day's journey, preaching at Gaddhi, Bapuljakan, and Manduala (twice) on the way. We had a good time in the bazaar at Khekrah, though rather a noisy one, Bernard bearing the brunt of the opposition, as I could not make out their awful village boli. The *sara* here, as you know, is very small, and the food almost *nil*; any way, after a rather hard day's work and no breakfast, I was only able to have a dinner of *ladu* and another kind of sweetmeat something like *jalebi*. This was a small inconvenience linked with a great pleasure, for we began selling gospels and tracts most freely at Khekrah.

“ BAGHPAT.

“Next day we went to Baghpat, making one halt at Kathah, where we had a good congregation in the gate of the town. A young Mussulman here very much amused me with his exhibition of English. After ‘Good morning, sir!’ ‘What is your name, sir?’ and one or two such like phrases, he relapsed into silence, or Urdu, and I thought he had exhausted his whole stock, but I found I was mistaken and had done him an injustice; for on getting into the bails, he said, as a last effort, ‘Good-bye, *my dear!*’ I did not laugh out then, but have made up for my self-restraint since. We put up in the big *sara* at Baghpat, and after breakfast spent a most enjoyable hour or two in the old town; we preached in two *bustis* to interested groups of *aveaners* and other low castes, and also in the

Hindoo school on the hill,—the *choodri* showed us no little kindness, and we sold all the books I had with me at the time, and one or two of the young men came back with us to the inn for more. After a rest we went into the bazaar and preached in three or four places, every time to large crowds, and every time also selling Scriptures and tracts. Only two men proved troublesome, one of whom, a *Jeminda*, was shut up by the people when I was about to sing a *Bbhajan* at the request of a *Mahajan*, who had asked us to tell him what was in our books. Again and again I have found a *bhajan* most useful, both in collecting a crowd, and in quieting them when gathered, as I never was interrupted when singing ‘*Gisú Masèh merá práu bacháyá,*’ though, as you know, *preaching* the sentiments of that *bhajan* will usually provoke *bahuá* on the part of some of the audience. Altogether, we sold in Baghpat one rupee's worth of gospels and tracts, quite clearing out, on this our second day, our whole stock of twenty-four Hindi gospels. I was so happy that night, and never before had I felt such a sense of pleasure at the thought,—there are now again copies of God's holy truth in the hands of many in Baghpat who never read it before! God enlighten and bless every reader of them!

“ BAROUT.

“Next day we sang and preached at Sasánah, Sarúrpúr, Tandí, Barout, and Barant. Samuel Wales and his wife send their *bahut*, *bahut salám*. They are working well, and I had the joy of baptizing the first fruits in Barout. There were three candidates for baptism, Wales' daughter, and a *Chunar*, Dhan Singh, and his wife, Samekor. We were greatly pleased with the conversation we had with them all, and decided to baptize them, but with great sorrow

Dhan Singh drew back ; he dreaded the persecution he would have to endure, as the Christians at Chaprauli have. I did not attempt to reason with him, simply pointing out the power and readiness of Christ to sustain those who trust Him, and adding, that when he felt he could bear all things for Christ's sake, and in Christ's strength, we should gladly baptize him. Samekor was a woman of very different metal, and gave a clear and unmistakable evidence of her faith in Jesus Christ. Samuel Wales and his wife also wished to be immersed at the same time, so, after a short service at his house, we went to the canal, where I baptized them, their daughter, and Samekor. Next day, Sunday, we had the Lord's Supper together. We preached several times on Saturday in the bazar, and on Sunday morning I went out by myself into other parts of the town.

“ CHAPRAULI.

“ We left at 11 o'clock and went to Nasauli, and met two of the Christians Bernard baptized last year ; then we went on, stopping at two or three villages off Chaprauli, which we reached late at night, but after 'pári' we had a large gathering outside the school-house. We stayed here all day Monday, preaching in various parts of the town, conversing with the crowds who all the while gathered round the school, and in the evening had the Lord's Supper with the Christian brethren. We propose building a school here shortly, as the Chumars have given the land, and the Jats have promised to give bricks, &c. On Tuesday we went through two villages to Kotanah, where we had hard work and noisy, and which we left very dispirited ; but as we were not told to speak only to those who will hear, we dare not fear God's Word will return unto Him void. Crossing the river we preached in Moharikpur and Tajpur

and put up for the night at Morthal, in the Government schoolhouse. We had good preaching in the bazar, and again next morning in a chaupal. The road to Soupat was thronged with people returning from Ganga ji Mela, and we preached to a crowd of them under a tree near a pî-á-o. In Soupat we had a good time, preaching and singing for three hours or more in various parts of the town, and then we went on through Bahalghar to Rai, in the sara of which we put up, and then had a preaching in the village. We finished our tour next day, Thursday, by preaching in five or six more villages.

“ THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING.

“ Altogether I very much enjoyed the work ; I have gained experience and knowledge, and while I sometimes felt much discouraged by the reflection, 'What possibility is there that a hurried visit, a few words at best but partially understood, coming to the poor people simply as a rather unusual and not very noteworthy incident, should influence the religious thought, and interfere with the education and prejudice of a lifetime, in the case of any one of the hearers?' still I did feel that the very mention of a new and unknown Saviour, whose grand characteristic is love, is often used by our Master as the influence to arouse curiosity and inquiry ; and blessed be His name, the 'foolishness of preaching' does exalt the wisdom and glory of God. I am as sure that the violent Mussulmans and bigoted Sarangis of Kotanah shall call Him blessed, as I am that the commission to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified to every creature was made by the Eternal One, who never sent His servants on fool's errands, nor wasted His own resources in vain displays of love and kindness. There is a work going on I am sure. The darogha at

Rai told me he believed Christianity would spread over the whole of India, and he did not mind much if it did. There has been, as you know, injustice and persecution suffered by the Chappauli Christians, yet in that very town there are three or four more Chumars asking to be baptized, and many Jats offering to help to build the school if their sons may also attend it. I baptized the first convert in Barout, and know Dhan Singh will soon follow, and rejoiced to hear from his fellow

basti people that he was a good, kind, and respected man amongst them. But there is little need for a young man, only just past his probation, to write like this to *you*. And yet I know also God has privileged me to enter, or to begin entering, upon your labours, and I pray His Spirit may rest upon me to make me faithful to my advantages, humble in my rejoicings, and hopeful in my disappointments.

“HERBERT J. THOMAS.

“Delhi, N.W.P.”

A Tour with Mr. Gogon Chunder Dutt.

THE following account, written by the Rev. Arthur Jewson, of Barisal, has just reached England:—

“Koolnea, Dec. 10th, 1883.

“MY DEAR MR. BAYNES,—I think the following little incidents will encourage Mr. Dutt's numerous friends in England. On November 15th, 1883, Mr. Dutt, four preachers, a colporteur, and I started from Koolnea in the mission boats.

“A BENGALI THATCHER.

“We had accepted an invitation to spend the first evening at the homestead of a thatcher, who, about four years ago, attended one of the missionary meetings which are held monthly in the courtyard of Mr. Dutt's house, and liked the music and singing so much that he went again and again, and began to feel he would like to become a Christian. His father and brothers threatened that they would not live with him if he embraced Christianity; but, finding him resolute, they tried to persuade him to defer deciding, and then were persuaded by him to come and hear the music. The Holy Spirit graciously inclined their hearts toward Christ,

and at last they asked Mr. Dutt to send some one to teach them more about Christ. Mr. Dutt sent Kāngali, a Hindoo convert, who, though he cannot read, is full of faith and zeal, and, as he goes about from place to place with passengers in his boat, he loves to preach, sell Scriptures, and give away tracts. Mr. Dutt told him to take nothing with him, but to go and live and eat with the people. When he did so the neighbours outcasted the family; the landlord fined them a sovereign, which, though it was illegal, Mr. Dutt persuaded them to endure for Christ's sake Also, in order to get them to leave the village, various false charges were brought against them in the Court, and the husband of the thatcher's sister married another wife; and when, to escape his cruelty, the poor woman took refuge in her father's house, the man threatened to come and break it down and beat her. Hearing of all this, Mr. Dutt went to the village to reason with the people, and to encourage the poor Christians to be faithful to their Saviour. When Mr. Dutt asked the poor wife what she

should do if her husband beat her, she said, 'I am ready to give my life for Christ.' The thatcher had previously been baptized; afterwards the sister and another brother were baptized; another family embraced Christianity; two Christian families moved to the village, and a little church was formed under the care of one of the three preachers who are supported by Mr. Dutt's Home Missionary Society.

"A CHRISTIAN NATIVE COMMUNITY.

"It was then with very great interest that soon after the full moon had risen we left the boats, and wended our way along field-paths, through the ripening rice and the shadows of palm-trees and of feathery bamboos, to this little Christian community. On reaching the homestead, we sat down in the house which they have set apart as the chapel, and talked to the head of the family, an old man, who told us he felt a great leaning toward the Roman Catholics, as two priests had visited him, and manifested so much love, and had taken the children of a neighbouring Christian away to their boarding school at Jessore, and were going to give them a good English and vernacular education, free of cost, and had even given the parents a parting present of money. We tried to persuade the old man not to have his attention drawn away by the priests and their gifts, but to look to Jesus, who alone can satisfy the soul. In the meantime an awning, which we carried about with us from place to place, had been put up in the court-yard, formed by the houses of the homestead; and we all sat down on mats to a good meal of rice, vegetables, fish, and ducks.

"EVENING SERVICE.

"After supper the evening's service began. It consisted of singing to the accompaniment of a drum and a

pair of cymbals, a number of hymns describing the history of Christ. These were interspersed with several hymns and short addresses. After the service came the collection and sale by auction of fruit and vegetables which had been brought by those who could not give money. These amounted to five shillings, and the man who made the collection called attention to the pleasing fact that some of the Hindoos and Mohammedans present had also given their mites. The poor woman I have mentioned also gave her gold nose-ring, worth eight shillings, for she had given up wearing it on becoming a Christian. I may here add that since returning home I have had the pleasure of examining the thatcher's aged mother as a candidate for baptism, and very pleased I was with her intelligent apprehension of Christian truth, and her heartfelt expression of attachment to Jesus.

"I have dwelt thus fully on the above little incident, not because there was anything remarkable about it, but because I believe it will give you a good idea of the nature of the ordinary work which is going on in this district.

"WORK AFIELD.

"I will now very briefly mention two or three other things by which, I hope, you will be able, more intelligently, to sympathise with and pray for Mr. Dutt and his neighbours.

"On Saturday, after the usual very interesting Bible class, we left our boat at a market place and started off, two-and-two, to visit the homesteads near. The preacher whom I accompanied visited seven homesteads; we were always listened to with attention, tracts accepted, and sometimes portions of Scripture bought. On returning to the boat we found that quite a crowd of sick people had assembled on the bank, and Mr. Dutt, whose fame as a homeopathic

doctor is so great that he not unfrequently has people come twenty miles to him for medicine, and Ram Charan Ghosh, one of his preachers, whom he has also trained in a very efficient manner, were attending to the diseases both of their bodies and souls. That afternoon we were very busy preaching in the market, and Mr. Dutt gave or sent medicine to not less than 200 patients.

"MANIFOLD LABOURS.

"We spent Sunday at Kadamdi, where the annual fair is held. The appearance of the village is a credit to the Christians, and I was pleased to hear from the pastor that, with the exception of two or three old women, all can read. In the afternoon I gave an address at the Young Men's Association, and was delighted to find that these young men meet every Sunday to try, by mutual instruction and criticism, to fit one another to preach the Gospel. On Tuesday, a Mohammedan whose family had been greatly benefited by Mr. Dutt's medicine, found us in a market and asked us to go home with him, as all were so anxious to see Mr. Dutt and to express their gratitude to him. We went, and after preaching the Gospel to some fifteen men and boys, Mr. Dutt was taken to see the women, and, after he had preached and sung to them, at his suggestion they also sent for Ram Charan and me; and on leaving they gave us two fowls and four rupees for the Home Mission Fund.

"MEDICAL WORK.

"On Wednesday we were staying at a Christian's, whose house is called, by interpretation, Cocoa-Nut Homestead. Though the spot is a lonely one, boat-loads of invalids continued to arrive all day. Mr. Dutt was even asked to visit several women who had been brought in a boat to a secluded spot that they might, unobserved, obtain the benefit

of his advice. Here we preached many times, and about 200 patients were attended to. On Friday we were at a little village called Old Woman's Land; the distinguishing feature of the day was that a break was made in the dispensing of medicine in the middle of the day in order that a larger number of the patients that flocked to us might be present at the missionary meeting.

"On Monday we were at the large Christian village of Shalabuyni, which has been built on land reclaimed from the Sunderban jungle by the Christians. It is reached from the boat by a bank some two hundred yards long, which was constructed, through their inundated rice-fields, by the unsalaried pastor of the village, at a cost of sixty rupees, on the occasion of their welcoming Mr. Dutt back from England. At the Missionary meeting, Mr. Dutt referred to the fact that, though their crops were suffering much from drought, fifteen of their number had gone into the Sunderbuns and cut down a boat load of wood, and sent it to be sold for the Home Missionary Society, and it had realized sixteen rupees. Since then there had been an unusually high tide, their corn had revived, and they had every prospect of a splendid harvest and high prices.

"MEDICINE WANTED.

"The friends at Stroud will see, from this account, that Mr. Dutt is making excellent use of the fine box of homeopathic medicines, which they gave him, and other friends may be glad to know that he would be very glad to receive two or three more boxes, as he desires to train some more of his preachers to heal both the souls and the bodies of the suffering thousands around him.

"I am, dear Mr. Baynes,

"Yours truly,

"ARTHUR JEWSON.

"Barisal."

[THE MISSIONARY HERALD,
MARCH 1, 1884.



BACKERGUNGE NATIVE CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE. (*From a Photograph.*)

Backergunge Native Conference.

EVERY year's Conference is an improvement upon the one that preceded it. The gathering is becoming a power in the district, and may develop in many directions in the future to the benefit of the community. It is something more than a gathering to discuss matters of importance touching the welfare of the thousands of Christians in the district, though that is no mean portion of its work; in addition to this it also in some degree controls the whole community, by forming, accepting, and enforcing rules that are binding on all alike; and a number of evils have been thus successfully suppressed. The missionary aids by his counsel, and encourages by his presence; but on many points the members of the Conference have greater insight into the native character, customs, and tendencies than any foreigner is likely to possess. All preachers and deacons are members; but, in addition to these, a number of the people who live where the Conference is held are usually present. A general collection defrays the expenses of the gathering; but the church that invites the members bears the greater share of this burden, and is responsible for details in arrangement.

This year the meetings were held at Soogram. Brother Edwards presided. The people decorated the chapel with excellent taste, and showed in many other ways their delight at receiving the members. Perfect harmony reigned in every sitting. The speeches showed that such opportunities for the development of the talent in the churches are not thrown away. Varied and many were the subjects brought forward and discussed. An earnest and lively prayer-meeting opened the sittings. The first subject presented was, "The best way of preaching the Gospel." This was followed by a discussion on "The present condition of the Christian community in the district." I had to read a paper on "Church government" the following morning, and a long and interesting discussion was aroused. Some rules too, to aid the pastors in this portion of their work, were formulated and accepted. This was followed by a paper on "Our young men," and many excellent suggestions were thrown out as to how to utilize this class in God's work. Some urged upon them Sunday-school work; others suggested prayer-meetings in homes where the pastor could not visit; and most encouraged them to unite in an association for mutual improvement.

"Roman Catholicism" was the next subject brought up. The question of great moment was, "What attitude ought the Christians to assume towards those who had gone over to that sect?" I suggested that they should be treated as Phirtees (apostates) are treated now—*i.e.*, that none of our people should eat with them, or in any way have fellowship with

them. This was heartily agreed to, and a rule was formulated at once on the subject. To have been less strict would have been disastrous to the community. It will deter many who are being tempted to go over, and shame those who have gone, if it does not lead them to desire to return.

“The service of song” then came under discussion, and was wisely and warmly dealt with. Bengalees, as a musical race, do not need to learn much from Europeans on this subject. “Wife beating” was the subject of an excellent paper that could hardly have been excelled in its spirit and matter. Early marriages are at the root of this vice, and so is the want of education, but especially the absence of the Spirit of Christ. A paper on “Prayer meetings,” and the discussion that followed, were very inspiring and encouraging. Many bore testimony to God’s willingness to answer prayer, and most cheering instances were related.

The Madarepore Mission called forth many remarks. It was taken up and started entirely by the Conference, and it is now in its third year. A preacher has been supported, his house built, and land rented. Little visible result has at present followed, but their “labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Two young women read papers to the Conference on the third day. One of them was well composed, and interested us all much. Afterwards a wife of one of the preachers appealed earnestly to her sisters for help for the Madarepore Mission; and proof that her words were not in vain was given when the plate went round. As this is the first effort made by our native women in this way, we were greatly pleased by the success of the meeting devoted to them. The large chapel was crowded to the closing sitting. I addressed them on the words, “He loved me, and gave Himself for me,” and Brother Edwards presided at the communion table afterwards. Thus we parted, commending each other to God’s care for another year. May it be a prosperous one!

ROBERT SPURGEON.

Tidings from Stanley Pool.

BY the kindness of Mr. Whitley, of Byculla Park, Enfield, we are able to give our readers the following extracts from a letter written by Mr. W. Holman Bentley to Miss Rooke (now engaged in Zenana Mission work in Delhi), and dated “Arthington Station, Stanley Pool, October 6th, 1883” :—

“MY DEAR MISS ROOKE,—My father and mother have told me that I am indebted to you for so kindly providing me with the harmonium I need.

I am indeed grateful for this very kind assistance, and hasten to express my thanks.

“The African is fond of music, but

it is a difficult task to teach my own dear boys to sing without an instrument to help them, especially at first.

"Their scale is different to ours, as you may be aware, and there is yet another difficulty—whatever our Scotch friends may say about instrumental aids to worship, I fear my boys might wonder whether the strange noises we can make were at all musical. Now, as they stand round Mr. Comber's harmonium at evening prayers, they sing our few Congo hymns heartily and gladly. Not satisfied with one, they ask for one more and one more until we are tired, and say that it must suffice.

"You may wonder why I asked for a harmonium when there is one here. Mr. Comber brought one out with him four and a-half years ago. It travelled about in Congo a great deal, and has had a rough life during our pioneer work along our present line, sometimes being stored three months at a time without being aired. When it finally reached here it had scarcely any voice left, leaking badly. . . .

"I have given careful instruction as to its transport to this place, and it will receive every care here; when I return, we have good reason to hope that our steamer will be nearly finished, and the instrument will be ready to surprise the wild savages up river. For I am only here temporarily; we have wandered indeed, but now the wandering is begun in real earnest. It is impossible to foresee the kind of life I must lead, but it is most probable that I shall have a station to call my home somewhere within 400 miles of here. We have had a fair training, and we hope that, as soon as it is safe to risk a few things at a new station, we may be able to set to work in real earnest, and at once.

"Our great hope is in the children,

and our first attempt is to get boys for training from whom we may pick up the language, and to whom we may look for assistants, teachers, evangelists, and at last pastors. Their ears and hearts are more readily reached than those who have become brutalised by the aimless, cruel, wicked life of the 'happy, innocent savages.'

"The children are very sharp, bright little fellows; but at fifteen or sixteen their intellectual life seems to stand still; there is nothing left then but bad to learn.

"How to turn their half-believed superstition to practical account. How to extract cloth from all around them through fear of accusation of witchcraft, and at the same time ward it off themselves. It is impossible to describe the terrible degrading effect of this system. In many parts a woman cannot plant a sufficient crop of arachthis and cassava, because, if she did not want when others did, she would at once be marked for the next witch palaver. A man cannot earn and work as much as he would, for the same reason, while all the cloth they get is not to wear, but to buy slaves, or rather retainers and wives; the rest is hoarded, that it may be wound round them when they die.

"Wars are frequent, and great palavers made for the purpose of extracting heavy fines; a pitched fight in their market every month or so, and every one liable to unreasonable and uncontrollable bursts of passion. Greed and cruelty, at which every one laughs, until it is his turn to suffer.

"These things keep these countries in a continual ferment. All are ready to acknowledge this; all will deplore it as one speaks of it, especially in a new place. When I have been talking to some one about these things, those close to me betray a nervous anxiety

that all possible shall hear this talked about a thing no one has ever dared to combat.

"It might seem a sad, hopeless outlook, but there is no reason for regarding it in such a light.

"They feel the need of the light and help we bring; and, although our expectations as to those who are now adult must be very moderate, we have a promising field in the children. When their education has been pushed to a certain point, there is no need for that intellectual stagnation to set in—a wider field is set before them. When they begin to think for themselves, the excessively gross superstitions must lose their hold.

"But we always tell them that, good as all these things are, there is no hope either for them or their people unless God Himself change their bad hearts. We have not come to teach them to read, to make cloth, &c., &c. We have come to tell them of the great 'Nzambi, their Nzambi, and how His Son came to teach us; to tell us of the Father's love; to set things straight; and then to complete His loving work, by giving His own life to reconcile us to God.' The other things we teach them are accessories. Our best school is at San Salvador, where some forty boys and more are in constant training, half of them living in the house.

"At Bayneston, too, our brother Hughes is getting on well. Here we have nine boys; only one of these is from the immediate neighbourhood.

"The chiefs here would much prefer receiving heavy presents to doing anything for the white men. They see that the presence of white men who are pushing up river threatens their ivory monopoly; and although they half believe that we have other objects than ivory, they think that perhaps if they refuse to send us boys to teach, we shall

go back to our country, and then that will be one party of whites cleared away out of their land.

"This attitude is already showing signs of breaking down, however, and we have good reason to hope that ere long we may have a flourishing school here. There are swarms of children about, many of whom would be glad to learn. We have now sent to a well-disposed friendly chief, Makitio, of Ngombe, 60 miles south-west, to tell him that he may send three more boys. From his district come the boys we now have; they are Baknogos, and speak a dialect differing very slightly from that of San Salvador. The transport service is working well. Nearly all the *Peace* is here now, only four months after the first plate arrived. Our stores at Underhill and Manyanga were almost empty by the last advice; 300 loads reached here last month. No pieces of the steamer are lost; her fine little tender, a steel sectional boat, is here in company with Dr. Sims, of the Livingstone Mission; we went round Stanley Pool in her. We find the 'Pool' to be about seven times the size Mr. Stanley gave. It is nearly three times the size of the Isle of Wight. At first we thought it larger still, but on charting it out it is about 400 square miles in area.

"The view from our station is very fine, and now, as the rains have set in, the air is perfectly clear. It is difficult to realise that hills seen so clearly and apparently so near are thirty miles away. There has been some anxiety at home as to De Brazza and his possible movements. It will be indeed a disaster all round if the Upper Congo is left to the absolute control of France. We can but hope that at least it will be neutralised.

"We are in correspondence with the missionaries at Gahon (American Presbyterian); they are much troubled and

harassed by the French there—a new commandant is behaving very badly. Their schools are closed, and any teaching in other than French, and such as the French may direct, is prohibited. They are trying to drive out of the colony all influence other than French. The navigation of the rivers is stopped by a law forbidding any one to carry firearms, and, as a consequence, the traders' boats are pillaged wholesale by the natives on the banks.

"England will act very unwisely if, through geographical or other ignorance, she allows Central Africa to be cursed by France. . . .

"We are all well here, and on good terms with all, even with the king of the west bank of the Pool, including Nifwa. But to cross unto the French territory, as it is called, would very likely cause trouble.

"You will have heard by this time of the disaster which happened to the pioneer of the Algerian Mission (Jesuit), the Abbé Guyot. Now the 'Mission du Saint-Exprit et du Sacré Cœur de Marie' is in trouble, five miles from here, away across the Ndamo Falls. The Catholics are seeing trouble.

"Five Husas of the Belgian Expedition were drowned a day or two ago attempting to cross the river, which is about two miles wide, by passing only 500 yards above these terrible falls. It was sheer madness. They were natives from Lagos. . . .

"I have to devote my time and energy to the languages just now, and can only write letters at night when fairly tired.

"Believe me to remain,

"Yours sincerely and gratefully,

"W. HOLMAN BENTLEY."

Work for the Zenana Mission.

AT the request of Mrs. Angus, we gladly insert the following letter from Miss Thorn, of Delhi, whose recent visit to England did so much to create deepened interest in the work of the Zenana Mission in Delhi and elsewhere.

"Baptist Mission, Delhi,

"December, 1883.

"MY DEAR MRS. ANGUS,

"Will you please to convey our very hearty thanks to the kind friends who have sent us such a nice box of dolls, bags, picture-books, and children's clothing, &c. We are hoping this year to induce some of our Zenana pupils to come to our houses to receive these gifts of love from distant England; they have never yet done such a thing. Though some few have come to see us, they have always taken care that the neighbours should not know whither they

were bound; but now we shall have to tell each one who else is expected.

"I have heard from several sources that our friends in England get tired of doll-dressing, and would be glad to do something more useful. Our pupils have no book-cases in which to keep their books; and, as the youngest child of the family is allowed to have whatever it cries for, the lesson-books come in for a share of its attention, and are soiled and torn accordingly. I think ladies at home might assist in their preservation by the gift of suitable book-bags—an improvement upon the native 'judān,' in which

boys carry their books to school. The bag should be of the shape of an ordinary night-dress case—length twelve inches, width nine inches—lined with holland or glazed calico—the outer covering being cretonne, satin, chintz, or anything pretty, except American leather (as that spoils very quickly in the heat), and fastened with buttons or braid or tape. Also some well made needle-cases, such as English ladies use, would be valued, for the work-basket is as rare as the book-case in the Zenana; and although the family garments are made at home, the needle is generally stuck in one corner of the work in hand and often takes long to find.

“A large number of our pupils being women, such gifts as these will be

more suitable than dolls, and will help in enforcing lessons of tidiness.

“The last pattern for boys’ coats sent to you is more simple than the previous one, and we shall be thankful to have any number of the two larger sizes made in strong calico, with a narrow band of Turkey red at the neck and waist; they are needed for our boys’ boarding school. If any working party would like to undertake the winter coats for thirty boys, I shall be glad to send particulars to them direct as to the sort of coat required. Cardigans or knitted jackets high in the neck, and with long sleeves suited for young people, would also be very acceptable.

“I remain,

“Yours affectionately,

“BERTHA THORN.”

Recent Intelligence.

Mr. Thomas S. Penny, of Taunton, writes as follows, and we very cordially commend his suggestion to the imitation of our readers:—“I think you would like to know that last week I went to Hatch Beauchamp, a small country village, and gave an address on our Central African Mission, with a view to deepening interest in the Society’s work. I took my African map with me and found it a wonderful help, not only to my own speaking, but to the clearer grasp of the subject on the part of my hearers. On Sunday last, in the afternoon, I went to Fivehead Sunday-school with the same object, and in the evening gave a missionary address at another village—Isle Abbots. I believe that increased contributions will result in all these branches. I propose to visit one or two other places in the same way, in the hope that friends there may also be stimulated to do more. I venture to suggest that if friends connected with other town churches would in this way visit COUNTRY churches, a double purpose would be served—namely, a deeper feeling of brotherhood between town and country would be created, and the funds of the Society would also be largely benefited. It seems to me that we want all our churches to take an intelligent interest in missions, and I cannot but think that the better they are informed as to our work, the more cheerfully they will give, and the more earnestly they will pray. You will, I am sure, pardon my troubling you, but having proved the advantage of my suggestion (two branches with our own church—viz., Creech and Corfe—having commenced their auxiliaries through his instrumentality), I feel I ought not to refrain from mentioning the matter to you.”