

our teaching on these subjects. We allow our minds, and the minds of our people, and the mind of the world, to be occupied with a number of minor, if not trivial points, about ceremonies and vestments, and subordinate differences of doctrine, until statesmen seem to think that these are the only things we care for, and consequently conclude that the denominational teaching we profess to value is concerned with such mere verbal matters, and that it is no hardship to discountenance it. The way to meet that danger and misapprehension is to lift these cardinal questions high above all others, into the vision and the apprehension of our people, to make them realize that our thoughts are full, and that theirs ought to be full, of God and of His Word, of Christ and of His sacrifice, and of His eternal and living kingdom ; to realize better ourselves, and to make them realize, that every interest and consideration in the world is secondary in importance to these grand truths ; and that, consequently, whatever course legislation may take, we at all events shall never rest, and will give the nation and Parliament no rest, until young and old have their minds filled with these truths and realities, and live in them in order that they may die in them.



Christianity in the Indian Empire.

By THE REV. T. BOMFORD, M.A.

MANY people seem to wish to affirm that Christian missions are making no progress in the Indian Empire. They refer us to the opinions of "various civilians and military officers, men who, of course, know what is happening in the empire." There is a passage in Lecky's "History of European Morals from the Time of Augustus to that of Charlemagne" which supplies us with an answer to these affirmations. Lecky shows how few pagan writers before Constantine's time ever referred to

Christianity at all, how little they said about it, and how utterly they failed to grasp the rapid progress it was making in the Roman Empire, still less to foresee how in the future it would prove to be the immense moral force which, of course, we know it did prove to be. Plutarch, the elder Pliny, and Seneca—great names these and wide in range of thought—never mention Christianity; Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius give it a few words of contemptuous censure; Tacitus and Suetonius treat it as an execrable superstition. Yet some of these men wrote almost on the eve of the triumph of the Christian Church. They were not unobservant of other movements; the growth of Roman luxury, for instance, and the importance of that growth, they are careful to mark and to describe. And it should be remembered that this silence continued up to the time of Constantine, by which time one-fourth of the population of the Roman Empire was Christian.

Now apply all this to India. Notice that hundreds of books are written by the statesmen, administrators, and novelists of the ruling race in India at this time, and that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to gather from these works that Christianity is making any progress in the land, or exerting any influence. Statistics show that, so far, only one in a hundred of the population in India is Christian. If the Roman writers ignored the presence and power of Christianity in the Roman Empire when one in four of the population was Christian, it is a small wonder, after all, that the British writers ignore its presence and power in India when only one in a hundred of the population is Christian.

Are we prepared, however, to argue that the Christian religion had no power in the Roman Empire till Constantine's time? We all know that Constantine's policy was due to his feeling it necessary to yield to the enormous force of Christianity. It was not Constantine who made the Roman Empire Christian. He may himself have felt its moral power or he may not (it is hard to diagnose Constantine, almost as hard as it is to diagnose our Queen Elizabeth), but he probably knew that it would be

Christian in a few years whether he wished it to be so or not. Roman writers ignored Christianity when it was growing rapidly in power and influence in the Roman Empire; British writers ignore it when it is growing in power and influence in the Indian Empire. Is there any connection between these two phenomena; have they a common cause, a common origin, so to speak? Let us inquire briefly.

The original Roman republican character owed its high tone to the old simple Roman religion. Little by little this became corrupted, and contact with men of other religions begat in the Romans an indifference to religion. Looked upon as forms of worship only, other religions seemed to them as good as their own. So while for respectability's sake they continued to observe its outward rites, they lost all belief in the intrinsic value of their own religion; they made no effort to spread it; they cared nothing, absolutely nothing, whether their religion spread among the nations subject to them or not. We might be writing this about the English in India, but we are not, we are still speaking of the Romans.

Now mark that the morality caused by their old religion did not cease at once; like the impetus in a moving body, it continued after the force which caused the movement had ceased. And another force, too, came to delay the decay of morality which generally follows the loss of religious belief. The Stoic philosophy could not create a high moral tone, but it could come to the help of men in danger of losing that high moral tone, and among educated and thinking men could delay the progress of that decay. Hence—and this is important to remember—men like Marcus Aurelius, with the good of the empire at heart, never imagined that the much-needed regenerating power for that empire was to be found in a religion. They themselves—so they thought at least—owed nothing to any religion; it was to them a matter of complete indifference what religion a man professed, or whether he professed any. Their one concern for the ordinary run of man was that he acknowledged the Emperor, paid his taxes, and gave no trouble to the officials.

Now turn from Rome to England, from the Roman Empire to the Indian. The English race owes its high position and its moral character to the influence of the Christian religion. This we will not stay to argue. History must be speaking the truth in this matter. If there is such a thing as cause and effect, the cause of England's greatness is manifest, there is no other. But Englishmen are losing their belief in Christianity. This may be partly accounted for by the defective manner in which the Christian religion is often put before them. Briefly, it comes before them in three shapes, and in the extreme form of either of the three it is dissociated from moral power and high moral character. It is preached as a mere set of outward observances, attention to which will secure a man's salvation ; or it takes the form of a set of doctrines, which if rigidly held will answer the same purpose ; or it is preached as requiring an emotional experience, the passing through of which will be a guarantee to a man that he is one of the elect. Englishmen know from experience that many most ardent in the performance of ceremonies, many most keen to shout the correct shibboleth, many most ready to narrate their emotional experience, are deficient in the moralities and amenities of everyday life, and they have come to regard Christianity either as a ritual, or a creed, or an emotion, which exercises no influence on the moral character of those who profess it.

Making all allowance for prejudice and natural indifference, there is much to be said in excuse for those who cannot see the power of that which often comes before them in an emaciated state. The power of Christ is often present, even where to the outsider all seems to be ritual or creed or emotion. But let that pass. All will know what we mean when we say that Christ is often obscured in the preaching and in the practice of Christianity. Now, come back to these Englishmen of whom we have been speaking. Their belief has gone, but the moral influence of their forefathers' religion is still strong ; and we find men—and many of them too in India, and are thankful to find them—who, while denying any belief in Christianity, are leading lives which

are the product of Christianity. Ignorant that their own high character is due to Christianity, they can see no object in spreading it, nor take any interest in the many signs of its growing power. Uninfluenced by it themselves, or thinking themselves so, they cannot believe in its power to influence others; and in investigating the change of thought observable in the minds of educated Indians, they treat Christianity as a negligible quantity. All religions seem to them equally useful in their way, and it matters not to them what religion a man professes so that he gives no trouble to the officials of the empire. The Stoic philosophy delayed the decay of morality in Roman minds of culture, and so does the philosophy of Altruism delay the same decay in English cultured minds to-day. Devotion to duty, readiness to spend his life and strength for the good of others, these things are present in the average English-Indian official; but they are really caused not by the philosophy he holds, but by the religion he discards. That some reformation is needed in the morality of India is evident to every English official, but he believes in meeting the need not by the spread of religion, but by the publication of moral text-books, drawn from various religious systems, but in which the religious element is carefully ignored, the very element which has created the morality.

Profound is the disbelief in Christianity as a possible factor in a man's life. Let us illustrate this disbelief from recent facts. Not long ago the biography of a famous Indian frontier Englishman was published, in which a large space was devoted to an account of a remarkable man with whom he had been brought into contact. This man, rising from the ranks, had become a commissioned officer in the Guide Corps. Much is told of this Afghan officer's life and death, but the fact that he became a Christian man, and as a Christian man won the confidence of the Government, and was employed by them in the dangerous service in which he lost his life, is not mentioned. To come to England for a moment, it was strange that in the *Times* leader on the late Sir George Stokes at the time of his death, a leader

which not only dealt with his scientific achievements, but analyzed his character, the fact that he was an humble and earnest believer in and follower of our Saviour was not so much as hinted at.

Ignorance of the power of Christianity passes rapidly into contempt for it. We naturally think lightly of qualities we do not ourselves possess, and contempt quickly passes into positive dislike. The writer of this has heard an English judge in India, when appealed to for protection by a convert to Christianity, say that he supposed it was a question about "Christianity or some nonsense of the kind." In another case, a young man, having become a Christian, and in consequence been driven out of a wealthy home, applied to a judge to know what steps he ought to take to claim his share of the property his father had left. The English judge prefaced his remarks by saying: "What a fool you were to become a Christian and risk the loss of your inheritance!" The judge probably did not value his own religion at a rupee, and thought the man a fool who risked the loss of 40,000 rupees on its behalf. We might give many other similar instances.

Christianity in the Roman Empire had not merely to meet contempt and sneers, but often to face persecution. This persecution indirectly, no doubt, helped forward the triumph of the Christian Church, for it tended to purify it and free it from that top-hammer which so often hinders its advance, and so to make it a better witness for Christ, a greater power among those it reached. The reasons for this persecution were not that it was a new religion, nor that it was a proselytizing religion, for both the Jewish religion and the Egyptian were allowed without much opposition to grow in the Roman Empire. Christianity was a disturbing element wherever it was preached. Its introduction led to riots and disturbances. A man might become a convert to Isis without changing his mode of life. Not so if he became a convert to Christ; his change of life was resented by his friends and relatives, hence the riots. Often enough these riots were set on foot by the Jews; but as these

had been law-abiding citizens till the Gospel had been preached, the fault was, of course, in the preaching, not in the Jew. So the Christian was blamed and had to suffer. A strong government based on military rule dreads riot. Riot may be fanned, it may become insurrection. Christianity also caused disturbance in the ordinary course of trade. Pliny remarks in writing to Trajan that the fodder business had suffered from the lessened demand for sheep for sacrifice in the numerous temples. No doubt the farmers had complained and pleaded inability to pay their taxes.

Officials in India have the same reasons for disliking the spread of Christianity. It is a disturbing element in some districts. Conversion to Christianity often causes a riot or something approaching a riot. The supreme Government hates riot, and an official in whose district a riot takes place is apt to have a bad mark placed against his name. He is called to account, and both he and his district have to suffer. So far, perhaps, Christianity has not seriously affected any of the trades or social arrangements of India, but it is bound to do so in time. For instance, the Chuhras of the Punjab have hitherto been the despised menial drudges of the small farmers, and even when they and their masters are Mahommedans the Chuhra is not allowed to draw water from the same well or to worship in the same mosque as his master. Thousands of these Chuhras are now turning Christians, many only in name no doubt, but many from sincere conviction. Will they in another generation be content to accept the position of menial drudges? A readjustment of the social strata is bound to come sooner or later. In some parts of India such readjustments are taking place without disturbances, but it cannot be so in all. Officials like to see their districts working with clock-like regularity, and dislike any movement which promises to disturb this precision. Persecution of Christians in India is out of the question, nor is it likely that missionaries will ever be prohibited as they once were under the rule of the old East India Company; but Government is capable of showing its dislike of missionary

effort, and has been known of late to urge people not to forsake their ancestral religions.

There is another and a stranger parallel between the Government of India—and, indeed, the Government of England—and that of Rome. Emperors of Rome saw that some power was needed to bind together the different races of their empire. They needed something resembling a religion; and not believing in the religion of their own country, or, indeed, in that of any other, they proceeded to construct a new one and to force it on their peoples. This new one was by no means to be a substitute for the existing religions, but it was to be supplementary to them. The central feature of this new religion was the recognition of the imperial genius of the Roman Empire, to which genius the different nations under Rome owed their peace and happiness. The Emperor himself was the embodiment of this idea, so he was given the title of *Divus*, and to his statue divine honours were to be paid. Hence, as we all know, came the great quarrel between the Church and the empire. More ready than any other class of men to acknowledge and to submit to the rule of the Roman Emperor, the Christians refused to give him divine worship, and they were therefore looked upon as traitors. We know from the New Testament that the Christians would have been ready enough to acknowledge that every stable government contains an element of the divine. The Emperors, by asking too much in the pursuance of their ideal, lost all.

The problem before the rulers of India is much the same. The various peoples of India must be united in one homogeneous whole. Some common principle must be found—and thoughtful men have been looking for it for the last fifty years—to bind together these various nationalities, with their varying customs and religions. Western civilization based on western education would, it was once thought, have proved to be the needed power. But an impersonal idea has little force with eastern people, and its progress has been slow, its influence small. The present idea is to unite India by bringing the person of the Sovereign to the front. In 1859 the sovereignty

of the Queen took the place of the rule of the old Company ; in 1878 the title Empress of India was assumed ; in that year, and again in 1903, festivals were held at Delhi in honour of this new principle, and princes and governors summoned from all parts of India to pay their devotions before the representative of the Sovereign. Here lies the weakness of the new cult : the Sovereign is invisible and has to be represented by a Viceroy, and the success or failure of the cult depends somewhat on the character of this Viceroy. Men like Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius might have seemed worthy of the title *Divus Cæsar* ; there were others who were not. It remains to be seen, both in England and in India, what effect imperialism will have on the masses of the people. Of this we are certain, that a greater power exists in Christianity, one far more fitted to compass the object our rulers have in view.

A few words of caution remain. Do not imagine that all Indian officials ignore Christianity, and the part it is playing in the revolution of India. From the days of Lord Lawrence to the present a long roll of English statesmen and administrators have recognised and borne witness to the value of Christian missions in the development of India. Many of these have actively helped forward the work of Christian missions. It is easy for Christianity to spread without the ordinary average Englishman being in the least aware of it. Daily business brings Englishmen into contact with Indians, but brings with it no necessity, often no opportunity, for the Englishman to inquire into the religion of his Indian friend or employé. On Sundays, if the Englishman goes to church, he goes where his own language is used, and his own Government chaplain officiates ; he does not see the Indian in church because the Indian has his own church and his own Christian minister, missionary or otherwise. The Englishman, seeing no Indians in church where he ought to see them if they are Christians, thinks there must be very few in the country.

No one, certainly no missionary, wishes to see the Government doing anything directly to spread Christianity. After the

Mutiny some thought the Government ought to have declared that Christianity was the religion of the country. Even Sir Herbert Edwards urged that the Bible should be taught in all the Government schools. Steps of this kind would have been a mistake. All that is asked is that there should be fair treatment of all peoples in the country, both Christians and others. Some years ago an official discovered that there were more Christians in Government employ than their numbers warranted, and there was some talk of limiting their numbers. Such a step might prove of benefit to the Christian Church, but it would have been grossly unfair. The Christian men do not owe their positions under Government to the mere fact of their being Christians, they have won these positions by open competition and by their own merits. We know well enough that Christianity must triumph in India, and the reasons for this coming triumph are given clearly, by Lecky in his concluding words on the conversion of the Roman Empire.

No other religion has such elements of power and attraction ; it is bound by no local ties, and is equally suitable for men of all nations and of every class. It appeals to the affections, and unites to its distinctive teaching a pure system of ethics. It proclaims the universal brotherhood of man, and recognises the softening influence of love.

The chief cause of its triumph according to Lecky is the congruity of its teaching to the spiritual nature of mankind ; it represents faithfully the supreme type of excellence to which men are tending ; it corresponds to their religious needs, aims, emotions. Lecky is speaking of Rome ; make a few slight changes, and you are reading what may be said of India.

Its progress in India is hampered, however, by two things which had no place in Rome. In the first place a wide gulf exists between the American and English preachers of Christianity and the people they would convert, a gulf in moral standards and in social life, a much larger gulf than existed between the first preachers of the gospel and their pagan hearers. Teachers of these days are the product of centuries of Christian

teaching. The increase of Indian native workers and teachers will in time surmount this difficulty.

In the second place the missionaries themselves are to blame for another difficulty. The Christianity they teach is too often bound hand and foot to the ceremonies, creeds, and formularies of their own particular churches. They preach things which no doubt have a value in these particular churches at home, but which are not essential to Christianity. Western ways of thought and modes of worship will not attract the people of the East. The power of Christianity in the Roman Empire was not founded in an organized Church with formularies and shibboleths, but in the preaching of the Man Christ Jesus, the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, the Man who not only taught but showed how to live, and who gave His life as a ransom for all. Let the missionaries of Christ preach Christ as revealed in the Scripture, and let secondary matters go, if they seem to wish to go, and they will find that though the preaching of the Cross will still seem to many to be foolishness, it is still the power of God, the wisdom of God, and will be recognised as such by many who are weary of the philosophies, the pleasures, the empty creeds and toils of this life, and longing for something more stable, more satisfying, more powerful.



The Sadness of Poe.

By MARY BRADFORD WHITING.

“THE tone of the highest manifestation of Beauty is *sadness*,” wrote Edgar Allan Poe in his “Philosophy of Composition.” “Beauty, of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears. Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones. ‘Of all melancholy topics,’ I asked myself, ‘what, according to the universal understanding of mankind, is the *most* melancholy?’ ‘*Death*,’ was the obvious reply. ‘And when,’ I said, ‘is this