

Our Foreign Missions.

INDIA.

Three weeks have passed since we arrived in India, and I have been anxiously waiting for an hour of repose when I might write at least one short letter to our many friends, who will hear from us and our work here only through such medium as your paper affords. I had intended writing from Bombay, but the business I had to transact there entirely consumed my time and strength, so that I did not write a single letter during our stay there of two weeks.

I will first say that our reception in Bombay was as great a surprise to us as any of the unexpectedly strange things that greeted our unsophisticated eyes and ears. The first man with whom I shook hands after landing on that heathen shore—which we were so glad to place our feet upon that we almost fell down and kissed it—was Mr. Moniji Mody, a converted Parsee, and one of the grandest good men it has ever been my pleasure to even see. He is a large, fine appearing man, as are most of the Parsees, and when he stood before us that Tuesday afternoon of Nov. 7, just after we had come up from the ship, his kind, christian, manly face spoke a welcome to us that was more touching to our hearts than were his cordial and beautiful addresses that came from his genuine love for all who love the Master. He had previously secured us a good boarding place in a christian family, and his kindness continued as long as we remained in the city. He went with us to buy our furniture to take to Ellichpur, and in many ways gave us much of his valuable time. I know of but one way to convey an appropriate idea of his lavish self-expenditure, and that is to say he is the brunette twin brother of Bro. Hertzog, of Suspension Bridge. For most of the brother-hood, that is plain. Bro. Mody was converted about ten years ago, and is one of the few Christian Parsees in the world. He has been preaching daily on the streets of Bombay for five years. I attended his simple street meeting one day. He has often come near losing his life, such is the hatred of the Parsees towards any one leaving their religion. Only six weeks ago, as he was returning from his preaching place, he was knocked down with a stone and his head cut, notwithstanding police officers guard him when he

preaches. Twice he took us to his elegant home for dinner, where we were received as if we had been lifelong friends. Mrs. Mody is an accomplished English lady, having a practical knowledge of fifteen languages, which, with her superior knowledge of all mission work, makes her society invaluable to persons like ourselves.

The other missionaries and christian people of Bombay received us somewhat after the same fashion. The Congregationalist missionaries—Bro. and Sister Hume and Mr. Abbot—are models in Christian character, spirit and work, who after our arrival desired us to make their house our home. I was much pleased with their day and Sunday-school, the latter of which numbers over 200, to which Bro. Norton and I spoke through an interpreter. It was a strange yet beautiful sight to see them in various highly colored dresses, representing at least fifteen different castes and many languages, all sitting together studying God's word. It was a thrilling sight to see scores of those who had turned from their idols to serve the living God, worshipping together so devoutly. I met their native pastor, who was once a low caste idolator, but is now an educated minister and preaching Christ to thousands. The work is a grand one, and well calculated to engage the entire power of every one who desires the extension of the kingdom of God.

The Methodist brethren, also received us most heartily. They have two churches, composed of Europeans and Eurasians. Bro. Norton spoke to one of these the Sunday evening he was in the city, while I was speaking to the other. On the following Sunday evening I conducted the entire services, the pastor being absent, I spoke the first evening on "Christ preëminent in all things," and the next time my subject was the "Great Commission," as given by St. Matthew. Among the native converts, I met a Bro. Trimbuck and his wife, who are from the high caste Hindoos. They are well educated. He preaches and his wife teaches. He spoke approvingly of my last discourse, and especially of that part where I said that from the commission of Jesus we were taught to make disciples or Christians, and not sectarians of any name and that denominationalism was unscriptural and sinful. I asked him, as he knew the native mind, what he thought would be

the effect upon the natives for the converts to confess the Savior publicly and then immediately be immersed. He said, "It would be right, and the effect must, therefore be good. I believe immersion is right, though I have never been immersed myself." I also spoke Friday evening before the Young Men's Christian Association, by invitation of Mr. Condor, the president. Bishop Foster, Bro. and Mrs. Hard, formerly from Buffalo, Mr. Northrup and Mr. Fox, the presiding elder, all were kind to us. We were all specially pleased with the venerable George Bowen, who has been in Bombay forty-five years, and is at present editor of the *Bombay Guardian*, a weekly religious paper. He preaches constantly also, and is one of the saints on earth, so pure and spiritual is his life. When the time came for us to leave for Ellichpur, quite a number of friends met us at the station to bid us good-bye and God speed. All rejoiced that we had come, and many wanted us to remain in Bombay and work permanently. From this broken outline I have given, are you not surprised that we should have been received so kindly?

You are all desirous of knowing how we are impressed with what we have already seen of India. Often in America, when asked to speak of India, I said I preferred to wait five years before I attempted much on a subject so great. All I can say now is, "I see men as trees walking"—nothing is very clearly apprehended by me. From all that I had read in books, and from all that I had learned by personal contact and conversation with good men who had lived in India for years, I had very little idea of what I now see. It is a frequent remark, often repeated by the members of our party, "we never had any idea of what is here." Those who have lived here long say, in the most confident tone, "Well, you find it very different from anything you have expected." About all we can say is, *how strange!* Strange people, strangely dressed and undressed, strange language, strange habits of eating and living in general, strange government, strange religion, strange fruits and flowers, strange money, weights and measures, strange trees, shrubs and vines, all, literally all, is strange. As we walked along the street in Bombay, straining our eyes at all the strange life around us, the street cars came along, and I said,

"that looks like home;" and sure enough, when we got on one, there was the manufacturer's name, "J. M. Jones, Troy, N. Y." I afterwards learned that the street railway was owned and conducted exclusively by Americans, and I never saw anywhere as well conducted street-cars or such cheap fares. Yet Bombay is said to be to the interior, where we now are living, as New York or London is to Bombay, and from all I have yet seen, the comparison is true. The change is greater than words can express.

The most annoying, as well as most impressive habit of the people that has come to my notice by experience, is their utter lack of appreciation of the value of time and truthfulness. Day after day I was kept in Bombay attending to what seemed only the business of a few hours. But there was no hurrying, and I was simply told to be patient—one of the most difficult things to do at the only time it is of any value. Max Müller delivered a lecture in Cambridge this year to prove the truthful character of the Hindoo people, but I am sure he never would have selected such a subject if he had lived here for even a few days—the books to the contrary notwithstanding.

The most seriously depressing feature of this land is its idolatry. On every hand, and on every thing, the marks of this curse plainly appear. Two days after our arrival in Bombay the great Drevalee holidays, the beginning of the Hindoo year, commenced. They continued five days, and were formerly celebrated with human sacrifices. Before we left the city the greatest feast of the Mohammedan calendar was observed. It is called the Mohurrum, and it yearly causes great excitement throughout all India. It is kept in memory of the death of two of the grandsons of Mohammed. We saw some parts of this seldom witnessed now even by Mohammedans. I will not attempt any description of these at present. H Athen temples, ceremonies and customs met the eye wherever we look, and the thought that came and returned most frequently was, how shall we give all these millions the gospel—the only cure for all this curse of Satan?

We have all been here now three days, and it has rained nearly all the time since we came, a very unreasonable thing every body says. We all like our bungalow very