

7. Sekundärliteratur

Memoirs of the life and correspondence of the reverend Christian Frederick Swartz. To which is prefixed a sketch of the history of christianity in ...

Pearson, Hugh

London, 1835

CHAPTER XXIV.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

State of the missions for some years after the death of Swartz—
 Labours and success of Messrs. Jönické and Gerické in the
 South of the Peninsula—Death and Character of those mis-
 sionaries—The Rev. Mr. Horst—Ordination of four Cate-
 chists—Exertions and writings of Dr. Buchanan for the
 promotion of Christianity in India—Ecclesiastical Establish-
 ment for British India—Beneficial effects of it—Bill for the
 addition of two Suffragan Bishops, and for rendering Christian
 converts eligible to all situations and employments—Pro-
 gress of the Gospel in Tinnevely—Testimonies of Bishops
 Middleton and Heber, and of the Rev. Mr. Hough—Reflec-
 tions on the numbers of the converts to Christianity, and on
 the duty and the means of promoting their increase—The
 importance, in this view, of Swartz's example—Conclusion.

CHAP.
XXIV.

THE history of the life and labours of Swartz would
 be imperfect and incomplete, if we were not briefly
 to advert to the events and circumstances which
 occurred within a few years after his lamented
 departure from the world, with reference more
 particularly to the missions with which he was
 connected. He left behind him several able and
 excellent coadjutors, by whose zealous and de-

voted exertions the cause of Christianity in India continued to flourish and increase. Of these, the senior was the pious and admirable Gerické, who, though stately resident at Vepery, near Madras, occasionally assisted with his counsels and his labours, Mr. Kohlhoff, the worthy successor of Swartz at Tanjore, and particularly co-operated with the indefatigable Jœnické, in the south of the Peninsula. The latter of these valuable missionaries did not long survive his apostolic predecessor. In a letter to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, dated at Tanjore, the 23rd of May 1800, his brethren and fellow-labourers lament the severe loss which they and the mission had sustained by his recent death. "From the time of his arrival in India," they observed, "till seized with that dreadful sickness, the hill fever, he had pursued his work with fervour and delight. He was a great blessing to the congregation and school at Tanjore, and a happy instrument for the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ, in the countries to the south; where he erected several churches, established schools, and had laboured with all his strength to instruct the ignorant, to awaken the careless, and to animate every one to walk worthy of his holy profession. The great endowments of his mind," they added, "the excellent dispositions of his heart, and his zeal for the glory of God, and the good of souls, had given

CHAP.
XXIV.

them cause to regret his early death ; and it was matter of especial sorrow to them, that such an afflicting stroke should so soon have followed the lamented death of the venerable Mr. Swartz ; but they prayed that God might mercifully look upon the afflicted state of the mission ; that he might be their helper and protector, and supply his church in that country with able and faithful labourers !”¹

In the following year, Mr. Gerické communicated to the Society the gratifying intelligence that several new congregations had recently sprung up in the south ; that at Dindigal and Madura, chapels were building ; and that it was his intention to employ Sattianaden as an itinerant teacher at these and other places, for which stated labourers could not as yet be provided. In another letter, he laments the want of assistance at Tanjore. “It is delightful,” he says, “to see the growth of the Tanjore mission, and the southern congregations dependent on it. The inhabitants of whole villages flock to it. What a pity that there are not labourers for such a great and

¹ The pious Jœnické died at Tanjore, and was buried in the mission church near the remains of his revered friend, with whom he had so faithfully and affectionately served as a son in the gospel—amid the sighs and tears of the sorrowing congregation.

delightful harvest! At Jaffna, and on all the coast of Ceylon, there is another great harvest. We have sent such of our native catechists as could be spared; but many are required for that extensive work."

CHAP.
XXIV.

Mr. Kohlhoff confirmed this encouraging report. He and the native assistants had made several journeys to publish the word of God in various towns and villages of Tanjore, where new congregations had been formed. At Kanandagudi, where the charitable and munificent institutions of the rajah, already mentioned, were afterwards established, about forty families had come to the resolution of renouncing the worship of idols, and of turning to "the living and true God." At Adanjour, and at Leraloor, villages in a different direction from Tanjore, many others had been converted to the faith of the gospel, and chapels had been erected for divine worship.

The majority of the members of these new congregations were of the Collary caste, and proprietors of lands, cultivated by themselves, and at Pudapatty, which is nearly in the centre of the Collary district, a chapel had been built, and an able catechist, educated by Swartz, was stationed there. "Formerly," observed Mr. Gerické, in his journey through this country, "the road between Trichinopoly and Tanjore had been very unsafe, from the depredations of the Collaries; but since

CHAP.
XXIV.

the late Mr. Swartz had been among them, and had formed congregations in these parts, we have heard nothing of robberies."

A new school-house had also been opened at Tanjore, capable of accommodating above a thousand children, in which the English, the provincial, and the Tamul schools were collected together.

The following extract from a journal of the Rev. Mr. Cœmmerer, in 1803, gives a very interesting account of the state of Christianity in the mission churches at and in the vicinity of Tanjore.

"When I visited the mission congregation at Tanjore, and prepared its members for the ordinance of the Lord's supper, I observed with great pleasure and satisfaction the blessed effects which Christianity had evidently produced among the natives, more especially among those who had been favoured with the personal instructions of our dear departed fellow-labourer Swartz. Their attention, devotional fervour, and earnestness in prayer, truly edified me, and though my labour in the Lent season was exhausting, having to attend not only to the congregation in the city of Tanjore, but also to those dispersed through the adjoining villages, yet all labour and exertion were rendered easy by the Christian spirit and conduct which I witnessed.

"In paying a visit to the neighbouring Chris-

tian congregations, I also came to Pudapatty, half a day's journey from Tanjore; where a beautiful Christian church has been erected. The catechist (Wedamaniaken) a truly amiable man, (who was a schoolboy when in 1792 the late venerable Swartz instructed me in the Malabar language,) came to meet me there with a numerous band of native Christians, whose conversation I greatly enjoyed, more especially in the quiet evening hours. I performed here the public worship of God in the church, and afterwards addressed the heathen.

"I then proceeded to the next village, called Budelur, in which I met a still more numerous congregation of native Christians, under the immediate care of an aged and faithful catechist, of the name of Dewasagajam, who had been gardener to Mr. Swartz about fifteen years, and had planted many a tree by his direction, of whose refreshing fruits we now have the pleasure of partaking. This man enjoyed familiar intercourse with our revered father, and frequenting, as he did, his daily morning and evening devotions, he made considerable progress in Christian knowledge, and also constantly exercised himself in reading and writing. Mr. Swartz having long watched him, and convinced himself of his Christian integrity and zeal, made use by degrees of his talents and acquirements by requesting him to teach the ten

CHAP.
XXIV.

commandments, and also the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion to those heathen who had declared their intention to receive Christian instruction, and also to repeat those preparatory lessons which Mr. Swartz had himself given to those hopeful beginners. By constant exercise the native teacher acquired such facility in Christian instruction, that the late excellent Mr. Jœnické could profitably use him as an assistant, and finally appointed him a regular catechist, which office he now discharges with dignity, and much profit to the people."

The most remarkable, however, of these reports respecting the increased prevalence of Christianity in this part of India, is contained in a letter from Mr. Gerické, early in 1803, in which he informed the Society that he had recently travelled through the Mysore, and from thence to Palamcotta, and nearly to the extremity of the Peninsula. "It had pleased God," he said, "to awaken such a sense of religion among the inhabitants of whole villages, that they had sought instruction from the neighbouring Christians and their catechists, and particularly from Sattianaden, and were waiting anxiously for his arrival, to be further instructed, and baptized. In some of these villages, chapels had been already built, and in others the natives had broken their idols, and buried them deep in the ground, and converted their temples into

Christian churches." On his departure from the Tinnevelly country, where these gratifying scenes had occurred, messages were received from many villages, entreating him to prolong his stay, and to do among them what had been so happily effected in other places. With this request it was not in his power to comply; but he recommended them to the care of Sattianaden, and of the native catechists and assistants. In the course of this journey, Gerické baptized above thirteen hundred persons; and, after his departure, the native teachers formed eighteen new congregations, and instructed and baptized two thousand seven hundred people; so that the whole number of these converts amounted to no fewer than four thousand. This extraordinary success excited a very considerable persecution on the part of some of their heathen neighbours, and particularly from those who were officially employed under the collector of the district. Sattianaden was deeply depressed by the cruelties exercised upon the new Christians, one of whom wrote to Mr. Gerické, that, but for the hope of heaven, such were their sufferings, they should all throw themselves into the sea. The excellent Kohlhoff, however, a true "son of consolation," kindly undertook to visit and comfort these oppressed converts; and at his earnest entreaties, the collector at length put a stop to the injustice and machinations of their enemies.

CHAP.
XXIV.

CHAP.
XXIV.

The conduct of Gerické, upon this interesting occasion, has been severely, but very unjustly and unreasonably, blamed, as if he had permitted the great body of the people just described to be baptized without sufficient evidence of their sincere conversion to the Christian faith. The charge itself is perfectly gratuitous, and appears to have been founded simply on the extraordinary numbers of the candidates for admission into the Christian church; forgetting the various means which had, during many previous years, been in active operation in the southern districts, the labour which had been bestowed upon them by Swartz and his pious and unwearied coadjutors, Joenické and Sattianaden, and, above all, the fervent prayers which had been offered for that divine blessing which had now so evidently been bestowed, and which has ever since continued to prosper the "work of the Lord" in that favoured part of the peninsula.

At the close of this splendid, and, as it unhappily proved, this last stage of his missionary career, Mr. Gerické, like his venerable predecessor, took occasion to express his assurance, that if there were only an additional number of faithful and discreet labourers, wherever a door was opened to them, rapid would be the progress of the gospel. Like Swartz, too, he urged the great importance of European missionaries, from

the fact, that the discourses of the native teachers, even supposing them to be in other respects equal, failed in carrying the same degree of weight with them. "They never gain," he observes, "the confidence that is placed in an European, *when they are once convinced that he is really what he exhorts them to be.* Without good missionaries, true disciples of Jesus Christ, from home, the work of the mission would lose its respectability, even though the native teachers were good men; and missionaries," he emphatically adds, "without the spirit and mind of Christ, and as full of the world as the natives are, would soon make the mission the most graceless thing imaginable.

"It has pleased God," he concludes, "to lead us, these several years, through great anxieties with regard to the mission; but we observe and believe, that a kind Providence watches over it; and such help as seemed absolutely necessary for its preservation, has always been furnished in due time. This keeps our hopes alive, and preserves us from losing our energy."

With these pious and animating sentiments, this most excellent man closed his correspondence with the Society. Soon after his return from the memorable journey to the south, which has been just mentioned, he was attacked by a fever, from which he partially recovered; but his increasing and incessant labours did not permit him to enjoy

CHAP.
XXIV.

the rest which his weakness and age required. Change of air was recommended; but, arriving at Vellore, he was unable to proceed, and died there on the 12th of October, 1803, in the 62nd year of his age, and in the 38th of his labours as a missionary in India. "In him," observes one of his brethren, "the Society lost a most faithful servant, the mission its second pillar, and all India a benefactor, and an eminent example of piety and virtue."

Mr. Gerické, though much blessed, had been greatly afflicted in his domestic relations. The death of his daughter has been already noticed; and during his journey to Tanjore in 1801, he had many an anxious thought respecting his only son, who was an officer in the Company's service at Ongole, where he was then extremely ill, and whither his wife and his little grandson had gone to visit him.

"The last letter," thus he wrote to a friend, "which I received from Ongole, reached me at Tranquebar in going to Negapatam and Tanjore. Near my journey's end at Sadras, my Dutch friends, not knowing that the melancholy news had been concealed from me, came to condole; and *I found that my son had died in the very night in which I had dreamt that I saw him dying at Trichinopoly.* After my arrival at Vepery, I had still to wait eight days for the return

of Mrs. Gerické and the little boy from Ongole, without a syllable from them ; and when she arrived, we had to lift her out of her palankeen like a corpse, having lost the use of her limbs and all her strength. She can now walk again, but does not come out of her room. She is quite regardless of life. All my brethren and my friends have not expected that I should survive so much affliction. I know what I feel, and my feelings on such occasions, though not violent, are lasting. I loved my children dearly. God gave them, and God heard my prayers every day in the education of them. They cost me much anxiety ; and when the Lord had helped me so far as that I was no longer in any anxiety about them, he took them from me. But," adds this truly pious man, "he has not withdrawn his comforts. He makes me die to the world, and gives me that peace which the world cannot give. He keeps me in health, and I go on in my services. My sorrows draw me to 'the God of all consolation,' and wean me from the world."

We cannot be surprised that sorrows such as these should have undermined the health of one so susceptible and affectionate. It is a striking proof of the power of religion in his heart that he should, amidst them all, have exhibited such ardent and unremitting zeal and diligence in his missionary labours. The consternation and grief

CHAP.
XXIV.

which pervaded all classes on the death of this excellent and valuable man, cannot be described. His mild, meek, and humble character, had endeared him to persons of distinguished rank, as well as to those of inferior station. His conversation, it is said, was particularly agreeable and instructive, from the stores of information which his long experience and attentive observation had enabled him to accumulate. He spoke with so much wisdom, that all who heard him were pleased; and even such as differed from him on the subject of religion, respected and revered his piety. The simplicity and integrity of his character, had obtained for him the title of "*The primitive Christian*." Though the propagation of the gospel was his chief object, and occupied his principal attention, he took a lively interest in all institutions for the general good, and particularly encouraged the cultivation of learning and science. He even paid a monthly salary to a Brahmin for assisting one of his brethren in the study of Indian literature. His readiness and diligence in doing good were unwearied, and his charities boundless. Though from various sources he had derived considerable wealth, he observed the utmost frugality in his style of living, that he might be able to afford more extensive relief to the poor and needy, the widow and the orphan. To his brethren, he was a most kind and generous friend and bene-

factor ; never assuming any superiority over them, but ever being the first to take upon himself the heaviest burdens, to assist and to comfort them. In the year 1800, he rebuilt the church at Cudalore out of his own funds ; and at his death, besides a provision for the Christian poor at Negapatam, Mr. Gerické left to the Vepery mission fifteen thousand star pagodas,¹ together with the reversion of another considerable sum and a large house, on the demise of his widow. He was, in short, only inferior in piety and benevolence to Swartz himself, whose cordial and affectionate friend and coadjutor he had been during a lengthened period of service, and with whom, after no long interval, he was re-united in happiness and glory for ever.²

CHAP.
XXIV.

This second bereavement was a severe blow to the Indian missions. It was particularly felt by Mr. Kohlhoff, upon whom, in addition to the extensive Tanjore mission, and the care of the numerous congregations between Palamcotta and Cape Comorin, the duty of the new English garrison at Tanjore had now devolved. To re-

¹ About £6,000 sterling.

² An elegant monument is erected to the memory of this excellent man in Madras, near that of his venerable friend, in which he is represented with the Bible in his hand, and a group of children around him, pointing to the sacred volume, and exhorting a Hindoo to believe.

CHAP.
XXIV.

lieve him under these accumulated burthens, Mr. Cœmmerer of Tranquebar, as we have lately seen, assisted him by periodical journeys, as well as by the catechists of that mission, and repeated the earnest call for fresh labourers from Europe. The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, while "lamenting the loss of Mr. Gerické so soon after that of the invaluable Mr. Swartz," could only regret the failure of their endeavours to obtain new missionaries from Halle. The learned and venerable professor Schulz, who had survived his return from India nearly sixty years, and who had recommended so many valuable candidates for the Indian mission, rested from his own various and protracted labours the year after the death of Swartz. He had associated with himself in the direction of the orphan house the late excellent Dr. Knapp; but the religious state of the German universities at this period, which has been already alluded to, rendered every application of this kind for the present fruitless.

When Mr. Gerické was called to the mission at Vepery in 1787, he left at Cuddalore Mr. Christopher Horst, a young man who had studied in a German university, to superintend the schools at that place. His piety, zeal, and diligence in that subordinate capacity had been most exemplary, and on Mr. Holzberg's settlement at Cud-

dalore, he removed to Tranquebar to qualify himself more perfectly for the service of the mission. Hitherto the generous Gerické had allowed him a salary of £60 a year; but as that had now ceased, Mr. Pohlé, whose health was beginning to decline, requested the Society to supply this deficiency, and to permit him to assist in the mission at Trichinopoly. The Society readily consented to send Mr. Horst a gratuity of £50 for his recent services at Cudalore, but suspended any permanent salary till farther accounts were received of his competency to act as a missionary. About three years afterwards this promising young man having fully proved his qualifications for the ministry, was ordained, according to the rites of the Lutheran church, by Messrs. Pohlé, Kohlhoff, and Holzberg, and with the approbation of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, was appointed to a share in the extensive labours of the Tanjore mission. An extract from one of his letters to a friend in the midst of the French conquests in Germany, will give a pleasing view of his disinterested and zealous piety.

"I wrote," he observes, "to Germany in 1806," the year of his ordination, "to order a printing press, with divers Latin and a few German types, to be sent out to me from Copenhagen, together with Malabar types from Halle, at my own ex-

CHAP.
XXIV.

CHAP.
XXIV.

pense, independent of the one which we hope to obtain from England. I was then joint owner of a manor left by my maternal grandfather, and had three thousand dollars of one year's income of that estate in the hands of my attornies. But now the estate, as well as the three thousand dollars, have no doubt become a prey to the grand nation. The Lord's will be done ! He will provide for myself and mine. Only I regret the press. When I bespoke it, I thought that in the event of a casualty, (which God avert,) I should be obliged to go to Trichinopoly, and then my own press should have gone with me. Meanwhile, I would have used it constantly at Tanjore."

Mr. Horst was married, and had a large family ; and in the same letter in which the preceding passage occurs he says, " My private circumstances are poor, and I find it a hard matter to make both ends meet."

It was just at this period that the late Dr. Buchanan, on his way to the coast of Malabar, visited Trichinopoly and Tanjore. It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader of the sacred interest and delight with which this ardent and munificent friend of the missionary cause contemplated the scene of Swartz's labours ; how highly he was gratified with all that he saw and heard in what he emphatically styled " the garden of

the gospel," the numbers, the devotion, the order and apparent happiness of the native converts, the piety, zeal, and learning of Kohlhoff and Horst, of Pohlé and John, and the simple scriptural eloquence of the aged Sattianaden; and how confidently he anticipated, that "from Tanjore streams would probably flow, like its own fertilizing rivers, throughout the neighbouring lands." Wherever he travelled, this eminent man left behind him the traces of his Christian benevolence. Independently of his own private donations, he recommended to the missionaries at Tanjore an application to the Madras government for an additional allowance in support of their schools, which happily proved successful.

CHAP.
XXIV.

"We pray our gracious Lord," writes Mr. Horst to Dr. Buchanan, in 1809, "abundantly to requite your munificence to his servants. God bless you, dear sir, more than words can express, for your affection to his work among the heathen. Now Mr. Kohlhoff needs not make any further debts; and may by degrees pay off those which he has been obliged to contract, in order to maintain the many native labourers in the Tinnevely district, for which the interest of Mr. Swartz's legacy is not sufficient."

This valuable man had entered warmly into Dr. Buchanan's wishes to collect materials for a life of the venerable missionary, but he was not

CHAP.
XXIV.

long spared for this or any other service. In the year 1810, Mr. Kohlhoff announced to the Society the painful intelligence of his death. His learning and abilities, he observed, his ardent desire to be useful, the fervour and delight with which he ever pursued his work, and the essential services which he had rendered to himself and to the mission, had given him great cause to lament so early and unexpected a removal, which had deprived the mission of a faithful pastor, and a wife and numerous family of an affectionate husband, and a kind parent. It was particularly afflicting to have him called away at a time when the want of faithful missionaries was so severely felt; whilst his amiable disposition and uncommon application to business, had afforded the most sanguine hope of his proving a blessing to the missions. "The sufferings he underwent," adds Mr. Kohlhoff, "during the latter part of his illness, were very severe; yet he endured them with the patience and firmness of a Christian. His humble submission to the will of God, on his approaching dissolution, was truly awakening to every one that attended him; while the peace and tranquillity which he enjoyed to his very last breath, was a lively example of the inestimable happiness that attends a life of godliness."

Well might the aged Pohlé, on hearing of this distressing loss, exclaim, in a letter to the Society,

“Would to God that we could receive new missionaries! I am upwards of sixty-six years old; my strength faileth me, and I may soon be gone, and the mission be left an unprovided orphan. May the Lord hear our prayers, and help us for his mercy’s sake!”

CHAP.
XXIV.

Under these afflicting circumstances, the native priest Sattianaden being now also advanced in age, and unequal to the laborious duties which he had hitherto performed among the country congregations, Mr. Pohlé and Mr. Kohlhoff, with the consent of the Society, and the concurrence of their Danish brethren, resorted to the best and indeed the only means of increasing the number of their fellow labourers in their power. They selected four of the most pious and experienced native catechists attached to the Tanjore mission, one of whom was Nyánapracasam,¹ the history of whose conversion the reader will remember, and all of whom, to adopt their own expressions, “had from their childhood had the happiness of enjoying the sound and wholesome instructions of their late father, the revered Swartz, and to whom the words of St. Paul to Timothy, ‘Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, *knowing of whom thou hast learned them,*’ might justly and with good reason be applied;” and

¹ See vol. i. pp. 232, 261.

CHAP.
XXIV.

having examined and heard them preach their probationary sermons, after a discourse by Mr. Kohlhoff from 1 Tim. iv. 16, and a charge from Mr. Pohlé, with the assistance of the aged Sattianaden, solemnly ordained them, according to the form of the Lutheran ritual. They were immediately received into the service of the Society, and appointed to different stations in the Tanjore and Palamcotta missions.

While these zealous missionaries were thus endeavouring to supply the loss of their departed brethren, and in some measure to provide for the religious wants of their rapidly increasing congregations, a spirit had been excited in England, which, though it did not immediately respond to their reiterated entreaties for additional labourers from Europe, cheered their desponding hearts, and afforded the most gratifying proof of a widely extended and increasing interest in the promotion of Christianity in India. The attention of Dr. Buchanan had, it is well known, been anxiously directed during his residence in Bengal to the inadequate provision which had hitherto been made for the support of Christianity among the European population in India, as well as to the deplorable condition in a moral and religious point of view, of the natives of that vast empire. Towards the close of the year 1805, his "Memoir on the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establish-

ment for British India, both as the means of perpetuating the Christian religion among our own countrymen, and as a foundation for the ultimate civilization" (as he cautiously expressed it, but as we may now fearlessly add, the conversion) "of the natives," was published in England. More than a century had elapsed since Archbishop Tennison and Dean Prideaux had expressed their earnest wishes for such an establishment of our church in India; but though the possessions, the power, and the responsibility of the British nation had since that period so immensely increased, little had been attempted towards promoting the interests of Christianity, beyond the addition of a few chaplains at some of the principal stations of the East India Company, and the efforts which have been partially detailed in the preceding pages of the Danish and English missionaries on the coast of Coromandel, and in the south of the peninsula.

CHAP.
XXIV.

The appeal thus unexpectedly made by Dr. Buchanan to the British nation, preceded and followed as it was by the proposal of prizes to the universities, and of other publications upon the same important subject, produced a very striking and permanent impression upon the public mind. During the two years which succeeded the appearance of his memoir, the question of an ecclesiastical establishment, as well as that of the duty

CHAP.
XXIV.

of this Christian country to afford facilities for the propagation of the gospel in India, received the most ample and complete discussion; and the result was, that on the approaching renewal of the charter of the East India Company in the year 1812, a simultaneous effort was made by the more religious part of the community to enforce upon the government the necessity of making some effectual provision for these sacred and important purposes. In these endeavours to obtain the performance of a solemn national duty, the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Church Missionary Society, warmly and effectively participated, by presenting memorials to the directors of the East India Company, and to his majesty's ministers, in which the whole subject was admirably discussed and powerfully urged. The success with which these truly Christian exertions were crowned is well known, in the establishment of the bishopric of Calcutta, and of an archdeaconry at each of the three presidencies; nor is it too much to assert, that while none of the evils predicted by the opponents of this great measure have in a single instance followed, the benefits which have resulted from it have far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its supporters and friends.

While, however, the merits and labours of the learned and eminent prelates who have in too

rapid and painful a succession adorned the see of Calcutta, are gratefully remembered, let not the services of the able, pious, and disinterested individual be forgotten, who first directed the attention of the nation to the expediency of an ecclesiastical establishment for British India; and who, amidst opposition, calumny, and reproach, patiently persevered in the great object to which his talents and his life were devoted, until it was accomplished. It would be as unjust and as unavailing, to deny to Luther the merit of having roused the indignation of Europe against the errors and enormities of the church of Rome, as to refuse to Buchanan the claim of having originated and developed, to the general conviction of the nation, the duty of establishing the faith of the church of England in India, of lifting aloft the standard of the cross to the millions of the unconverted natives of our eastern empire, and of proclaiming to the ends of the earth "the salvation of God." Every succeeding year has tended to confirm the substantial truth of the statements, as well as to illustrate the practical wisdom of that admirable man; and it is only to be regretted that his primary suggestions as to the necessity of the greater extent of the church establishment, and the duty of the East Indian government to afford greater protection and en-

CHAP.
XXIV.

CHAP. XXIV. couragement to the profession of Christianity by the natives, have not as yet been realized.

Much, however, nay, far more than could have been previously anticipated, has been effected during the twenty years which have nearly elapsed since the first Protestant bishop landed on the shores of India. The visible and dignified establishment of our holy faith has evinced the religious character of the British nation, and received a corresponding tribute of respect from all ranks and orders of the natives. The learning and piety, the zeal and judgment of the East Indian prelates have illustrated the Christian character, and confirmed and accredited the episcopal authority. Churches have been erected and consecrated, schools built and endowed, and, above all, one noble institution, the Bishop's College, on the banks of the Hoogly, for the important purpose of training native youths as the future instructors of their countrymen in the principles of Christianity, as well as to be the source and centre of sacred Oriental literature. The inhuman sacrifice of the suttee has been abolished. The missionary stations have been visited, their wants relieved, and their numbers in some degree, though still inadequately, increased; and the native Christians recognised, elevated, and cheered. We review with gratitude these and other striking and

encouraging proofs of the increased prevalence, and the advancing influence, of Christianity in India; and we hail them as pledges that what still remains—and how much, alas! is there yet behind—will, in due time, be accomplished. We rejoice in the presiding wisdom and kindness of divine Providence in supplying, from time to time, the lamented vacancies in the East Indian episcopate; and we indulge an earnest and a confident hope, that the immense diocese of Calcutta, though once more committed to eminently pious and energetic, yet to single hands, may ere long receive augmented life and vigour, in the additional episcopal superintendence provided by Parliament in the bill recently passed for the renewal of the Company's charter, in the gradual increase of churches and chaplains at the principal European stations, and especially of schools for the instruction and improvement of the native Christians, combined with such regulations for ameliorating their condition, and securing their employment in the public service, equally with our Hindoo and Mahomedan subjects, as become the character and the duty of a Christian government.

The influence of the episcopal establishment in India has been peculiarly propitious to the English missions on the coast of Coromandel, and in the south of the peninsula. From the Danish

CHAP.
XXIV.

mission at Tranquebar, "the glory" was evidently departing. The friendly visit and pecuniary aid of Bishop Middleton in 1816, afforded it a seasonable and temporary relief; but it has been gradually verging towards decay. It has fulfilled its course; and after having for more than a century been a light to them that sat in darkness, and the source from which the English missions derived their origin, is now, in the progress of events and years, eclipsed and superseded by their brighter and more extended rays.

At Trichinopoly, the learned and excellent Pohlé maintained the original foundation of Swartz, and laboured faithfully till the year 1818, though he never greatly added to the numbers of the congregation. But at Tanjore, and in the surrounding country, and in Tinnevely, and southward towards Cape Comorin, the more extensive field, planted by the venerable Swartz, and, during more than twenty years, watered and cultivated by his own unwearied labours, and by those of Gerické, Jœnické, and Kohlhoff, and more recently by the valuable assistance of Sperschneider, Haubroe, and Rosen, the triumphs of the gospel have been progressive and delightful.

"It is a fact," observes the author of the Sketch of the Protestant Missions in India, "that in whatever part of southern India inquiry has been made as to the existence of native Protestant

Christians, some of the converts of Swartz and Gerické have been discovered; thus evidencing the beneficial influence of the early missionaries of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge in almost every part of the peninsula.”

CHAP.
XXIV.

“We have,” says Mr. Sullivan, principal collector of Coimbatore, addressing the Madras District Committee, “a small, but interesting, congregation of native Protestants here, who have wants which I must get supplied through your agency. They are descendants of some original disciples of Apostle Swartz, and do honour to their spiritual father. They join in our English church service; and when they get supplied with Tamul prayer-books, we shall have the service read amongst them in their native language on Sunday evenings. I want you therefore to send me a dozen of Dr. Rottler’s translation, and a dozen English prayer-books, and the same number of psalters in Tamul.

“The request of Mr. Sullivan,” it is added, “was immediately complied with, and he was assured of the readiness of the Committee to assist his plans for the benefit of the native Christian congregation in Coimbatore.”

With what evident delight does Bishop Middleton¹ describe the native Christians in Tinnevely, and mention the interesting visit of a party

¹ Life, vol. i. p. 228.

CHAP.
XXIV.

who came from Palamcotta to welcome him, and to receive his blessing! "I went forward," says the bishop, "to meet them. They were headed by their native priest, and my man David, (the son of Sattianaden.) They were about thirty; and they formed the most remote congregation under Mr. Kohlhoff's care. The priest, a very interesting man, addressed me on behalf of his people; and, in reply, I gave them a suitable exhortation, which David interpreted with great energy, and they received it with every mark of thankfulness. They then opened their Tamul prayer-books, and sung a psalm of thanksgiving quite correctly, and in good time and melody. The Brahmins," a party of whom had also come to pay their respects to the bishop, "witnessed the scene, and both deputations quitted the camp together."

Of the native Christians in Tinnevely, the following gratifying report was given a few years since by the Rev. James Hough, at that time chaplain of the East India Company at Palamcotta. After mentioning the church at that station, originally built by one of Swartz's female converts, he describes the numbers of the protestant Christians in the whole district as amounting to about four thousand, scattered through sixty-three villages, and consisting of congregations, varying in number from a few individuals

to three and four hundred. Some of these native converts were farmers; but the greater part were mechanics, persons of the caste of Shanars, cultivators of the cocoa-nut and palmyra trees. The increase in four years, from 1814 to 1817, was four hundred and eighty.

CHAP.
XXIV.

In a subsequent communication from Mr. Hough, written after he had visited some of the Christian stations in the interior, he gives a most interesting picture of the people whom he found there, especially in two villages inhabited entirely by Protestants.

"There is," he says, "a church at every station, but, with only two exceptions, they are built of unburnt brick, and covered with palmyra leaves. The ground on which these churches stand was given to the mission by the nabob's government about the year 1800, and most of the buildings were erected at the same time. Those I have seen are in very good repair, and it requires but a small sum annually to keep them so.

"The country priest, Viswasanaden, a pupil of Swartz, a man of great piety and ability, eminently successful in the conversion of his idolatrous countrymen, and highly respected both by heathens and Mahomedans, is stationed at a village called by the Christians Nazareth, about twenty miles south of Palamcotta, and Abraham, the other country priest, is at Mothelloor, a few miles

CHAP.
XXIV.

further. If I may judge from appearances, during my short stay among the people of these two villages, they are much attached to their priests, as are the Christians of the surrounding country ; and I am persuaded they only require to be well supported and encouraged, to prove of the most essential service to the congregations entrusted to their care. Even from my hasty visit, the joy diffused through all classes was indescribable, and the people flocked in from the neighbouring villages in every direction. On catechising such as were introduced to me as the principal people, I found them much better taught in their religion than I had anticipated ; and, considering the space of time that they have been without a missionary, it was highly gratifying and encouraging to find the benign and peaceable genius of Christianity still keeping them at unity amongst themselves. The two villages named above, consist entirely of Protestants, nor is there an idol or heathen temple any where to be seen, while the stillness that prevailed, contrasted with the tumult of heathen abodes, seemed to invest these favoured spots with a degree of sanctity, and made me forget for the moment that they were in the midst of a pagan land. One of the priests led me to a part of the village, where were seated, under the shade of cocoa-nut trees, a considerable number of women spinning cotton, and singing Lutheran

hymns, to a late hour. There were two old men among the group who were converted to the Christian faith by the Society's missionary, Jœ-nické, about twenty years ago, and they sang to me several hymns he had taught them. What they sang, or said, was not so intelligible, indeed, as the language of younger men; but you will readily imagine them to have been among the most interesting of the company. I state these, perhaps, trifling particulars, to show that there appears to be something more than the bare name of Christianity here, and that the enemies of missionary exertions are mistaken in asserting, that there is not a genuine convert to Christianity among the native Protestants. If," adds this pious and judicious friend to such efforts, "the Society had no other fruit of their cares, their exertions, and their expenditures for the promotion of Christian knowledge in India to produce, they might triumphantly appeal to these two villages, in proof that their labour has not been in vain."¹

CHAP.
XXIV.

It would not be difficult to add to the preceding testimonies to the importance of the Protestant missions in Tinnevely; but these are amply sufficient to vindicate the success of past exertions, and to encourage the most cheering hopes for the

¹ Much additional information upon this interesting subject is contained in Mr. Hough's able reply to the letters of the Abbé Dubois, on the state of Christianity in India.

CHAP.
XXIV.

future. "The number of converts," said Bishop Heber,¹ when writing from Trichinopoly, in 1826, "is gradually increasing; and there are in the south of India, about two hundred Protestant congregations, the numbers of which have been vaguely stated at forty thousand. I doubt whether they reach fifteen thousand; but even this, all things considered, is a great number." The calculation of the bishop was probably below the real amount. Our information upon this point is necessarily imperfect; but judging from the returns which have been made from time to time, the number of native Christians now connected with the different Protestant missions on the coast of Coromandel, and in the southern districts of the peninsula, can scarcely amount to less than twenty thousand; while the total number of converts, from the commencement of the missions to the present period, may be fairly estimated at sixty thousand.

These are indeed but trifling numbers when compared with the millions of the unconverted natives of that immense empire, which has, in so remarkable a manner, been subjected to our sway; but, viewed in connexion with the difficulties, natural, political, and moral, with which the pious men who have been successively engaged in the laborious and self-denying work of conver-

¹ Journal, vol. ii. p. 462.

sion have had to contend, with their limited numbers, and restricted means, they may justly be considered great; more particularly when it is remembered, that though too many of them, like others in our own favoured country, may not have advanced far beyond the mere name of Christians, yet multitudes among them have really accredited their religious profession, have lived under the purifying influence of Christian principles, and died in the faith and hope of the salvation revealed by the gospel. Justly, therefore, did Bishop Middleton, when surveying the Tanjore and Trichinopoly missions, as founded by the illustrious Swartz, pronounce that, "in a Christian point of view, they may be considered as forming the noblest memorial of British connexion with India." And with equal justice did the biographer of his lamented successor, when describing the memorials of the grateful rajah's veneration for their illustrious founder, declare that "in the daily increasing number of converts, in the churches which he built, and in the order and prosperity of their congregations, a more durable monument is raised to the memory of Swartz, than even the genius of Flaxman and the affection of the rajah combined could create."¹

These, together with the other missionary stations in the peninsula, which, during so long

¹ Life of Bishop Heber, vol. ii. p. 419.

CHAP.
XXIV.

a series of years were supported and watched over by the venerable Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, have been transferred to the incorporated Society for the propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and placed under the superintendence and direction of the Bishop of Calcutta. They are now, therefore, identified with the church of England, and ought to be considered as objects of lively and sacred interest by all her members, and as essentially connected with our obligations and our duty as a Christian nation. Can we, indeed, conceive of a nobler destination than that which the providence of God has manifestly assigned to us, of rendering the dominion with which he has invested us, not only, as it undoubtedly has been and is, the source of many civil and political advantages to the natives of Hindostan, but subservient to the far higher purpose of communicating to them the inestimable blessings of the Christian revelation; "the knowledge of salvation through the remission of sins," the principles of holiness, the precepts of a pure and elevated morality, the means of grace, the sources of present consolation and happiness, and the hope of future and eternal glory! This all-important and exalted work has, during many years, been gradually, and almost insensibly advancing. The diffusion of useful knowledge, the progress of education, even when

not directly connected with Christian principles, as in the instance of Swartz's provincial schools, the abatement of native prejudice, and the abolition of cruel rites, the episcopal establishment of Christianity, and, above all, the improvement of the European character, and the increasing number of those who visibly exemplify and adorn the Christian name, have all been tending to promote and accelerate that great consummation so long and so ardently desired and implored by the real lovers of their country and of mankind, the general prevalence of Christianity in India. Remote, and even visionary as this expectation may to many appear, it is to the true believer in the divine origin and excellence of our holy religion, and in the recorded declarations of its ultimate and universal triumphs, anxiously, yet calmly regarded as the certain result of the faithful adoption and diligent improvement of suitable means and opportunities. In proportion as these are wisely and seasonably exerted, on the part of the local or the supreme governments, by affording increased facilities to the acquisition of European learning, by the suppression or the discountenancing, by all equitable and peaceful methods, of whatever, in the native superstitions, is plainly opposed to civil and social morality, and by the avowed and consistent support of Christian ordinances, and the Christian profession ; and on the

CHAP.
XXIV.

CHAP.
XXIV.

part of the civil and ecclesiastical members of the East India Company's service, by the exemplary and Christian discharge, each in his several rank and vocation, of their acknowledged duties to God and man,—this mighty and apparently impracticable work will assuredly be accomplished; and precisely in the same proportion will the real happiness of the natives and the best interests of the British empire be promoted and confirmed.

The history of the venerable and illustrious person recorded in the preceding pages forms a powerful and unanswerable example and proof of the extent to which the beneficial influence of one eminently wise, disinterested, and devoted Christian missionary in India may be carried. The success with which his labours were graciously attended, let it be remembered, has not proved, like that of Robert de Nobili, or even of Xavier himself, for the most part, superficial, nominal, transient. Like the apostles, whose spirit he had so largely imbibed, and whose steps he so closely followed, he was ordained by his heavenly Master to go and bring forth *fruit*: and his fruit, like theirs, *remains*.¹

The history of Swartz proves, also, the important and encouraging fact, that the purest and most uncompromising exhibition of Christian doctrine and Christian precepts, illustrated and

¹ John xv. 16.

adorned as they were by his own personal character and conduct, will be so far from exciting in the natives of India, of whatever rank, any feelings of aversion or distrust, that it cannot fail when accompanied by "the meekness of wisdom," and the spirit of kindness and love, to attract their attention and to conciliate their regard. It can never be too frequently repeated, or too constantly borne in mind, that the triumph of this great missionary was that of Christianity itself, clearly and simply stated, patiently inculcated, and eminently and consistently exemplified.

CHAP.
XXIV.

For the advancement and completion of the interesting and immortal work to which the life of Swartz was devoted, we chiefly require men like-minded with himself. "Let us," said Bishop James, "have another Swartz in temper, in manner, in judgment, and in Christian feeling, and I fear not to say, that, under the blessing of God, we may look for a Swartz's success."¹

In various important particulars, the situation and prospects of the Christian missionary in India are, since that early day, materially altered and improved. "Other men have laboured," and he is invited to "enter into their labours." One of the most pressing and cheering duties to which he is at this moment called is, not so much to break up fresh ground, as to engage in

¹ Brief Memoirs, p. 93.

CHAP.
XXIV.

tilling that which is already under cultivation.

The missionary of the present day possesses, at the same time, greater facilities for his work, with respect to the acquisition of the native languages, and is more powerfully supported and encouraged by episcopal protection and superintendence, and by general Christian sympathy and aid.

Meanwhile, the idolatry and superstition of the Hindoo are manifestly yielding to the light which is on all sides breaking in upon those polluted "chambers of imagery," and approaching to the predicted period, when they will be thrown, as worthless and unworthy, "to the bats and to the moles;" while Mahomedanism itself, proud, contemptuous, and vindictive as it is, upon whose hardened and deluded votaries but little impression has hitherto been made, is equally verging to decay; nor can we contemplate the tottering fabric of its European power, its avowed and principal support, without confidently anticipating, that its oriental bulwark, shaken as it has long been by British ascendancy and dominion, will feel in growing weakness and alarm, the prelude to its approaching fall.

Amidst these propitious symptoms, and prophetic hopes, the heavenly voice which continually resounded in the ears of the early missionaries, from Ziegenbalg to Swartz, may still be heard—"Go ye, and teach all nations—and lo!

I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

CHAP.
XXIV.

May the great Proprietor and Lord of that universal field for the propagation of his gospel, qualify and send forth such labourers into his harvest, and accompany them, according to his promise, with his presence and blessing! And may He stir up the hearts of his faithful people to cherish those Christian institutions which are engaged in educating and preparing them for their sacred undertaking, as well as in supporting them amidst their arduous and self-denying labours! The pious Kiernander expressed his dying expectation, that the time would come, when the whole English nation would unite in a general society to send the gospel to the East Indies—“an event,” he added, “which will give the firmest stability to the British possessions in the East.” Would to God that this fervent anticipation may be realized! Yet “not by might, nor by power, *but by my Spirit*, saith the Lord of Hosts.” Such is the sacred principle which must never be forgotten by those who hope for the conversion of mankind. “Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, the wilderness,” whether of heathen or Mahomedan nations, can never become “a fruitful field.”

For that divine and fertilizing influence, let those who have deeply at heart the moral re-

CHAP.
XXIV.

novation of the world, devoutly and incessantly pray. Let them not keep silence or give rest to Him who dwelleth above the heavens, until he establish and make his church "a praise in the earth." The result of such combined exertions and prayers can scarcely be doubtful. The converts of the Gentile world would "spring up as the grass, and like willows by the watercourses." "The wilderness and the solitary place would be glad for them; and the desert would rejoice and blossom as the rose."

But whatever may be the success of such Christian labours, the hour is coming, when those who have in any, even the least and lowest measure, contributed to promote them, shall "rejoice together." Then, above all, shall those who, like Swartz, and his faithful precursors and followers, have planted and watered, at length reap in this blessed harvest, and "gather fruit unto life," and happiness "eternal."¹

¹ John iv. 36.