

Rev. W. E. Light
With the Editor's kind regards.

EXTRACTS FROM THREE SPEECHES

DELIVERED BY THE LATE

JOHN POYNDER, ESQ.,

AT THE

EAST INDIA HOUSE, IN THE YEARS 1830, 1836, AND 1839:

DEMONSTRATING THE

Direct Support and Encouragement given by the Company to

IDOLATRY.

TOGETHER WITH

EXTRACTS FROM OTHER SOURCES
ON THE SUBJECT OF IDOLATRY, AND THE INDIAN MUTINIES,
WITH REMARKS BY THE EDITOR.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

It having been suggested, through the medium of the public press, that it might be desirable at the present crisis, when everything connected with India excites so much interest, to republish a speech delivered by the late Mr. Poynder, at the East India House, in 1836, on the encouragement given by the authorities to the idolatrous practices of the natives of India, a near relative of the deceased has been induced to select such passages from this and two other speeches by Mr. Poynder on the same subject as appeared to him likely to be useful.

The immoral practices of the Hindoos are so revolting that it is impossible to do justice to this subject without entering into a detail which would render a work of this kind unfit for the general reader. The Editor has, therefore, cautiously avoided such detail, his object being to render these extracts suitable to all classes of readers.

The terrible calamities which have recently befallen our countrymen, with their wives and children, in the East, speak, trumpet-tongued, against the policy heretofore adopted by our Anglo-Indian Government. That unhallowed, short-sighted policy is the real cause of England's disasters.

It is important to take a review of our past career in India, or we may go on perpetuating the same offences, and thus render ourselves, as a nation, obnoxious to the same punishment.

It is one of the objects of this publication to show that national sins call down national judgments, and that if there be one sin which does this more than another, it is IDOLATRY.

Avarice, also, is a sin which is most odious in the sight of God, and which steels the heart against everything that is noble and generous. It will be seen that England has never yet faithfully fulfilled her mission: the love of money, rather than the love of souls, has been the mainspring of her policy and the ruling motive of her actions. The worshippers of Mammon seem to say, "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." It is observable that the same line of policy has been adopted towards the poor degraded, idolatrous natives of India and the poor degraded, idolatrous Romanists of this kingdom. The Church of Rome is a grossly idolatrous Church, debasing and enslaving her

adherents. To patronise and support such a Church is to support and encourage idolatry. The clergy of the Church of England and ultra-Liberal statesmen are entirely at issue upon this all-important point.

The long-protracted struggle between those who were for retaining the Antichristian abominations which have so long scandalized our Indian Empire, and those who were anxious to see them abolished, eventually led to an important change. The authorities, as long as they could, strenuously resisted all reform; but, owing to God's blessing on the energy and determination of those who were interested in the sacred cause of humanity, they were forced to give way. Much, however, remains to be done. These authorities have not yet entirely severed themselves from all connexion with idolatry and impurity, and until they do this, a heavy load of responsibility lies at their door.

Hitherto the proceedings of the ruling powers have been shrouded in obscurity. They have drawn largely upon the confidence and credulity of the public, which they have sadly abused. The time has at length arrived when the British public will no longer quietly submit to such treatment.

The object of the Editor has been to condense as much valuable matter as he could in a small compass. With this view he has not only abridged Mr. Poynder's three speeches, but he has also culled from various sources, information which he hopes will be useful, on the all-engrossing topic of our Indian policy, and the bitter fruit which that policy has yielded in the terrible revolt which has endangered the very existence of British rule in India.

There is another topic intimately connected with this, and equally endangering the prosperity of our country. Those who are sincerely attached to our Protestant Constitution in Church and State cannot but deplore the existence of Romanizing Tractarianism in the one and infidel Liberalism in the other. Owing to the progress which these formidable opponents of Protestant Christianity are making, it becomes necessary to fight the battle of the Reformation over again. The issue of this contest cannot be doubtful, since the truth must eventually prevail, when all idolatrous and Antichristian powers will be utterly destroyed, and the Redeemer's cause be signally triumphant. In the meantime, may we be found waiting "in humble and joyful hope for that glorious period when our Redeemer shall appear unto our complete salvation; when the last storm shall blow on the Church, when the last dart shall be thrown by the Wicked One, and the last enemy shall be destroyed."*

G. POYNDER.

* Bean's "Family Prayers."

Lee, Kent.

EXTRACTS FROM A SPEECH

Delivered by the late JOHN POYNDER, Esq., at a General Court of Proprietors of the East India Company, on Wednesday, Sept. 22, 1830; containing evidence in proof of the direct encouragement afforded by the Company to the licentious and sanguinary system of IDOLATRY.

MR. POYNDER, in the preface to his speech, observes: "If the East India Company can be shown to be openly and unnecessarily promoting the extension of idolatry, to the injury and depreciation of true religion, she has forfeited her trust, more signally and emphatically than she could have done by negligence or malversation in her pecuniary or commercial relations; precisely in the proportion that morals are of more importance than politics, and the interests of eternity superior to those of time."

The following is a copy of the Motion proposed by Mr. Poynder, which it was the object of the Address to advocate, viz.:—

"That this Court, taking into consideration the direct encouragement afforded to idolatry, and also to the licentiousness and bloodshed connected with idolatrous observances, by the collection of tribute from the worshippers and pilgrims at the temples of Juggernaut, at Gya, Allahabad, and elsewhere, both for the repair of those temples, and the maintenance of their priests and attendants,—recommends to the Honourable Court of Directors to take such measures as may have the effect of immediately directing the attention of the Indian Government to this subject, and of eventually removing such a reproach from a Christian empire."

ADDRESS, &c.

MR. POYNDER says:—"I invite attention to the Motion, the main object of which is to abrogate the collection of tribute, as affording the sanction and authority of a Christian Government to the popular idolatry, and encouraging the licentiousness and bloodshed inseparably connected with it.

"... Adverting to the Motion before us, as the text of my remarks,

I shall now endeavour to prove that licentiousness and bloodshed are invariably connected with the several idolatrous temples, where the tax is collected; and that its collection operates as a direct encouragement, on the part of our Christian Government, to idolatry in general, and to those impure and sanguinary practices in particular; while, so far from the revenue that is raised being exhausted by the objects to which it is professedly applied, a surplus of considerable magnitude accrues to the East India Company.

"And, first, I shall notice the abominations invariably found in connexion with all the idolatrous worship of India before I advert to the particular temples in question."

Mr. Poynder then proceeds to cite the testimony of the celebrated historian of British India, Mr. Mill, the Abbé Dubois, and Mr. Ward, in proof of the impurity and cruelty always accompanying idolatry. At page 12 he says:—"Mr. Ward's 'History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos,' has supplied me with much of the most valuable information."

Adverting to the general immorality of the temple worship, Mr. Ward says:—"Many of the practices in the presence of Hindoo idols, in the very midst of their worship, are so dreadfully obscene that I am persuaded even the lowest London mob would not suffer the actors to escape without marks of their disapprobation; and yet the Hindoos expect nothing less than heaven for these works of merit. A great number of the Hindoo saints live in a state of perpetual intoxication. . . . I have drawn away the veil from some of the scenes, yet the Christian public must give me credit respecting the rest; for they are so intolerably gross that they cannot be fully dragged into public view."

"In the year 1806," Mr. Ward says, "I was present at the worship of the Goddess Doorga, as performed at Calcutta. . . . The whole scene produced on my mind sensations of the greatest horror. . . . The reflection that I was standing in an idol temple, and that this immense multitude of rational and immortal creatures, capable of superior joys, were, in the very act of worship, perpetrating a crime of high treason against the God of Heaven, while they themselves believed they were performing an act of merit, excited ideas and feelings in my mind which time can never obliterate."

"Mr. Ward's entire account of the worship and festivals in honour of Krishnu is an awful exhibition of human depravity, in connexion with idolatrous observances." He says:—"The Hindoo is at once called to what he considers Divine worship, and to a licentious festival; no one imagining but that worship and adultery may be performed in the same hour."

Mr. Ward, in describing the religious festivals, says:—"What must be the state of morals in a country when its religious institutions and public shows, at which the whole population is present, thus sanctify vice, and carry the multitude into the very gulph of depravity and ruin!" Again, "When the crowd assemble before their temples, it is to enter upon orgies

which destroy every vestige of moral feeling and excite to every outrage upon virtue."

"How shall I describe the unutterable abominations connected with the popular superstition. I have witnessed scenes which can be clothed in no language; and have heard of other abominations practised in the midst of religious rites, and in the presence of the gods, which, if they could be described, would fill the whole Christian world with disgust and horror."

"Men are sufficiently corrupt by nature without any outward excitement to evil in the public festivals. . . . But what must be the moral state of that country where the sacred festivals, and the very forms of religion, lead men to every species of vice?"

"These festivals and public exhibitions excite universal attention; and absorb, for weeks together, almost the whole of the public conversation: and such is the enthusiasm with which they are hailed, that the whole country seems to be thrown into a ferment: health, property, time, business, everything is sacrificed to them. In this manner are the people prepared to receive impressions from their national institutions. If these institutions were favourable to virtue the effects would be most happy; but as in addition to their fascination they are exceedingly calculated to corrupt the mind, the most dreadful consequences follow; and vice, like a mighty torrent, flows through the Plains of Bengal with the force of the flood-tide of the Ganges, carrying along with it young and old, the learned and the ignorant, rich and poor, all castes and descriptions of people, into an awful eternity! In short, the characters of the gods, and the licentiousness which prevails at their festivals, and abounds in their popular works, with the enervating nature of the climate, have made the Hindoos the most effeminate and corrupt people on earth. . . ."

"Let every conscientious Christian fairly consider whether a great degree of criminality does not attach to the person who in any way countenances idolatry. I am not ashamed to confess that *I fear more, for the continuance of the British power in India, from the encouragement which Englishmen have given to the idolatry of the Hindoos, than from any other quarter whatever.*

"Though it has been said that the Hindoos are a moral and comparatively an honest people, there needs no attempt to prove to persons engaged in business in India that such an assertion is as far from truth as the distance between the Poles. Every one who has been obliged to employ Hindoos has had the most mortifying proofs, that if the vices of lying, deceit, dishonesty, and impurity, can degrade a people, then the Hindoos have sunk to the utmost depths of human depravity. Whole pages might be written on this painful subject, till the reader was perfectly nauseated with the picture of their disgusting vices."

"The impurity of the conversation and manners of the Hindoos is so much dreaded by Europeans that they tremble for the morals of their children, and consider their removal to Europe, however painful such a

separation may be to the mind of a parent, as absolutely necessary to prevent their ruin. In the capacity of a servant the wife or widow of an English soldier is considered as an angel compared with a native woman. Lying is universally practised. . . .

'Impurity and cruelty have been, in all ages, the prominent features of every form of Pagan superstition; but nowhere have these features presented a more disgusting and horrible appearance than among the Hindoos.'

"In concluding my extracts from Mr. Ward I would notice his view of the woful expenditure of human life in India by means of the several idolatrous observances, and the pilgrimages connected with them:—

"I have ventured (says he) on an estimate of the number of Hindoos who annually perish, the victims of the Brahminical religion, and have supposed that they cannot amount to less than 10,500!'

"In further proof that bloodshed is inseparable from the whole of the temple worship—which, it will be remembered, is one branch of my argument, and is adduced by me as a reason against British connexion with such a system—I advert to the painful and sanguinary austerities of the Devotees, invariably observed at all the great festivals of every temple. The Abbé Dubois describes very fully the self-inflicted tortures and painful mutilations which invariably attend these ceremonies. At the head of these he enumerates the prostration of victims under the processional car during its progress—a sacrifice which, he says, is hailed by the spectators as the perfection of devotion. He then notices the suspension of worshippers in the air by means of a pulley, after a hook has been driven into their backs—a most painful and protracted, and often a mortal species of torture.

"It is hardly necessary (says the Abbé) to add, that in no instance do the corrupt and vicious Brahmins take any share themselves in those austerities which they prescribe as essential to the salvation of their deluded followers.' . . .

"The Indians appear to surpass the different nations of the earth, whether ancient or modern, by the unbounded depravity which is found in some of their religious rites.'"

At page 42 Mr. Poynder calls upon the India Company to refuse to participate in the fruits of such pollution. He says,—"If you will do but little to extend the influence of your own holy faith, at least do nothing which shall positively obstruct its progress, and give occasion to idolaters to affirm, that when the meanest of your own interests are in question you are not nice in the means of advancing them."

Mr. Poynder then proceeds "to particularise each of the principal temples from which we derive tribute, as more completely illustrative of the encouragement afforded by Great Britain to licentiousness and bloodshed."

"At the head of all the idolatrous temples in the world stands that of Juggernaut; or, as the name imports, of 'the Lord of the World'; for such is the impious title by which this monstrous idol is made to usurp the authority of the Supreme Being."

In reference to the revenue derived from this polluted source, the conduct of the Indian Board of Control appears to have been highly culpable. Mr. Poynder observes:—"It was reserved for an inconsiderable number of politicians, appointed as Commissioners for the affairs of India, to affix the broad seal of their authority for the continued perpetration of offences virtually amounting to murder; and that under the abused name of religion, and in spite of the just indignation, and recorded votes, both of the Directors and Proprietors of the East India Company!"

At p. 56 the evidence of Dr. Buchanan is brought forward, who, after adverting to some of the disgusting immoralities of this degraded people, says:—"I have seen Juggernaut. No record of ancient or modern history can give, I think, an adequate idea of the valley of death. The idol has been justly considered as the Moloch of the present age, for the sacrifices offered to him, by self-devotement, are not less criminal, perhaps not less numerous, than those of the Moloch of Canaan. As other temples are usually adorned with figures, emblematical of their religion, so Juggernaut has representations, numerous and varied, of that vice which constitutes the essence of *his* worship. . . . The characteristics of Moloch's worship are obscenity and blood."

Dr. Buchanan, in a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, on July 1, 1810, observes:—"Turpitude and crime are found in the ignorant and idolatrous nations of the present day. I resided many years in the heathen world, and was satisfied that the character of their idolatry corresponded with that which is given in the Scriptures. I resolved, however, to visit the chief seat of the Hindoo religion, for which purpose I made a journey to the great Temple of Juggernaut, which is to the Hindoos what Mecca is to the Mohammedans, the stronghold and fountain-head of their idolatry. . . . Many of the pilgrims die by the way, and their bodies generally remain unburied, so that the road to Juggernaut may be known, for the last fifty miles, by the human bones which are strewn in the way. On the great day of the festival the idol was brought out amidst the acclamations of hundreds of thousands of his worshippers. He was seated on a lofty throne, and surrounded by his priests. . . . Thus the worship of the idol began. It had the two characters of cruelty and impurity. Men and women devoted themselves to death before Moloch. I myself beheld the libations of human blood; and I give you this record, because I witnessed the fact.

"These idolaters are our own subjects; and every man who can afford it is obliged to pay a tribute to the English Government for leave to worship the idol. This is called the Revenue of the Temple; and a civil officer, supported by a military force, is appointed to collect the tax. Other temples in Hindostan have long been considered as a legitimate source of a similar revenue. This scene is, indeed, remote; but, I repeat it, these are our own subjects, and we have it in our power to redress the evil. There is a time appointed by the Divine Providence (according to the prophetic record) to

every nation for its melioration and felicity. Such a time came to our nation when the light of Christianity visited it; for our altars were once polluted by human sacrifices. The same happiness, we would hope, is now come for India; for what can be compared to the disgrace of regulating by a Christian law the bloody and obscene rites of Juggernaut?"

In a sermon preached by Dr. Buchanan before the Church Missionary Society, on the 12th of June, 1810, he says:—"I have seen the darkness which exists in the heathen world; and it is not easy to describe it. No man can know what it is who has not seen it. I have been in what the Scripture calls 'the chamber of imagery,' and have witnessed the enormity of pagan idolatry in all its turpitude and bloodshed. I can now better understand these words of Scripture, 'the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.' I have seen the libations of human blood offered to the Moloch of the heathen world. But the particulars of these scenes cannot be rehearsed before a Christian assembly. It may suffice to observe that the two prominent characters of idolatry are the same which the Scriptures describe—cruelty and lasciviousness, blood and impurity. The fountain-head of this superstition in India is the Temple of Juggernaut."

At p. 65 the statement of another eye-witness is adduced, namely, Colonel Phipps, of the 13th Bengal Native Infantry. After alluding to what he had seen on the walls of the temple, and at the idol Juggernaut, he emphatically adds:—"A Christian is almost led to think that it was an attempt to see how low idolatry could debase the human mind." Colonel Phipps also observes:—"The attendants of the idol are fond of boasting of the efficient support which they receive from rulers whose own religion teaches them to abhor idolatry."

At p. 71 an extract is given from one of the missionaries on the Balasore Station. The writer says:—"On the piece of ground where I have just built my bungalow, close to the Juggernaut road, I counted upwards of thirty skulls within half an acre. This, however, it must be remembered, is nothing to be compared with the Golgotha, or place where the dead are usually thrown. I have several times passed over this piece of ground; it is not a furlong from our house, and the skulls and bones exceed calculation. The fact of dogs, jackals, and vultures, living on human prey, is familiar to every inhabitant of Orissa; and I apprehend that in the neighbourhood of Juggernaut they live on little else."

At p. 84, an extract is given from a letter addressed to Mr. Poynder, by a clergyman of the Church of England, formerly a resident in India. The writer says:—"My firm opinion is that the raising a revenue, either for State purposes, or for those to which the Juggernaut Tax is applied, is an indirect, though powerful encouragement to idolatrous practices of the worst description, and to misery almost unparalleled, and it is, therefore, to be entirely deprecated in a Christian Government."

Another extract is furnished at p. 86, from the letter of a missionary,

who says:—"I certainly think with Mr. Ward, that the British power has more to fear from its connexion with idolatry in this country than from anything else."

Another missionary states:—"It is one of the most astonishing facts in modern history that a high-spirited, professedly Christian Government, celebrated for the wisdom of its councils and the benevolence of its proceedings, should lend its patronage and prostitute its power for the support of the most degrading, most cruel, and most obscene system of idolatry that ever disgraced mankind; and not only lend its power and influence for its support and splendour, but condescend to fatten on the spoil, and sell its dignity for a few rupees! I cannot help feeling indignant at the conduct of my countrymen who are connected with the worship of Juggernaut. Here we have a high-minded English gentleman, who would challenge and shoot a man for the least expression derogatory to an imaginary honour, stooping to be a cartwright or carbuilder for an ugly wooden idol, and superintending the payment of the Brahmins' food and the hiring of prostitutes for their service. There is another, standing at the gateway and taking toll from the poor wretches the victims of the Company's and the Pundas' duplicity, and offering arguments to prove that it does no harm. It will scarcely be believed that a gentleman high in the service of the Company is to be seen as busy as possible conducting, with apparent pleasure, the abominable idolatries, and, waving his cap, encouraging the car-drawers to proceed. These gentlemen deserve to have their names published to the world, so that when they return to England to enjoy their ill-gotten gains their countrymen may treat them as their conduct deserves. The natives glory in this dereliction of Christian principle, and they loudly proclaim, How the Company honours Juggernaut!

" . . . Oh, that the day may soon arrive when some powerful friend to the interests of humanity shall attend and investigate the whole of this idolatrous business! Then may we hope for our testimony to be fully substantiated, and the Government to blush at having supported this wickedness so long."

At p. 112, the following extract is given from the "Friend of India:—"The God of truth seems to have ordained that in the very nature of things idol-worship should contain within itself the seeds of its own decay; and to attempt to counteract this natural tendency, and to support idolatry by virtue and wisdom, the growth of Christianity, seems an act which, if continued, would make us fear more for the British empire in India than from the combination of all its enemies."

Alluding to the active support of idolatrous worship by Great Britain, and the profits arising from this polluted source at other places besides Juggernaut, such as Gya, Allahabad, and Tripetty, Mr. Poynder observes:—"It must assuredly be admitted that the consideration of our unhallowed gains from these known and unknown sources of iniquity assumes an aspect that is truly appalling."

At p. 134, he says:—"The argument drawn from treaties by the objectors of my Motion, if it prove anything for them, must prove by far too much; because, upon this principle, they must inevitably shut the door upon Christianity itself for all future time; and it is clear that if the existing treaties could admit of the construction for which they contend, the greatest violence has already been done to Pagan India by the inculcation of our common Christianity. If it can once be held by the lawyers of the East India Company, that by all or any of our treaties with the natives Great Britain stands pledged to anything more than to a neutral endurance of existing institutions (and that only till mental and moral instruction shall bring about a better state of things), she is from that moment the avowed patron of idolatry, and an open apostate from the faith of her own Apostolic Church. The mother country has, I contend, conceded no such power to her military chiefs; nor have they, in fact, ever exercised or desired to exercise it. The utmost which they have done or could do, and that only for the present exigency, has been to assure the natives of a tolerant protection for their own (however erroneous) system, till some other men than conquerors, or rather till the grace of God, through their instrumentality, might happily effect, by the influence of milder and more pacific arguments than soldiers use, a moral and spiritual change in the native mind itself; but to imagine for an instant that in the successive acquisitions of our Oriental possessions we have ever authorised, or that our military agents have ever dreamt that they were authorised, to rivet the chains of ignorance, superstition, and bloodshed, for all future time, by guaranteeing the express protection of the British arms and influence to such abominations, and by securing a perpetual revenue from them for ourselves, would be to suppose the renunciation of the religion of the Church of England as no better in itself and no more worthy of our support than the religion of heathenism.

"Let the late Mr. Grant be heard on this subject, than whom no man better knew what pledges Great Britain actually had given, or ought to have given, to her Indian subjects:—

"Are we bound for ever (says he) to preserve all the enormities in the Hindoo system? Have we become the guardians of every monstrous principle and practice which it contains? Are we pledged to support, for all generations, by the authority of our Government and the power of our arms, the miseries which ignorance and knavery have so long entailed upon a large portion of the human race? Is this the part which a free, a humane, and an enlightened people—a nation itself professing principles diametrically opposite to those in question—has engaged to act towards its own subjects? It would be too absurd and extravagant to maintain that any engagement of this kind exists—that Great Britain is under any obligation, direct or implied, to uphold errors and usages, gross and fundamental, subversive of the first principles of reason, morality, and religion.

"Shall we be, in all time to come, as we hitherto have been, passive spectators of so much unnatural wickedness? It may, indeed, well appear

surprising that, in the long period during which we have held these territories, we have made no serious attempt to recal the Hindoos to the dictates of truth and morality. This is a mortifying proof how little it has been considered that the ends of Government and the good of society have an inseparable connexion with right principles. We have been satisfied with the apparent submissiveness of this people, and have attended chiefly to the maintenance of our authority over the country, and the augmentation of our commerce and revenues; but have never, with a view to the promotion of their happiness, looked thoroughly into their internal state."—*Printed by the House of Commons in the year 1813.*

"If, indeed, any doubt could exist on this point, the public pledge which was given, on the last renewal of the Company's Charter, by the House of Commons, would speedily remove it, for it was then unanimously resolved by the whole House, in Committee, 'That it is the peculiar and bounden duty of the Legislature to promote, by all just and prudent means, the interest and happiness of the inhabitants of the British dominions in India; and that for these ends, such measures ought to be adopted as may gradually tend to their advancement in useful knowledge, and to their religious and moral improvement.'

"Now it is obvious, that if Great Britain can be shown, by the treaties in question, to have in any way become a party to the support of the reigning idolatry, from which she is to pay herself as she can, the vote of the House of Commons is, in that case, so much wind; while, if it shall appear, as I contend it must, that we have made no such compact with Idolatry, we have really done nothing to prevent that 'religious and moral improvement,' to which the British Parliament has pledged itself and the nation; and which it has solemnly declared to be for the 'interest and happiness of the inhabitants of the British dominions in India.'

"And here, Sir, I am reminded of what Mr. Brougham has recently observed in the House of Commons, on the subject of certain other treaties, which—like the treaties of the East—were supposed to stand in the way of the abolition of slavery in the West Indies.*

"But I am told,' said he, 'there are treaties existing which prevent the completion of my hopes. Upon this subject, the argument founded upon treaties has always been used, from the period when a blood-stained treaty gave us, in exchange for the glory of Blenheim, an increased share in the unhallowed trade of Africa. The same argument, founded upon public treaties, was employed, until the people's indignation awoke, and descended in thunder, which smote that horrid trade, and scattered its guilty gains to the wind. The country is again awake, and I trust that timely attention to its voice may avert from this country a far more terrible and miserable judgment of God.'—*Mr. Brougham's Speech on Slavery in the West Indies, House of Commons, July 13, 1830.*"

* The plea set up on the ground of treaties for perpetuating what is wrong in the East and West Indies, may remind us of the plea set up for continuing the Maynooth Grant.
—ED.

Mr. Poynder proceeds to expose the pretended fears of those alarmists who evince, he says, a "determination to touch no existing abuse of whatever description, for with them the Company is all perfection. . . . It is high time that these Anglo-Indians, whose authority is estimated at so high a rate by many, should be informed by the British and Christian public, that if *they* cannot appreciate the high designs for which it has pleased Almighty God to commit to our enlightened and highly-favoured country the present and future destinies of above a hundred millions of people (1830), there are those among us who better understand their own responsibility; as believing that pecuniary profit, and secular patronage, are objects of a very secondary and subordinate character—legitimate, indeed, so long as they keep their place, and are used in reference to higher and more honourable ends—but base and unworthy to the last degree, if they deviate from their proper purpose, and become the chief, or only end of action, either in corporate bodies or private individuals.

"Another objection suggests itself in the shape of the proposed measure being an invasion of religious prejudices. But the short answer to this is, that the Motion does not seek to invade the existing religion, bad as I have proved it to be; but only seeks to remove the reproach of a Christian country converting those very prejudices into objects of gain; while, in point of fact, the whole history of our connexion with India is necessarily one continued series of invasion of native prejudice and error, in every case where the best interests of India, and the manifest honour of England, have required our interference. . . . What shall be said of the conduct of those nominal Christians at home, who under the specious pretext of respecting the religious opinions of the heathens, would oppose the express revelation of God, and perpetuate the pollutions of Idolatry? And what of the affected terrors of those alarmists, who would have us shrink from an acknowledged duty, under the operation of a dishonourable fear?

—Our doubts are traitors;
Which make us lose the good we oft might win,
By fearing to attempt.—

"Let us here, as in the case of suttees, only once surmount the difficulty of daring to become a blessing to the people we govern, and they will be blessed as they have never been before; because we have never yet intended to benefit them in proportion to the amount of their necessity, and the extent of our capacity.

"Upon the whole, then, I feel myself fully justified in contending, that the abominations I have endeavoured to expose, contain in them one prominent feature of evil, beyond even the atrocious case of widow-burning itself; namely, the profit which I have proved to accrue to the Company. In the other evil, indefensible as it was, the iniquitous Brahmins alone were profited by the murders which they fomented—the Company was clear from that innocent blood; but here the Company is at once a partaker in the crime, and a partner in the profits. In the other

case, the Company had only to bear the guilt and odium of permitting what they might always have prevented; in this, they at once lie under the double responsibility of mixing themselves up, as a Christian Government, with Idolatry and its observances; while, at the same time, they participate in all the profits of the unhallowed connexion.

"To this must be further added the inconceivable amount of moral profligacy which is involved in these practices; and which thus receives the sanction of the Company's influence, to an extent of which the case of the suttees furnishes no parallel example. There, indefensible as was the practice itself, it was not found in connexion with all that is execrable and loathsome in vice and profligacy; and, therefore, the same extent of moral evil did not, in that instance, receive the sanction, or boast the authority, of a Christian Government—a Government which, with almost incredible inconsistency, is now found, with one hand, bestowing the benefits of her own ecclesiastical establishment upon India at large; and, with the other, actually building and repairing idolatrous temples, hiring prostitutes for their supply, and fostering a system of lust and pollution which is absolutely without an example in the history of the Christian world."

EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECH

Of the late JOHN POYNDER, ESQ., at a General Court of Proprietors of the East India Company, on the 21st of December, 1836, upon a Motion for carrying into effect the Letter of the Court of Directors, of the 20th of February, 1833, which ordered the withdrawal of British patronage and support from the worship and service of Idolatry, and the extinction of all Taxation arising from the Superstitions of Heathenism.

"Be not ye therefore partakers with them. . . . Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."—EPH. v. 7, 11.

SPEECH, &c.

MR. CHAIRMAN,—I beg leave, in pursuance of previous notice, to move,—"That, adverting to the despatch of the Court of Directors, dated the 20th of February, 1833, having for its object the withdrawal of the encouragement afforded by Great Britain to the idolatrous worship of India, and also the relinquishment of the revenue hitherto derived from such source; which object does not yet appear to have been accomplished; this Court deems it necessary to recommend to the Court of Directors to adopt such further

measures upon the subject, as in their judgments may appear to be most expedient."

... It is now six years past that I moved for the withdrawal of this Company from all participation in the revenue arising from Indian idolatry; on which occasion I went more fully into the moral pollutions and sanguinary character of that idolatry, than can at present be necessary. I shall now, therefore, merely advert to the several authorities which I then produced, as attesting both the evil itself, and suggesting the practicable remedy, premising only that the real question, both on this last occasion, and at present, is, not whether the temple worship shall be abolished, but whether the temple tribute shall be abandoned, as the taxation of heathen idolaters by British Christians; a distinction to which I earnestly request the attention of every hearer. . . .

Mr. Grant observes, on the impurity of idolatry:—

"The feature by which the Hindoo deities are, above all, distinguished, is the abandoned wickedness of their divinities, Brahma, Vishnow, Maladeo, and all the rest. The most enormous impurities, the most villanous frauds and impostures, the most detestable cruelties and injustice, the most filthy and abominable conceits, every corrupt excess and indulgence, are presented to us in their histories, varied in a thousand forms." . . .

Mr. Harington, in writing to Mr. Peggs, says:—

"A Christian Government ought not to derive a revenue from the allowance of this sin.

"It is evidently indecorous and inconsistent that the Government of a nation professing Christianity should participate in the offerings of heathen superstition and idolatry."

Permit me here to say a word on the date of the tax. It has now existed thirty years, having been first levied in 1806. Mr. Udny, the Member of Council, strenuously opposed it. His recorded opinion is, "The making provision by law for superintending the temple, and paying its officers, will operate to sanction and perpetuate a system of gross idolatry, which Government is neither bound, nor is it becoming, to do. I would leave the temple, and its whole economy, exclusively to the direction and management of its own officers, allowing them to collect the regular fees they have been accustomed to do, and securing the pilgrims against all vexation from the extortion and oppression of those officers." This valuable recommendation was despised, and so was the concurrent advice of that enlightened statesman, the Marquis of Wellesley, who absolutely refused to sanction this odious impost, and nobly left India without doing so. But the love of gold was too strong, and the article loved was too sweet; for, as Shakspeare has said,—

"Believe it—we'll do anything for gold!"

Mr. Warden's Minute of Council, as one of its members, is,— "I again record my opinion that all the sanguinary customs of the Hindoos might be

prohibited, without affecting either the security or popularity of our supremacy."

The Abbé Dubois observes,— "I have never beheld an Indian religious procession, without its presenting me with an image of hell."

Mr. Chaplin (formerly Commissioner in the Deccan), whose object is to keep things as they are, by imputing fanaticism, enthusiasm, and Methodism, to all who oppose idolatrous taxation, says,— "The proposition to abolish the pilgrim-tax appears to me too extravagant to have been entertained for a moment by any but weak-minded zealots, whose next step would be to overthrow all the Hindoo temples, and to erect Methodist conventicles on their ruins." . . .

But Mr. Chaplin proceeds to assert that this country is pledged to keep up idolatry, in spite of her own faith. "The Government," says he, "is pledged to support the temples and religious institutions of the people which have always been upheld by former rulers; but the performance of this obligation will be rendered difficult, if we are to sacrifice to false ideas of Christian delicacy so fair and appropriate a source of revenue."

The English of all which is, that revenue must be had, at all events; so that, according to this witness, when Christianity and idolatry are placed in apposition, "no false ideas of Christian delicacy" are to be sacrificed to the profits of heathenism! The religion of Jesus must bow to the crescent of an impostor, and defer to the paramount claims of "them that are no gods, that have eyes and see not, and ears that hear not, neither is there any breath in their nostrils!"

. . . The truth is, the whole system descends in a direct line from the heathen governments, which we supplanted, and which, of course, never intended to suppress superstition, though they taxed it; all which was perfectly consistent in a heathen government; but we continue the tax, because it is profitable, and not as intending prohibition which, in our Christian Government, is the height of inconsistency and sin.

. . . Mr. Dalzell, of the Madras service, says:—

"The imposition of taxes by us upon the observance of superstitious and idolatrous rites, appears obviously adapted to insure the belief, either that we approve of those rites, and therefore fix a price upon their observance; or that, although we really despise them, we are still content to render the erroneous bias of the people subservient to the purpose of drawing money into our treasury. The rise, extension, and permanence of our dominion in India are fitted to impress our native subjects with a high reverence for our character; and this consideration heightens our obligation scrupulously to avoid any measures which tend to lower us in their estimation, and to impair our capacity of usefulness to them by bringing the sincerity of our conduct into suspicion, or which are suited to rivet the chains of superstition, by deluding them into the opinion that we view favourably those pernicious errors which, as Christians, we cannot but desire to see dispelled by the light of truth and the verities of a pure faith. I conceive the taxes

on pilgrims might be abolished with perfect safety, and I consider that it is a duty incumbent upon us to discontinue them, inasmuch as their existence tends to identify us with idolatry, by denoting, if not a positive approbation of its rites, yet such an indifference to the moral evil inherent in them as is neither required nor justified by the most ample toleration. Pilgrims, I presume, would be still at liberty to present their spontaneous offerings to the idols of their worship."

The Committee of the House of Commons, after this examination of evidence being informed that the Directors had the subject under full consideration, so reported to the House, in consequence of which, Parliament adopted no decision, but, with its usual wisdom, left it entirely to the Directors to provide the proper remedy; and in six months from that time the Court issued the important despatch of the 20th of February, 1833, a document which, whether from its profound reasoning or the conclusion adopted as the result, I must be permitted to characterize as one of the most able and valuable State Papers which ever came under my notice.

The Directors' despatch remarks that Government is bound to provide a police sufficient to enforce order, and ensure safety at all religious festivals, as essential to toleration, which is no act of favour or friendship to the worship, and only simple justice to the worshippers—but beyond civil protection, nothing enjoins us to proceed—we ought not to take part in the celebration nor assist in the preparations, nor afford it such support as shall accredit it with the people, or prevent its expiring from neglect or accident. However modified, the essential character of the heathen rites is unchanged; they are opposed to the precepts and spirit of Christianity, and even of natural religion, which, however, is no reason for prohibiting them by law. . . . But a Government (they add) which believes those rites to be deeply erroneous and civilly productive of much evil, is not obliged, nor at liberty, to shew them any positive sanction or encouragement. A pilgrim-tax, to defray the charge of the police to protect the pilgrims, should merely meet the expenses incurred . . . but the tax nowhere exists in this simple form; for instance, the revenue being much beyond what is required for the police force, the surplus is applied to the shrines, idols, and temples, and in supporting the priests, and others, attached. At Juggernaut, not only a large portion of the entire revenue, but a sum much larger than the whole amount of the pilgrim-tax, is so applied. This is far beyond any want of a local police, and, instead of our being mere conservators of the peace, we are become the chief agents in upholding an idol establishment. Here is an end of all mere neutrality. But worse,—this mixes up the Government with the interior concerns of the idol establishment. . . . Such arrangements are not only wrong in principle, but tend to injurious consequences, as exhibiting the British power in close connexion with unhappy and debasing superstitions, which inspire the people with a belief, either that we admit the Divine origin of those superstitions, or, at least, ascribe to them some peculiar and venerable

authority. How can we make a profit of practices whose existence we deplore, and of tenets which we wholly disapprove? . . . As a general question, the raising a surplus revenue by a pilgrim-tax must, in many ways, lead to the promotion and encouragement of the superstition out of which the tax is derived. First, it gives the Government an interest in the progress and extension of idolatry. Secondly, it furnishes to the Government, and those employed in the levy, a perpetual inducement to increase the income of the temple, and, therefore, to attract as many pilgrims as possible. . . . On the whole (say the Directors), the principles of toleration do not require them to promote the growth and popularity of superstitions deplored by every rational and religious mind; and therefore they hold that any system which directly connects the pecuniary interests of the State with the extension of such superstitions is objectionable, and ought to terminate. The pilgrim-hunters, employed to travel throughout India, to entice the pilgrims to the temples, receive a fee from every pilgrim they persuade. They, therefore, have a direct interest in enticing as many as possible, and they discharge their vocation with astonishing industry, dexterity, and success. . . . The pilgrim-hunters are excited and quickened by the known good faith of Government in levying and paying their fees. Thus the credit and authority of Government are perverted to the support of a manifest and revolting abuse. In proof that the Government makes itself a party to the ceremonies of Juggernaut, the most gorgeous decorations of the cars consist in broad-cloths directly supplied from our own warehouses. . . . It naturally forms matter of offence to the opponents of the pilgrim-tax, that we should thus consent to dress up the idol equipage with our own hands. For these reasons, all these practices should be abrogated; and on the whole, we think (say the Directors) that the pilgrim-tax should be extinguished altogether. . . . The Directors adduce the important evidence of Mr. Stirling. "It has always (he says) appeared to me, that if we abolish the tax at Juggernaut, throw down the barriers encircling the town, and withdraw from the system of patronage, interference, and regulation unavoidably resulting, the certain consequence would be a gradual decline of the sanctity of the temple, and the cessation of its peculiar fame and attraction as a place of religious resort. . . . Doubtless, under the new system, matters would not be so well managed as at present—numerous abuses and gross irregularities would prevail, and the whole concern would gradually sink into neglect and disrepute; but for this result the British Government would not be responsible, and assuredly it is not one which we should have any occasion to regret." The Directors add, that they "do not intend to prescribe a rule which the Government abroad is instantly, and without respect of circumstances, to carry into accomplishment:"—but neither have I, nor others, required them so to act; what we have required is—that three whole years and upwards should not pass without redress, while that Government itself thought five months too long to have its own orders slighted by the officers of the three

Presidencies. . . . The Directors then suggest for consideration "the possible expediency of commencing with some one of the great superstitious establishments, and so extending the improvement to the rest, in the event of the complete success of the first experiment." But where, I ask, has this experiment been attempted? It will immediately appear that the greatest of them all is, down to the last despatch, as rampant as ever. The Directors then "leave all to the judgment and experience of the Governor-General, persuaded that he will carry these views into effect with all prudent and practicable expedition."

I now come to my proofs, that nothing effectual has been done in the three last years.

The first is from an individual of high rank and authority, written from Juggernaut, and dated June 4, 1835—two years after the above despatch had been received in India—"I have visited the valley of death—I have seen the den of darkness—Juggernaut has been trodden by these feet, and seen with these eyes, after thirty or forty years hearing and reading about it. Oh, Buchanan! How well do I remember your pious indignation when, nearly thirty years since, you visited this foul and horrible scene! My soul is moved within me even to trembling. The dread pagoda is situated in the vicinity of this village, called Pooree, of which the narrow streets and wretched abodes are only emblems of the moral ruin and misery it diffuses. A town of 50,000 souls is held together by the direst superstition—no trade but sin, no art but delusion and lies, no bond of union but communion in idolatry. Nothing has yet been done to abolish these atrocities. . . . The horrors are unutterable. . . ." Such is Juggernaut! Dr. Buchanan's description is most true. Cruelty, lust, oppression, disease, famine, death, follow in its train. . . . In another letter of the same date, the same writer says,—“The horrors of the pilgrim-tax still linger in existence, though condemned from home, and impose yearly on 200,000 travellers the risk of death to one-third of the aggregate pilgrims.” The same excellent and estimable informant, in a letter to a mutual friend, writes,—“You may tell Mr. Poynder, that nothing has yet been done, that I know of, about the pilgrim-tax; the rupees are so much thought of.”

Letter from the Rev. —, dated Cuttack, 8th July, 1830—two years from the receipt of the Directors' despatch—"The return of Rutt Jattrā, or Car Festival of Juggernaut, which will be celebrated three days hence, reminds us that all the shame and guilt of a Christian Government supporting and cherishing idolatrous rites continue to be persisted in, notwithstanding the noble expression which the Court of Directors gave of their abhorrence of such a course in their despatch of the 20th February, 1833. The Indian Government has left the whole business just where it was. It might have been supposed its members would be glad of the permission to wash their hands of the pollutions of heathenism; but, no! they are content to remain providers for the gods. When we have looked on, as hundreds of thousands of our fellow-men were bowing down before

the shapeless trunk of Juggernaut, and rending the air with their shouts, we have been oppressed with shame. It has been next to impossible to believe the fact that was before our eyes, that such multitudes were capable of the deep degradation we were looking on. But the shame has increased when we consider the part that is borne by our countrymen, at the headquarters of this abomination. . . . It is sorrow enough that idolatry and its concomitant evils should exist; but it is more than sorrow, it is iniquity that they should be prolonged, and increased by men, who profess to know God, and to serve Him. We are at a loss to conceive what it is that induces Government so long to disregard the positive injunctions of the home authorities. We trust it is not consideration for the revenue that is raised by the pilgrim-tax, for the Government must be poor indeed—not in money, but in character—if it avows its continuance of a great and heinous immorality, for sordid gain."

The following was lately addressed to me by the Rev. —, a missionary. " . . . It is most fervently to be wished that all interference on the part of Government with the idolatrous worship of the Hindoos, should be withdrawn, as I know these things often lead them to imagine that their governors approve of, and patronise their superstitions, and the Brahmins endeavour to make the people believe this is the case. Immense numbers of Hindoo temples in one part of the country are now lying in ruins, and in many places the idols that were once worshipped in them are prostrate and broken within them; were Government support withdrawn from those still frequented, and the Brahmins left to manage the endowments of those temples among themselves, I have very little doubt but that those which remain would soon fall into the same state of decay. I consider the countenance and support afforded by Government one of the main props of superstition and idolatry in India."

As to the support afforded to idolatry by the Indian Government, the Rev. —, a missionary, writes to me. " . . . Let the measures which have been sanctioned at home be carried into effect in India; let that neutrality, which should never have been departed from, be maintained; let the lands and endowments of the temples be committed to the Brahmins and to the idolaters themselves; let all Government interference, support, and patronage be withdrawn; then, should idolatry not fall into decay, and should the Christian religion not make greater progress, our Indian rule will, at least, be delivered from the heaviest guilt which a Christian Government can incur, and our nation be relieved from a curse, which must unquestionably rest upon it. . . . "

From a missionary lately at Bangalore, but now in this country: "So long as a professedly Christian Government gives public patronage and support to idolatry; so long as the Brahmins are able to reply to us, 'Does not the Government support this temple, and these priests, and dancing women, and the whole system of worship? Are they not paid their monthly allowance out of the public revenue? Do not European gentlemen

encourage these ceremonies, and make presents to the idol, and often fall down and worship? Who are you that come here to question the truth of our religion?"—so long as European magistrates are obliged to be present at the festivals and spread the golden cloth over the image, as the representatives of the State, and European officers are obliged to salute the abominable thing, and European functionaries are obliged to collect the wages of iniquity,—the curse of the Almighty rests upon India, an invincible barrier is raised against the progress of the Gospel and the diffusion of truth, and a burden of uncanceled guilt lies upon the Government and people of Great Britain. Imagine what was our delight when, in a late dispatch of the Court of Directors, it was decreed that throughout India the pilgrim-tax was to be abolished; that the infamous connexion of the Government with idolatry was to cease; that Hindooism was henceforth to be left to its own endowments and resources; that a neutrality, which ought never to have been departed from, was to be maintained, and that public functionaries were no longer to be rendered the ministers of Baal. As cold water to a thirsty soul, so was this good news from a far country to us. But how have these hopes been realized? Nearly four years have passed since the emancipation of the State from the thralldom of idolatry here has been determined, and what has been done to fulfil the wishes of the Government at home? Information has been called for upon the point. Returns have been sent for to the collectors and magistrates, and this measure, so full of grace to India, is, after all, suspended upon the report which they may choose to make. To whose hands, then, has this great and important subject been committed? To the hands of men who have a percentage upon all the taxes that are collected. To men, some of whom have declared that the conversion of Hindoo females to Christianity is a crime of the greatest enormity, and ought to be punished accordingly. To men, some of whom have sent forth the Brahmins and the underlings of Government to create a cabal against this measure, to alarm the people with the gross misrepresentation that the Government was about to establish Christianity by force, and to make an uproar through the province, in order that they might have a pretext for resisting the measure altogether, giving it as their opinion that the very proposal would raise an insurrection throughout the country."

I think it right to add that this writer is well known to me, and is a minister of the Gospel, of the highest possible character and talent, and one to whom India has been eminently indebted. His reasoning is able and conclusive.

In further proof of the grossness of the idolatry, another missionary writes, under date of the 19th of June, 1835,—about two years from the receipt of the dispatch:—

"... If any beings were ever under strong delusion, Hindoos are. They persuade themselves, contrary to the evidence of their senses, and while they see 500 men pulling with all their might to move the car, that it moves of its own accord. But this is not more absurd than their contending

that he (Juggernaut) ascends the car himself. This year I saw the block taken to his throne. It was a sight sufficient to excite laughter in the most serious—some pulling, some pushing, and others fanning the ugly block, just as children of five years old would play with a doll; and this is done by those eminent for wisdom, and who, of course, think themselves very wise. Such are the fruits of idolatry—degradation lower than that of the brutes which perish. It is hard to account for the ignorance—nay, I know of no word that expresses the state of Hindoos; to call it brutality, would be casting an aspersion upon the brute creation. It contains all that is degrading, debasing, corrupting, and devilish." I would add that the Scriptures give the best account of this, "He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

... I could easily multiply proofs of the deplorable degradation of idolatrous India, while the light of Heaven is shining so brightly in the mother country, whose agents and officers, however, are obstructing the influence of that light, to their own sordid advantage, in defiance both of the express command of the Almighty, and of positive orders received from home to the contrary! But I forbear, and observe, in conclusion, that I the Court will now advert to the terms of my Motion, it will be seen that I have studiously avoided the language of recrimination and reproach, together with every expression calculated to give offence. I content myself with submitting the simple fact, that nothing has yet been done to satisfy the expectation of a waiting empire, or to assuage the woes of a suffering people; nay, more—that, upon the present system, an undisguised obstruction is offered to the diffusion of our common Christianity through the regions of the East. ... The Directors have decided that this abomination shall terminate, so far as their recorded opinion against it can have any weight, and so far as their own withdrawal, however late, from the profits of iniquity, can be of any use.

... It is impossible, in the utmost exercise of Christian charity, not to apprehend that "the mammon of unrighteousness" has had an operation, or assuredly, long before this, the voice of the Court and of this country would not have been uttered in vain.

But, anxious as I am to press no harder at home than I am justified from facts, I do not disguise my impression that, if the Directors now hesitate to act with a greater degree of vigour than they have ever yet displayed, they are from henceforth the patrons and abettors of idolatry, because "*Qui non prohibet cum prohibere possit, jussit.*" "He that is not with me is against me," was the declaration of unerring authority.

Let it never be forgotten that, of all the abominations in itself, and of all curses in its consequences, both here and hereafter, idolatry stands at the head. For this, the nations which knew not God were driven out of Canaan of old, and the nations which professed to know Him, but still went after their idols, were driven in their turn from Judea. His glory God will

not give to another. He is declared in his holy and immutable law to be "a jealous God," where the figure employed has reference to the alienation of heart consequent upon a strange attachment, which is itself a breach of the marriage contract, and affixes the stigma, and entails the curse of adultery. The whole Bible, from the beginning to the end, denounces this violation of our covenant with the great Creator as injurious in time, and destructive for eternity. This was the burden of all the Prophets, and at once the cause of the Babylonish Captivity, and the curse of Babylon herself, as best appeared in that awful night when the fingers of a man's hand came forth, and wrote upon the wall of the King's palace such words as changed his countenance, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another! It was for this that it was said, "Thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; but the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." It is on this account that we dare not laugh, as we have seen that some can do, at the mere absurdity of idolatry, because we are rather called to weep over it as ruinous, and to denounce it as fatal.

It might, indeed, suit the infidel Gibbon, and our modern infidels after him, to eulogise the gay and elegant mythology of Greece and Rome, because he never read, or never believed, the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans; but had he ever understood the wretched condition of the heathen world as it is there most faithfully and affectingly depicted, he would at once have admitted that under such a system of darkness the grossest uncleanness abounded, in spite of the highest intellectual cultivation, precisely as it now does in heathen India. . . .

The duty thence resulting of communicating the light we have received is obvious; and either to withhold this Divine revelation of his (God's) will from the ignorant and vicious, or to pull down with one hand—as we have too long done in India—that edifice of eternal truth which we profess to be erecting with the other, is alike inconsistent and criminal.

It is not true, as certain infidel philosophers of all times have asserted, that it is the same thing whether men are Christians or Pagans, and that they are no more responsible for their religious creed than for the height of their stature or the colour of their hair. To my mind, one of the strongest collateral testimonies to the authenticity of Divine revelation is the actual condition, at this very hour, of all countries abandoned to no better instruction than the light and guidance of their own natural reason, and either not possessing, or rejecting, the Word of God. Very different from the reasoning of Gibbon and Hume was the honourable testimony of that learned and pious layman, Mr. King, who, in proof of the duty of opposing idolatry, quotes the passage,—“Ye shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations, which ye shall possess, served their gods upon the high mountains and upon the hills, and on every green tree; and you shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves

with fire; and you shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place.” Upon which he adds,—“Most undoubtedly nothing can be so dreadful and pernicious as the remotest assent to, or connivance at, any part of idolatry. An avowed abhorrence of everything relating to it, and a heartfelt manifestation of its abomination, is the duty of every servant of God, and especially of any Christian who is at any time to investigate such matters.” *

For what purpose, I would ask, have the many millions of the East been subjected to British rule; and how it is that when mighty thrones have been crumbling about us—Great Britain still sets as Queen, and gives laws to distant empires? Why has she been spared amidst the wreck of surrounding kingdoms, but to promote the glory of God in the diffusion of the everlasting Gospel? What are any or all of the base and subordinate interests which are occasionally disputed and adjusted by this Court, or any of the pecuniary, and therefore perishing, advantages which can be obtained by us from India, either collectively or individually, when brought into competition with the interests of the immortal soul and the eternal destinies of man? “In considering,” says the illustrious Charles Grant, “the affairs of the world as under the control of the Supreme Disposer, and those distant territories as, by strange events, providentially placed in our hands, is it not reasonable, is it not necessary to conclude that they were given to us not merely that we might draw an annual profit from them, but that we might diffuse among their inhabitants, long sunk in darkness, vice, and misery, the benign light and influence of truth, and the blessings of well-ordered society? and that in prudently and sincerely endeavouring to answer these ends we may not only hope for some measure of the same success which has usually attended all serious and rational attempts for the propagation of that pure and sublime religion which comes from God, but best secure the protection of his providential government, of which we now see such awful marks in the events of the world.”

It is surely high time that those Anglo-Indians, whose authority is estimated at so high a rate by many, should be informed by the Christian public, that, if *they* cannot appreciate the high designs for which it has pleased Almighty God to commit to our enlightened and highly-favoured country, the present and future destinies of above a hundred millions of people, there are those among us who better understand their own responsibility, as believing that pecuniary profit and secular patronage are objects of a very secondary character—legitimate, indeed, so long as they keep their place, and are used to higher and more honourable ends; but base and unworthy, to the last degree, when they deviate from their proper purpose, and become the chief, or only end of action, either in corporate bodies, or private individuals.

* See King's “*Munimenta Antiqua*,” where some very remarkable evidence is adduced to prove that shortly before the assassination of the celebrated Captain Cook he had permitted Divine honours to be publicly offered to him by the native idolaters!

It is because proprietors of this class are insensible to their own duties, that such as feel their responsibility are consigned to the loss of caste, and treated as "enthusiasts" and "zealots," who would throw all India into confusion by propounding crude and ill-digested schemes of reform, in an empire where all the hold we possess is declared to depend upon the mere opinion of the natives; as if we could formerly have alienated that opinion by forbidding the murder of widows, or forfeit it now, by abandoning the taxation of idolatry!

Could it, however, be supposed for an instant, that the opinion of a nation were to be preferred to the judgment and favour of the Almighty, or even that empire itself might be retained upon any other principles than those which are in accordance with the declared will of the righteous Governor of the universe, it might justly be feared that we should subject ourselves to the rebuke which was once pronounced—"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days—a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

It is certain that this great work of emancipating the world from bondage like this will be accomplished, and if not by your instrumentality, still it must be effected; in order to which, it will be as easy to the same Almighty hand which has placed England on her present pinnacle of power, to hurl her into the gulf of empires now only known to history, as it was to raise her from nothing to her present dignity. As was once said of another great national deliverance—"Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall enlargement and deliverance arise from another place, but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed." I trust, however, that both England and her greatest commercial Company will better discern the day of their visitation; and, with the most sincere and grateful acknowledgments for the kind and patient attention with which I have been heard, from which I cannot but anticipate much good, as indicating a very improved state of feeling from that which was once evinced in this Court on similar occasions, I have the honour to conclude, by requesting that the Motion may be read.

In an Appendix Mr. Poynder states:—It was impossible that any individual who was present at the Court of Proprietors of the 21st of December, 1836, could entertain the slightest doubt, both from the public professions of the Chairman (Sir James Carnac) during the discussion and from the unanimous decision of that Court, that an efficient dispatch would now be transmitted to India; but it is painful to record that such a dispatch was sent out as was not merely inefficient in itself, but injurious to the whole cause of Christianity in the East. It bears date the 22d of February, 1837, and was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on the 1st of June following. It will fully appear from it, that (after the delay of four years) the Directors contented themselves with merely calling for certain financial returns of no comparative importance, while they virtually

consigned the great question really at issue to a contemptuous silence. By this document, instead of enforcing the execution of their own orders, they excuse the neglect in executing them which had taken place abroad, and now only require such returns of the amount of the idolatrous tribute as tend to reopen the whole question rather than to serve any single purpose of utility.

This disinclination of the Directors to follow up their own original dispatch must be wholly unintelligible to those who are not aware that the transmission of that dispatch was the result of an influence exercised by the (then) Board of Control; and that the Directors, in yielding to a necessity which they were unable to resist, only consented to sign it upon the insertion of a saving clause, which has ever since afforded them a loophole for retreat, namely, a paragraph which has been interpreted as conceding to the local Government the right to judge of the time and manner of carrying the dispatch into effect, although nothing could be further from the intentions of the framer of that dispatch than to invalidate its whole operation by so unfortunate a concession.

Mr. Poynder then adverts to a Memorial addressed on 6th August, 1836, by the Christian population of the Presidency of Madras, to Sir Frederick Adam, the Governor of Madras. He says, "It appeared from this Memorial not merely that the Indian Government was neglecting the employment of those legitimate means which Divine Providence had placed at its disposal for the illumination of a heathen empire, but that, in contravention of some express orders from the parent Government, it was actively engaged in imposing duties upon its own Christian officers and servants of the most onerous and revolting character, that, unmindful of the most obvious principles of every well-ordered Government, it was virtually renouncing its own allegiance to the revealed will of God, by extending, at this late period of the Christian era, the most direct encouragement to the grossest idolatry and crime, at the expense of the best and most honourable feelings of its own Christian population; and it could not but be evident to every well-informed mind that, while such a state of things could not expect to secure the blessing of God, it had only existed too long already, and could not be too speedily terminated.

... The Governor-General of India (Lord Auckland) was so far from acceding to the object of the Madras memorialists, after the Report transmitted to him by Sir Frederick Adam, that a letter, dated 25th April, 1837, was now despatched from the Supreme Government of India to the Archdeacon of Madras (the Bishop having died in the interval) in which his Lordship in Council notices "the displeasure expressed in strong terms by the Madras Government at the tenour of the Memorial;" and the Governor-General then adds, that "he fully participates in the feeling of regret that a Memorial of this description should have been presented;" and further states that "he has not been a little disappointed to see so many public officers in the Madras Presidency mixed up in a course

of proceeding calculated to disturb the mutual charity and goodwill which it should be their duty to foster and encourage between all classes of the community, and to embarrass the Government upon a grave question of policy, in respect to which its course ought ever to be independent, and guarded by a spirit of scrupulous caution and studious regard for the rights, customs, and opinions of all its subjects."

It is not easy to understand how such a charge could apply to a mere request that the same religious toleration which had been actually conceded to heathens and Mohammedans should be also extended to the professors of Christianity in the service of the Company, or to a prayer that they might no longer be compelled to violate their consciences, by attending and offering such honours at pagan ceremonies as were utterly opposed to their own religious belief. It was, in fact, simply because the Indian Government had not observed the slightest regard for the petitioners' own "rights, customs, and opinions," as Protestant Christians, while it professed an undue sensibility for those of the heathens, which had ever induced the petitioners to complain at all. It could be no breach of charity—as the Governor-General alleges—for them to protest against being compelled to do what, as British subjects and baptized Christians, was absolutely opposed to the first principles of their religious allegiance and their national duties. So far from wishing to "embarrass the Government"—as was alleged—they had taken no part in the question any further than as it affected their own consciences and civil rights. They had expressly renounced all desire to interfere with, or molest, the worshippers of idols; and it was only because the Government had first departed from its own religious and moral duty, and had further disregarded the express instructions from England, that the petitioners were compelled to protest at all.

Whether it was that the East India Directors now felt more emboldened, by the views thus taken both by the Government of Madras and the Governor-General of India, in reference to this Memorial, or how otherwise, certain it is that they now resolved to carry out their own views more fully, and to support the local authorities; and on the 18th October, 1837, they transmitted to India the following order:—

"We now desire that no customary salutes or marks of respect to native festivals be discontinued at any of the Presidencies; that no protection hitherto given be withdrawn; and that no change whatever be made in any matter relating to the native religion, except under the authority of the Supreme Government."

... In evident connexion with proceedings so little in accordance with what appeared to be both the duty and interest of a Christian and paternal Government, were certain orders issued by the Governor-General, dated 12th September, 1837, which necessitated the attendance of Protestant soldiers at heathen festivals, and which orders were in direct contravention of the orders of Sir Robert O'Callaghan and Sir Peregrine Maitland, both

having military command in Madras, whose directions in relief of Christian soldiers had long been acted upon, without its being so much as alleged that the slightest inconvenience had followed their observance.

This unnecessary interference on the part of the supreme authority with what had hitherto been found to work so well, led, as might be expected, to the resignation of Sir P. Maitland of his important military command; and the same honourable feelings which induced that gallant officer to "obey God rather than man," have equally influenced a civil officer of the Company, Mr. Robert Nelson, who had returned for a season to this country, to abandon a lucrative service, under a late correspondence with the Company, from which it appears that in consequence of the Secretary of the India House having been directed to inform that gentleman that he would be required, on his return to India, to submit to the same compulsory regulations as had been publicly complained of by the Madras Memorial, he frankly replies that, feeling it, as a Christian, "impossible to serve two masters," he is compelled to make his election, and therefore resolves to resign at once the civil trust which he had for some time held.

... Not only the offence against the Christian faith as seen in the treatment both of the native Christians in India and of our own Christian countrymen in addition, but (it must be observed, notwithstanding the immense cost of human life at which all these abominations have been proved to be going on to this time, and the irreparable injury inflicted on our common Christianity, by thus authoritatively declaring to the natives that there is no real difference between their religion and our own) the continued determination, on the part of the Company, to derive an unhallowed revenue from all the processions, penances, and temple-worship of heathenism, and to pay itself and its stockholders from the profits must needs be matter of the deepest grief, and the loudest remonstrance on the part of "all who call themselves Christians."

The public attention, however, appears at length to be excited on the subject. In addition to the Church of England, the Church of Scotland has asserted its ancient character and evinced its present purity, in raising its voice, without reserve, against the evils in question. Some of the counties and cities of the empire have also recently spoken out, in language which cannot be misunderstood. The bishops and clergy of the Church of England—in addition to the recorded petitions of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and of the Church Missionary Society,—have been equally true to their trust, and alive to the public expectations.

The Rev. Mr. Goode, one of the Company's own chaplains in India, in a sermon preached before the Church Missionary Society, as late as the 30th of April, 1838, observes:—"Christians, in the present day, have a special duty to perform, as they are *the light of the world*, in respect of the countenance which is given by the Government of our Indian Empire to the idolatrous usages of that people. A Government calling itself Christian still clings to a polluted revenue, derived from the pageants of idolatry, and

even pays a band of pilgrim-hunters who shall go about the country to bring together votaries, and swell the attendance on the wretched festivals ! The same Government repairs the idol temples, salaries the officers of those temples, honours their infamous processions with presents and offerings, in the name of the British authorities ; and, instead of Christianizing the poor deluded idolaters, even *compels* the attendance at the festival of its own officers, civil and military, if it so happens, even on the Sabbath, and prostitutes the consciences of its servants to do honour to the vilest rites of heathenism."

And is this (we ask) to be called *neutrality* ?—odious, as neutrality is, in such a case. Is this a *non-interference* with native superstitions ? Rather, is it not, openly and flagrantly, to *countenance* their abominations ? So the heathens themselves regard it, as I know from personal experience. The remark was made to me by my Pundit (a learned Hindoo), "Sir," said he, "Christians cannot think any great harm of our idolatry. You yourselves give an offering of broadcloth to the idol." My brethren, this is a scandal which calls for the loudest voice, the deepest brand of national indignation. This is a wickedness which must call down the heaviest curse of an outraged God upon its perpetrators, and upon all who stand by and allow it.

The senseless cry of danger to our Indian possessions has been raised long enough. If it were true—and it is *not* true,—but if it *were so*, perish, I would say, the accursed gains that can only be kept at the price of souls ! This cry was raised when the first missionary landed on the shores of India. It was redoubled when the holy enterprise of Buchanan, seconded by Christians in this country, obtained for India, under the blessing of God, an ecclesiastical establishment. It retarded for years the abolition of Suttee ; not the fears of Hindoos abroad, but the dread of outcry among men calling themselves Christians at home. India, it was said, will be lost, and behold ! India is ours still ; yes, and ours by a firmer tenure than it ever was, as we hold it for God our Saviour, and the enlightening of its wretched millions.

I do feel strongly, then, that this is a matter which should no longer be left, by a general and most culpable indifference, to the zeal, however honourable, of an individual. Christians are bound to make their voice heard on this subject, and to *force*, by that voice, those who will be influenced by no better motives to forego the wages of iniquity. *Ye are the light of the world*. Christians, it is yours to *guard* the light ; to be *zealous* for the truth in the earth ; to denounce the darkness of this world, under whatever specious form it may disguise itself ; and to see that the blessed light of the Gospel shall shine free and uncontaminated through the length and breadth of the habitable globe.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, in particular, in recently presenting the very important Petition of all the clergy of Birmingham to the House of Lords, spoke in the most able and convincing manner, for nearly an hour, in proof of the great impropriety and impolicy of the East India Directors, in

pursuing their present course ; while the Protestant Dissenters throughout the country are not less interested in joining the general feeling on the subject. It may be finally observed, in proof of the necessity of exertion, that it is only as concessions in favour of the propagation of Christianity in India have been reluctantly wrested by Parliament and the country from the East India Company (principally on the successive renewals of its charter), that any religious or moral good has ever been achieved for that empire.

. . . The opposition offered to Mr. Wilberforce by the Directors upon his successful appeal to Parliament in 1813, in favour of the extension of Christianity in India, will, perhaps, best appear from his recently-published "Life" :—

"Let me beg you (says Mr. Wilberforce, in writing to a friend) to exert yourself for the purpose of preventing the key of the door, through which alone any religious or moral light can obtain access into the East Indies, being committed for twenty years longer to the Court of Directors, *who, by their past conduct, have proved their determination to keep that door close locked and barred against all that might disturb the profound moral darkness of those vast regions*. You will agree with me that, now the slave-trade is abolished, this is by far the greatest of our national sins ; and it is prodigiously aggravated by its being affirmed confidently by Lord Teignmouth, Mr. Grant, and others, that prudent and gradual endeavours to improve and Christianize our East Indian population would strengthen our hold in that country, and render it more securely ours."—Vol. iv., p. 103. Again, in addressing another friend, he says :—"The pending renewal of the East India Company's charter, and the opportunity it offers of doing away that national crime of committing the control of the only entrance for religious light and moral improvement into India to the Directors, who are decidedly adverse to every attempt that can be made to Christianize or raise in the scale of being our East Indian fellow-subjects ; great as is the importance of the subject in a religious point of view, it is only less important in that of humanity. It is a shocking idea that we should leave sixty millions (on the latest testimony, above a hundred and twenty millions) of our fellow-subjects—nay, of our tenants, for we collect about seventeen millions sterling from the rent of their lands—to remain in a state of barbarism and ignorance, the slaves of the most cruel and degrading superstition, lest they should not be so easily governed by a small number of Europeans, though it is the opinion of many of the ablest East Indian statesmen that this doctrine is as false as it is wicked, and that by gradually and prudently proceeding to Christianize our East Indian population we should greatly add to the stability of our Oriental empire."—Vol. iv., p. 104.

. . . It is consolatory to reflect, that while the Directors retain, as a body—as has now been abundantly shown—the whole of their ancient and most inveterate prejudices, and are more decidedly hostile than ever to the spiritual and moral amelioration of India, it is no more competent to them

now than it ever was to resist a work of which the Word of God has decreed the inevitable accomplishment, and for which the energy of Christian Englishmen will assuredly supply the means.

To the Resolution of the Court, of March, 1838, and to any other Resolution which the Directors may adopt for keeping India in mental darkness and moral pollution, an anecdote recorded of Luther will apply:—When his coadjutor, the Protestant Elector of Saxony, addressed him, under considerable anxiety, in consequence of the vigorous and continued opposition of the Emperor and the States of Nuremburg, Luther simply replied, “Let your Highness rest assured that it is otherwise ordered in heaven than it is either by the Emperor or by the States of Nuremburg!”

In harmony with this historical fact, a circumstance occurring within our own memory may be noticed. No sooner had the British and Foreign Bible Society begun to overspread the world with copies of the Holy Scriptures in all languages, than the late Pope, taking the alarm—as he might naturally be expected to do—on the occasion, issued a formidable Bull against the object of that Society and the operations of its members, denouncing the Society as impious, heretical, and destructive, and its members as enemies to sound doctrine and eminently schismatical and pestilential. When this Bull found its way to the Society in London, an old member of the Committee quietly contented himself with observing, upon its being read in the Committee, that he “only wished his Holiness would read the 2d Psalm.” While it is needless to add that the Bible Society went on with its work in spite of the Papal denunciation, it is equally clear that the Christians of the East India Company will proceed with theirs. It is sincerely to be desired that the Directors of that Company would consent in time to be guided by the same unerring light as is displayed in the solemn admonition contained in every part of Holy Writ against all attempts to oppose the counsel of the Almighty, and to obstruct the progress of Divine truth in the world. Their only wisdom and safety assuredly consist in falling in with the Divine appointment, and not in resisting it, as they have now too long done. Whether they will believe it or not, there is “a chief corner-stone, and who-soever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but upon whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder.”

In another speech, delivered at a General Court of Proprietors of the East India Company, on the 20th March, 1839, Mr. Poynder adduces further evidence, proving the connexion between the Government and idolatry, showing that the Indian and Home Governments acted in concert against their own professions, refuting the predictions of Lord Ellenborough, and exposing the terrors of alarmists, who appeal to our fears rather than to our reason.

At p. 16, Mr. Poynder observes:—“The distinction which is now

attempted to be made between complimenting an idolatrous prince and doing honour to idolatry as such, is impossible to be supported. One missionary proves that the priests claimed the homage for their gods; another, that all the natives of India understood it to be so rendered; and the best and most influential members of your own national Church proclaim with one voice that the converse of that proposition is true, which has been held by the Directors as ‘self-evident.’”

But, says Lord Ellenborough, “We shall provoke a general ‘massacre’ if this outward respect is withheld!”*

Happily, Sir, we have lived long enough to outlive these terrors. The same threat was launched at your early Governor when he hung Nundcomar for a foul murder, who was the first Brahmin that ever suffered the ignominious death to which so many of his tribe have necessarily been subjected since, but without any disastrous consequences having ever followed to the empire of India. When your representative was threatened with a general rebellion for doing his duty, his quiet answer was, “If the priests do not like to be hung, they must not commit murder.” So when the Marquis Wellesley abolished the murder of infants, by their own mothers throwing them to the sharks at the river Hoogley, near Calcutta, as a *religious rite*, he heard of and laughed at the same bugbear; precisely as did Colonel Walker in Guzzerat, who stopped the infanticide of the Rajpoots; and so far from any revolution having followed, these very mothers came in a few years to Colonel Walker, with these very children in their hands, and made that gallant officer weep when they said, “Here are our children, who would never have been here if you had not saved them from being destroyed by their own mothers!” This was surely a revolution devoutly to be wished, but it was all the revolution that followed.

Just so, when Lord William Bentinck abolished the murderous practice of Suttee, or the licensed destruction of no fewer than the number of 666 widows—for such was the average of the ten years preceding the inquiry of Parliament—although the Hon. Mr. Lindsay, Sir George Robinson, and Sir James Carnac all equally predicted that we should be all driven into the sea if the murderous rite of Suttee should be stopped; I say, when, in spite of these alarmists, Lord Wm. Bentinck chose to act like a man and a Christian, chose to obey God rather than man, and went forward with his God-like purpose, India was still preserved to England; and when the same frivolous arguments were urged upon our late valued monarch, William IV., and he was solicited to annul the decree of his Governor-General in India, by revoking it, on an appeal to the Privy Council, the King chose rather to ratify that order; and did the loss of India follow? No! In the language, then, of our great Christian poet, let us continue

* It was under the influence of intimidation and an appeal to the nation's fears that the Romish Relief Bill was carried. The Duke of Wellington, who ought to have been actuated by higher and nobler principles, said, If you do not pass this measure you will have a civil war; or words to that effect.—EDITOR.

to do our duty in spite of the timid and reptile policy which would inculcate any meaner course :—

“Be good, and let Heaven answer for the rest.”

But it is equally notorious as a fact, however deplorable it may be to contemplate it, that if we had chosen to attend to the pretended fears of the Major Scott Warings, the Bullers, and the Twinings of earlier Courts, the Bible itself would have been prohibited throughout India, and not a missionary would now have been there to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation in any part of that extensive empire, an empire which, every Christian sees, was subjected to us for no other end than that we should become the medium of diffusing the light of the everlasting Gospel.

Over and over again did the enemies of Divine truth assert, on the faith of their experience as residents in India, that the bare attempt to promulgate our common Christianity would lead to our entire destruction as Europeans, and involve the loss of our Indian empire.

. . . . It was attempted no less to alarm the British Parliament in like manner, and was even gravely proposed to place the key of India in the Directors' hands for twenty years ! But did this prevent the Resolution of the House of Commons that India should be both civilized and evangelized ? So far from it, the proposal was met with as indignant a repulse as the late proposal of the Court to shut the door of India, not for twenty years, but for all future time, against all attempts of a similar nature.

It is rather too late, therefore, for Lord Ellenborough to attempt to deter this Christian nation by these alarms ; nor will his further assertion in the House of Lords, that “the natives observed the most scrupulous respect and delicacy towards the female sex,” avail him much, when every one knows, not merely that these chivalrous protectors of the weaker sex suffered innumerable victims to perish for a series of years before their eyes on the piles of their deceased husbands, leaving thousands of orphan children to mourn the loss of *both* parents, but actually were unworthy enough to fabricate a Petition from the natives, and others, in Calcutta, to the King of England in Council, praying His Majesty to reverse this humane and God-like order of his Governor-General.

It was under a similar ignorance of the Appendix to the Madras Memorial that Lord Brougham, on the same 31st July last, affirmed that by the “outward respect shown to heathenism” [for example, by the escorts now defended by the Directors] “no man's opinion was compromised.”

The Christians of India, however, feel very differently on this subject ; and so, indeed, did the Christians of all ages. What say the Indian Christians now ? In addition to the testimony of the Appendix—which, I repeat, the Directors were in no way justified in withholding from a man of such vigorous intellect and extensive benevolence as Lord Brougham—I would add, that a civilian of the highest character and talents, in a letter to myself, dated only the 22nd of last December, says :—“The outward

respect which Lords Ellenborough and Brougham declare to be necessary for the safety of India, never had existence in the Bengal Presidency ; and if the fifty millions in Bengal and Agra neither require nor wish for these tokens of respect for their religious feelings, how can the twenty millions in Madras and Bombay need them ? In truth, there is no foundation for the opinions expressed by these noblemen ; and even if there were, they do not meet the argument that such marks of respect cannot be paid by men who fear God, and desire to keep a conscience void of offence on the subject.”

But I would ask Lord Brougham, what was the “outward respect” commanded by the idolatrous monarch of Scripture to be paid to the idol which he had set up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon, but such as the early confessors of the true God could not possibly render ? What, again, was the simple offering of salt to the censers of heathenism, which, in the early age of the primitive Church, many thousands of Christians refused to present, as they tendered their eternal salvation, though at the certain sacrifice of their natural lives ? What, it might have been asked, is more insignificant than a pinch of salt ? Nothing, assuredly, in itself ; but when offered as the concession of a religious principle, and so understood by the proposer, it assumes incalculable importance, and must be refused at any sacrifice. It was quite of course that martyrdom was the penalty of refusing “outward respect,” as it was insidiously, but most unjustly, termed.

What, again, was the refusal even to be present at the sacrifice of the mass in the Papal Church—long after pagan persecution had ceased—much more *to take part* in such idolatry, but a refusal to offer “outward respect” ? and yet thousands of both sexes, and all ages, of our Protestant ancestors, were actually burnt for refusing. It would not have supplied any salvo to their consciences to have been assured that it was “self-evident” that this was no homage to idolatry, but a mere compliment to the priests, and only a compliance with decent custom.

It may have seemed a matter of indifference to Lord Brougham, without having the whole of the facts of this deeply interesting case before him ; but he will hardly persist in retaining this opinion when he learns that thousands of his fellow-Christians, men of unexceptionable piety and acknowledged talents, determine rather to perish than to violate their consciences by such sinful compliances.

None of these men “counted their lives dear to them” of old, and none will now, when obedience to man is opposed to the commands of God ; and why, then, when equal toleration is guaranteed to all, and claimed by all, has any man, or body of men, a right to refuse it to Christians alone ?

“But,” says Lord Brougham, “though we are not Roman Catholics, yet our troops turn out when Romish ceremonies are performed.” I can only reply, If they do, the greater is the error ; for they cannot be compelled to do so, since the War-office regulations peremptorily and properly forbid a Roman Catholic soldier being obliged to attend a Protestant place of worship. The

rule, therefore, applies more strongly in the case of Protestants, who are expressly taught by their own articles of faith, "that the doctrine of the Mass is a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit."

I feel persuaded, Sir, that so far from Lords Ellenborough or Brougham conceiving the least offence at anything which I have advanced, they would be rather satisfied that I should, in my place in this Court, have given them an opportunity of amending the defective information under which the Directors had left them.

. . . It only remains that I should advert, in conclusion, to the objection which has been urged, as to the wars with which the empire of India is at present threatened, by reading a recent communication from that quarter. As the friend of the Directors, I call upon them, before it be too late, to hear this warning voice from the East. If the writer be correct, that part of the last despatch regarding military escorts cannot stand, and, therefore, the sooner it is abandoned the better.

"When in every direction," it is observed, "there appear wars and rumours of wars, these are circumstances which, in the Christian view of the question, believing that there is a God who governs the world, make it more incumbent on the Government to concede what is asked; and, what is of much more importance, to relieve themselves and their country from the heavy hand of Heaven. Let us secure on our side the omnipotent arm of God, and as we have hitherto prospered in Asia, so we shall continue to prosper, and set at nought all the efforts of our enemies, however numerous and powerful. Pestilence destroyed the army of Sennacherib; the frosts destroyed the hosts of Napoleon. Is there no pestilence in India, to destroy, at God's good pleasure, either the army of our enemies or our own? It is to be hoped that the sacrifices now made by Sir P. Maitland and Mr. Nelson will not be in vain, but that they will rouse the Christian community in this country, of all denominations, to a due sense of the infinite insult offered to Almighty God, and to the commandments of the Gospel, by the East India Company, and cause them to stand up, as one man, against the continued perpetration of so great an enormity. It is impossible that this Christian country can tolerate the policy of forcing the civil and military, in their character of representatives of the Company, and, again, as the representatives of this Christian nation, to take part in the services of idolatry. What sect or caste of our Mohammedan or Hindoo fellow-subjects would the Directors dare to require to take part in the services of Christianity? The reply is obvious;—Not one!

It is Christians alone, the natives of this Protestant country, whom they so dishonour; whom, however, they cannot dishonour without dishonouring themselves, dishonouring their country, dishonouring their religion, and their Saviour; and, if there be truth in Scripture, deeply offending Almighty God."

I am unwilling to weaken the force of this remonstrance by any further observations of my own in proof of the impolicy, as well as impropriety, of

persisting in the exactions still required both from the civil and military service, by the Directors, as appear in this their latest despatch; and I earnestly conjure them to abandon the perilous position to which they as yet continue to adhere, because I feel assured, upon the evidence which I have adduced, that while such a course is wholly unnecessary and uncalled for, it is equally at variance with the due administration of their own Government, as it manifestly is with the express commands and requisitions of the Almighty.

The facts brought forward in these speeches of Mr. Poynder exhibit the policy of the Anglo-Indian Government in no very favourable aspect. That Government stands convicted upon the clearest evidence of supporting and encouraging idolatry for the sake of gain, than which nothing can be worse.

In order to obtain correct ideas upon this subject it is necessary that we should consider what a sin idolatry is; how it robs God of his honour, and degrades and debases man below the level of the brute. The terrible effects of God's wrath and indignation against idolatry are strikingly exhibited throughout the Sacred Volume. Indeed, if there be one sin which God hates more intensely than another it is idolatry. Image-worship, in all its forms, is a direct violation of His law, which expressly prohibits even the making of an image for religious purposes. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." (Exod. xx. 4.) God usually abandons those who are guilty of idolatry: "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone."

It is worthy of observation that throughout the Bible, when idolatry is spoken of, it is usually accompanied with some strong expression denoting its extreme malignity, such as—wrath, fury, indignation, jealousy, vengeance, hatred, abomination, accursed thing. "Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day." (Jerem. xlv. 4.)

"Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols; worship Him all ye gods." (Psalm xcvi. 7.)

How powerfully does the jealousy of the Lord of Hosts burn in these words:—"I am the Lord, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another." (Isaiah xlii. 8.)

The Church of England, in her elaborate Homily against "Peril of Idolatry," thus bears her testimony to the soul-destroying nature of this sin:—"St. Paul warneth us to flee from the worshipping of images, if we regard the kingdom of God and life everlasting, and dread the wrath of God and everlasting damnation. For it is not possible that we should be worshippers of images and the true servants of God also, as St. Paul

teacheth in 2 Cor. vi., affirming that there can be no more consent or agreement between the temple of God—which all true Christians be—and images, than between righteousness and unrighteousness, between light and darkness, between the faithful and the unfaithful, or between Christ and the Devil.” (See this Homily, *passim*.)

Dr. Graves observes:—“At the head of capital crimes under the Jewish law was placed *idolatry*. Not only the act itself, but every attempt to seduce men to it, and every mode of conduct which presupposed or obviously led to it. Against this offence the strictest rigour was exercised; no partiality for the dearest relative was to induce concealment; no dignity to silence accusation; no multitude of offenders, to deter from punishment. This severity, whilst it conduced to preserve the allegiance due to the Supreme Jehovah, inseparably associated the feelings of detestation and abhorrence with the crime of idolatry, not with the persons of the Canaanites; and proved to the Jews that they were commanded to exterminate the seven nations, not from any principle of personal resentment or national hostility, but merely as criminals condemned of God.” (Quoted in D'Oyley and Mant's Bible. Deut. xiii. 6—11.)

Archbishop Secker says:—“Those grievous immoralities, which St. Paul here describes (Rom. i. 24) as the consequences of idolatry, have been its consequences in all times and places.”

Bishop Burnet says:—“St. Paul makes idolatry to be the original of all the corruption and immorality that was spread over the Gentile world: which came in partly as the natural consequence of idolatry; of its debasing the ideas of God, and wounding true religion and virtue in its source, and partly as an effect of the just judgments of God upon those who thus dishonoured Him.” (See D'Oyley and Mant's Bible. Rom. i.)

Dean Sherlock observes:—“One principal intention of the Gospel was more perfectly to extirpate all idolatry: ‘For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil:’ that is, not only all sin and wickedness, but the very kingdom which the devil had erected in the world,—the very foundation of which was laid in idolatrous worship. . . . Our Saviour confines all religious worship to God alone: ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.’ It is his answer to the devil, when he tempted Him to fall down and worship him; but He gives such an answer as excludes all creatures, not only bad but good spirits, from any share in religious worship.” (See Bishop Gibson's “Preservative from Popery.”)

Dr. Croly thus writes:—“In the Jewish code, idolatry was declared to be the sin of sins,—the most direct offence to that God who claims the undivided homage of the heart,—the most open evidence of the alienation of man, the grand peculiar crime which smote beyond the criminal, and tainted the blood of posterity. No evasion was suffered in either the degree of the worship, or the form of the image. The people were

forbidden to ‘*bow down or serve*,’ and they were equally forbidden to take their graven image from any object in the worlds of matter or mind.” (On the “Apocalypse of St. John,” p. 344.)

Mr. Milner, in his “Church History,” vol. iii., chap. iii., says:—“The guilt of idolatry, though no sin is so much spoken against throughout the Old Testament, is not so offensive to natural conscience as that of crimes committed against our fellow-creatures. Many persons are apt to wonder why the Israelites were so prone to it; not considering nor knowing their own idolatry, which works in a way more suited to present times and circumstances. But, whoever understands that idolatry implies the departure of the heart from the living God, and the fixing of it on something else; that to distrust his Word, and to put confidence in some sensible object by which we would represent Him to our minds; still further, that to glory in our own strength and righteousness, instead of seeking salvation by grace, through faith only, proceeds from pride, and pours all possible contempt on the Divine Majesty, will not wonder at God's indignation against this sin, will see how naturally it operates on the human mind, and how it affords a complete demonstration of the apostasy of man.”

“To represent an infinite spirit by an image, and the great Creator by the image of a creature, is the greatest affront we can put upon God, and the greatest cheat we can put upon ourselves.” (Henry's Bible. Deut. iv.)

“The world by its wisdom never knew God. For near 6,000 years by far the greater part of mankind have had no other religion than *idolatry*. And shall they boast of their understanding, who, when left to themselves, have run into the grossest absurdities, and the most abominable impurities, even in the concerns of religion? Let us learn how low man has fallen, and what an universal necessity there is for a Divine illumination.” (Robinson's “Scripture Characters,” chap. i.)

“Whatever speculators may assume of the sufficiency of man's reason to discover Divine truth, stubborn facts confute the flattering hypothesis; and as far as God has, in awful displeasure, left men to themselves, they have dishonoured Him by the most absurd idolatries and superstitions, and degraded themselves by ‘vile affections’ and abominable lusts.” (Rev. T. Scott on Rom. i. 24.)

“If we say that the Roman religion is idolatrous, we can say nothing higher, for of all the enormities that are mentioned in the Bible *none hath so black a character as idolatry*.” (Dr. John Edwards, in Bishop Gibson's “Preservative from Popery.” Supplement.)

Having thus appealed to Scripture, referred to the Homilies of the Church of England, and consulted different authorities upon this subject, we arrive at the conclusion that idolatry is a God-dishonouring, soul-destroying sin, utterly incompatible with Christianity. The question is, in what light has this sin been regarded by the ruling authorities and by the generality of our statesmen? Weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, it is to be feared they will be found wanting. Tested by this standard,

their policy will not bear to be closely scrutinized, for they have made light of idolatry and treated it as if it were no sin at all. Here is the real cause of all our woes. The most fearful calamity has befallen our country, and yet comparatively few of our statesmen recognise the finger of God in this visitation. Unconverted and unenlightened men laugh to scorn the idea that national sins call down national judgments. They are at a loss to account for the *cause* of the Indian mutiny, which seems to them enveloped in mystery; but to the real Christian, who estimates the guilt of an action not merely by its effects on society, but as committed against a holy and a jealous God, that cause is palpable enough. The truth is, men of the world have very inadequate conceptions of the heinous character of idolatry; of God's intense abhorrence of it, and of his purpose, sooner or later, to punish those who are guilty of it. They treat these solemn truths with perfect indifference. Talk to them on the subject of idolatry, and you meet with no response; they are as silent as the grave. Here they betray the hollowness of their religion: they trifle with that sin which is the worst that man can commit against his Maker. But pandering to idolatrous usages, paying homage to the supremacy of caste, and ignoring Christianity, is not the way to secure the favour of God or increase the stability of our Indian Empire.

In reference to national judgments, the Bishop of Calcutta commences his sermon preached on the Day for Humiliation throughout British India in the following manner:—"Almighty God has visited us with his judgments, such sore judgments as British India has never known. No duty can be so urgent upon us now as humiliation before his Divine Majesty for the sins which have provoked his righteous indignation." He adds:—"The principles of God's dealings with the kingdoms of the earth now are fully exhibited in his proceedings with Israel of old and the heathen people around them. He regards nations in their collective capacity. Individuals He chiefly punishes in the next world; but collective bodies, as they will have no future existence, in this.

"And when nations have filled up the measure of their sins, the Lord sends his judgments forth, and sometimes *visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children*, especially if continuing in their fathers' sins, *unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him.*"

His Lordship proceeds to observe:—"It has long appeared to thoughtful persons that one of the chief sins of India is *our close connexion with the vices and idolatry of Brahminism*, and with the detestable licentiousness and bitter hatred to Christianity of the followers of the false prophet. In this opinion I concur.

"India would seem too much to have been ruled in former times on the theory that God is not the Governor of the world, but that Satan is the power whom it was wiser and safer to fear. I am far from thinking that the causes of the extraordinary insurrection now raging are to be sought in the conduct of the present age only. The Lord accumulates, as it were, His

wrath, or in mercy forbears His chastisements, until at length they fall on one particular generation, which goes on in some of the same sins, though possibly it may not in all respects be so abandoned as some of their ancestors. We have a hundred years of offences to answer for.

"I fear we have too much continued in the spirit, if not in the acts, of our fathers. Even in our own times, I remember well the struggle of twenty long years, under the great and eminent Wilberforce, that was necessary to secure a free admission of our missionaries into India. I remember the cruel treatment of Dr. and Mrs. Judson, whom I knew at Moulmein; the forced resort of Dr. Carey and his pious companions to the Danish settlement of Serampore; the prohibition to Dr. Buchanan to publish his Sermons on the Prophecies; the disgraceful delay in disconnecting Government with the pilgrimages to Juggernaut; and the salutes to idols and other ceremonies at Madras, which compelled the brave and noble Sir Peregrine Maitland to resign. Even my amiable and beloved friend and brother, Bishop Corrie, was rebuked by the Madras Government in 1836, for the mildest exercise of what he considered his appropriate duty, in expressing his sympathy with Sir Peregrine on that occasion.

"Further, in our Regulations both at Madras and in Bengal, Hindoo and Mohammedan endowments were and, I fear, are, declared to be endowments for 'pious and beneficial purposes,' and were placed in the special charge of the collectors of the districts, instead of being left to the native priests to manage, or rather mismanage, as they could, which would have gradually extinguished them. Offerings in the name of Government at famous shrines were presented; and, by the pilgrim-tax, the duty of keeping up some of the shrines was allotted to our Christian authorities.

"All this is going far beyond *non-interference*—which is right, and our duty: no force can ever be properly used in diffusing Christianity, nor has it ever: but these acts and regulations went to the discountenancing of Christianity, and the support of the grossest idolatries and superstitions, which we now find have imperilled our empire. Let it never be forgotten that the first Sepoy, who was baptized by my late friend, the Rev. Mr. Fisher, Chaplain of Meerut, was on that account alone, and though he was admitted to be a good soldier, dismissed the service: this Mr. Fisher told me himself.

"Thanks be to God, many remedial measures have been passed of late years, and are now being in preparation; but it is our duty to examine the matter to the bottom, and remove all remaining suspicions of our indifference to Christianity, and of our approbation of the native abominations. It is our duty to show on all occasions our intense conviction that Christianity is the only true religion—in fact, the only religion in the world; and that we adhere to it with all our influence and strength. And surely the present awful visitation for our sins is the proper moment for new and decisive measures to be taken, to which, I am sure, our present rulers will lend a willing attention.

"Another subject of deep anxiety to the Christian mind is *the connexion of our Government with the opium traffic*, by which we seem to have been gradually entangled in a system of measures by which we are administering this drug to the ignorant heathen of China, in a manner which is directly contributing to destroy their bodies and souls by thousands and tens of thousands.*

" . . . Another sin weighing on the neck of India is *the favour shown to the anti-social and Antichristian civil system of Caste*. It is as much a degradation of a large part of the human species as the old exploded theory of the natural inferiority of the negro race. I conceive it is contrary to the whole spirit of British jurisprudence, as well as to the laws of God, to recognise such a theory. And at the present time of the Divine judgments, when the pretence of the violation of this system has brought our power into jeopardy, we are surely bound to let all who shall hereafter be engaged in the public service clearly understand, that it will not for a moment be listened to, as it respects the external performance of military or civil duties."

It appears from the sermons preached on the day of national humiliation on account of the Indian mutinies, that great unanimity prevails among the clergy as it respects the unrighteous policy adopted by the Government in India, and the sore judgments which such policy has provoked.

The Rev. Joseph Fenn, formerly a missionary in India, in a sermon preached on this occasion, says:—"My first observation is, that the Bible is the only book of divinely authoritative instruction. If this book be neglected in our inquiries into the reason of God's controversy with us, we shall see vain and foolish things, and not our iniquities, nor turn away God's wrath."

"The Bible is God's history of the world, and the declaration of His plan of governing it, and of His dealings alike with nations and individuals. . . .

"But the Bible is pre-eminently a National Book; it gives the history of the rise and fall of nations; it reveals God's government of them, his control of their actions, and direction of them to His own purposes. . . . The Bible is pre-eminently the statesman's book; and then will a kingdom be rightly governed when its rulers shall understand it, and follow it as their guiding star."

"We learn in the Bible that God punishes nations for their idolatrous and false systems of worship. It is a monstrous thing to suppose that nations are accounted by God innocent in their idol worship; more monstrous still to imagine that they can be saved by it. Read Jeremiah x., and learn what God thinks of this sin, and how He declares that in the day of their visitation idolaters shall perish. . . . Does God anywhere allow any excuse for this sin? Far otherwise. . . .

* On the subject of the opium traffic, as indirectly prosecuted by the East Indian Government, see two valuable pamphlets by Major-General Alexander, of the Madras Army: published by Seeley and Co.—EDITOR.

"And why do I bring this sin of heathen nations before you, dear brethren, at a time when we are called upon to bewail our own sins? Because India is our country, given to us by God, and we are so bound up with it that we are implicated in its sins. The sins of India are the sins of the British empire, because it is part thereof; and if we like not the responsibility, we should dissolve our connexion with it. We cannot shake off the participation in the guilt of the idolatrous and Antichristian spirit and practices of India, having voluntarily taken upon us the occupancy and the government of the land. We are owners of the soil—lords of the fief. . . . What shall we, then, say of our participation in the guilt of India's idolatrous and Antichristian population, when we have been fostering and cherishing it, and have acted as if it were the condition of our tenure of the land? . . . We have told them in all our dealings with them, as their governing power, 'Our Bible, our Christianity, is not for you; you have your religion, and we wish you to remain in your fathers' creed and in your fathers' practices, and will uphold you in them.'

"I say, a more cruel, soul-destroying policy, if the Bible be true, than this, which we, as a governing power, have pursued, cannot be imagined. We have not only neglected our duty as a Christian nation, but have openly, publicly, avowedly opposed God's purpose, that 'all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.'

"Nor is the case a whit less criminal in the sight of God, and ruinous to our fellow-men and subjects, as it regards the Mohammedan population. Mohammed set himself up as Christ's rival, and every Mohammedan, so far as he is a religious man, is not merely an opposer and blasphemer of Christ, but bound, as he values the favour of his False Prophet and the hope of Paradise, to extirpate Christianity. . . .

"I say, then, that India is in an awful condition, guilty of the most foul and abominable idolatry, and of a most deep-rooted hatred to Christ and to his Gospel, and daily bringing down upon it the indignation of the Lord. It is our own empire; we participate in the sin, and, as the governing power, have pledged ourselves against any repentance and embracing of God's overtures of pardon and mercy. The time must come when the iniquity of the land shall be full, and then will judgment be poured out upon it to the uttermost. (See Neh. ix. 34, 35.)

" . . . Here, then, we have a clue to our true 'burden and cause of punishment.' (Text—Lam. ii. 14.)

"God's purpose is the universal exaltation of Christ, and the subjugation of all nations to His faith and obedience. This purpose we, as a governing power, have systematically and avowedly opposed. Christ shall not be known in India, nor rule over India, has been the language and the gist of our rule. . . . In former times we have put every conceivable hindrance in the way of the people of the land embracing the Christian faith. We have subjected them to loss of property, loss of social standing, loss of honourable employment, and though there has been a considerable relaxation of this

opposition, we still, as a governing power, maintain an opposing attitude.

" . . . We read in the first of Romans, that 'because men liked not to retain God in their knowledge, therefore God gave them over to vile affections, to do those things which are not convenient.' And then a catalogue of sins is given, which, if it were not in the Bible, we should never choose to read in our public assemblies; these sins are the consequences and the punishment of idolatry and false religion.

" . . . In defiance of all that God tells us in his Holy Word, and that history teaches us in his providential government of the world, we persist in our foolish and un-Christian course. We leave out of our calculation in our government of India that its inhabitants have souls as well as bodies—that they are immortal, and have no means of salvation but those which we can furnish. We sink down into the practical belief that idolaters and the open revilers of Christ, and impugnors of his Divine character and mission, will nevertheless be saved—or if not, that we, as a nation, have nothing to do with their salvation.

" . . . We slight that book which is God's authoritative teaching; we uphold that idolatry which God abhors, and that foul imposture which seeks to hurl Christ from His throne. We are guilty of setting ourselves in direct antagonism to God's purpose, in the universal exaltation of Christ and subjugation of all nations to his faith and obedience. We are guilty of the audacity of attempting to bring about that change in the moral and social condition of man upon earth which God has decreed shall be accomplished by Christ, and which He tells us can be accomplished by no one else. It is his glory to be the Saviour of the world and the hope and 'desire of all nations.' May I not say here are burdens enough and 'causes of punishment?'

" . . . What has called down this dire catastrophe—this sore and humiliating judgment? Where did it first break out? In Meerut, where the first Sepoy, an officer of acknowledged reputation in our native army, was dismissed the service, by an order of the Governor-General, for embracing Christianity, now many years ago. And whose is the hand principally conspicuous in the infliction of the chastisement? Nana Sahib, a Mahratta chieftain, well versed in our language, on terms of intimacy with our fellow-countrymen, and accompanying them in their field-sports, but untaught in our Christian faith, and remaining in heart a bigoted Mohammedan, filled with hatred against Christ and His followers.

" . . . Let us awake to a sense of our responsibility, and, according to our position and ability, make our voice heard demanding a change of policy in India, requiring that God and his Christ be honoured, and the happiness of our Eastern empire promoted in the only way possible, by the spread of the knowledge of the Gospel of our adorable Saviour."—(Sermon preached at Blackheath Park Chapel, on 7th October, 1857. Published by W. H. Dalton, London.)

In a review of the "History of the British Empire of India," by Edward Thornton, Esq., in the "Christian Observer," for October, 1857, the reviewer observes:—"Of all the marvels of history none is more strange and wildly romantic than the growth of our Indian empire. A few hundreds or thousands of traders, bent only on the gains of commerce, and at the distance of fifteen thousand miles from their own country, have become the masters, within a single century, of nearly two hundred millions of souls, or one-fifth of the whole race of mankind. . . . Can any other instance of a wonder-working Providence be found, in the whole range of history, so impressive as this rapid growth of the Anglo-Indian empire? The first impulse, surely, of every thoughtful mind, not abandoned to the darkness of utter Atheism, must be to inquire for what end so grand a miracle has been wrought in our days, which casts into the shade the physical wonders displayed to the eyes of the chosen people in the Arabian desert. Why has our country been singled out to receive so strange and solemn a trust? What moral obligations does the review of this century of marvels impose upon the citizens and statesmen of our Christian empire? Is it merely that a few thousands of English cadets and adventurers may amass princely fortunes, and return home, it may be, heathens in heart and life, inoculated with Eastern vice and luxury? Or are we bound to use the influence and dominion which Almighty God has given us over one-fifth of the human race, to promote the great work for which the Son of God suffered and died—the spiritual recovery and moral elevation of these countless multitudes, who have been sitting for ages in darkness and the shadow of death?

"These Indian mutinies, which have come upon us like a thunderbolt, are a solemn call to us, as a nation, to consider our ways, and re-examine the whole course of our Indian policy. Troubles, whether private or public, do not rise by chance—they are from the hand of God. But the calamities which now engross every English heart are of no ordinary kind. The Sepoy mutineers have cast off all the restraints of humanity. The foul depths of heathenism have been stirred, and have bred horrors and atrocities almost without a parallel. At such a time we ought ourselves to cast aside the shallow common-places of politicians, and to inaugurate, in the light of these sorrowful revelations of wickedness, a wise, sound, and thoroughly Christian policy, that will not leave our rulers and our people confounded with shame, when they give account, side by side, with these millions of heathen subjects, before the judgment seat of Christ. . . .

"The great majority of these teeming multitudes are the slaves of a superstition as foul, as base and morally hateful, as can be found on the face of the earth. It is not merely a dreary vacuum in which the true God, and the only Saviour of sinners, are unknown. Idolatry riots and revels there in its most hideous abominations. False gods, whose legendary lives are like a moral cesspool, receive the slavish homage of millions of worshippers, and that worship is as cruel and licentious as the divinities to whom it is offered. The system of caste carries the dominance of this

accursed creed into all the minutest acts of daily life. It is one which evil spirits might have devised to extinguish the possibility of human brotherhood, to infect one favoured class with satanic pride, and sink the rest in brutish debasement, from which no effort can recover them till this yoke of bondage is broken from their necks. As the religion of these heathen is one gigantic system of lies, which do equal violence to the first principles of Christian truth and the simplest facts of science, the social results inevitably correspond. Treachery and deceit are the staple of daily life . . .

"It is this vast moral lazar-house, this mighty preserve of the terrible kingdom of darkness and delusion, from which the stench of foulest lust and shameless idolatry is rising hourly to heaven, which has now been brought, by a series of political miracles, under the dominion of the British nation. . .

"The question which now presses for an answer is this, how are we to use the unparalleled trust? As Christians, or as heathens? As men who have a heart and a conscience, or as those who have none? As those who believe in God, or as sordid money-getting atheists, who care nothing that millions of souls perish in sin, if they can only squeeze a fortune out of them before their downward journey is finished? . . . Shall our Indian policy be one vast experiment to prove the falsehood of our Saviour's words, and show that we can gather grapes of thorns and figs from thistles? . . .

"We affirm confidently that for any Government, and eminently for our Indian Government, to aim at a perfect religious neutrality, is a design positively wicked in the very conception. The world is a great moral battle-field, in which the rival leaders are Satan and the Son of God; the rival armies are the faithful disciples of Christ, and the workers of iniquity of every class and kind; and the chief weapons of the conflict, on either side, are the truth of God in the law and the Gospel, and the manifold delusions of Idolatry and false religion. There is no really neutral place between these two armies. 'He that is not for me,' says our Saviour, 'is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.' Indifference to the spread of the Gospel is rebellion against Christ, and cruelty to man. . . . No Government has ever yet been able to carry out a theory of strict religious indifference, and never will be, to the end of time. The voice of history is uniform on this subject, down to the present hour. . . .

"In the earliest days of the Company, its habitual policy in religious questions was a cross between heathenism and infidelity. Its servants carried little Christianity with them to India, and that little most of them contrived soon to cast away. . . . The nominally Christian Company was practically more heathenish in its policy than the openly heathen empire at its side. And when the Charter was renewed nearly fifty years ago, the Indians in the House, with hardly an exception, strove with might and main to perpetuate this system, and to keep the soil of India sacred against the

hated entrance of a single messenger of the Gospel of Christ. It was only the strenuous zeal and fervid eloquence of William Wilberforce, and a few other Christian men of kindred spirit, which overcame their dogged and pertinacious opposition, and procured a liberty for Christian missionaries to reside within the dominions of those merchant-princes of Christian England. The Company long assisted, by their offerings, in the idol-worship of Juggernaut, the foulest and most cruel, perhaps, on the face of the earth. . . . The policy of those years reflected the character of the agents of the Company who gave it birth. It was heathen in some respects and infidel in others. The broad outline was one of philosophic indifference to all creeds. This was the spirit which prevailed with the directors and heads of departments; but the details were filled in by the practical heathenism of those subordinate agents, who lived without a Sabbath, a church, or a worship, and 'were mingled with the heathen and learned their works.'"

In the minute of the Church Missionary Society on the Indian mutiny in its connexion with Christian missions and the future government of India upon Christian principles, we read as follows:—"If it should be asked, why the judgment has been sent, not in past seasons of guilty neglect, but now, after both the Government and Christian people have begun to amend their ways, it may be observed, that this is in the way of God's usual dealing. Of careless and obstinate sinners, He says, 'Let them alone till the measure of their iniquities is fulfilled.' But He lays his fatherly correction upon those who are so far reformed as to profit by his chastisements. Thus this judgment is come upon us when there is a more general spirit of prayer in the Church of Christ, and a greater readiness to turn to the hand that smiteth, and more preparedness to bring forth the fruits meet for repentance, than at any earlier period of our connexion with India.

. . . "Let it be urged upon the Government of India to honour God by avowing itself a Christian Government, not neutral or indifferent to the religion of its subjects, but wishing that all should have the opportunity of knowing and judging of the claims of revealed truth, and desirous of their becoming Christians upon personal conviction of the truth of Christianity. Let this avowal be accompanied with the widest possible proclamation that no compulsion will be used, no bribe will be given. The consistency and honesty of such declarations would be easily understood by the natives. Whereas the neutral and equivocal position which the Government of India has hitherto attempted to maintain has been unintelligible.

. . . "The avowal for which we plead would facilitate and insure the severance of the last links of Government connexion with idolatry. Such links do remain, and must be severed, if we are to plead for mercy before God with clean hands.

. . . "Let the toleration of all forms of religion be guaranteed, so far as concerns a man's opinions and forms of worship, but not so far as to tolerate anti-social customs, or immoral practices under the garb of

religion. Let the moral law of England be the moral law of India. Very much has been effected of late years in conformity with this principle; suttees and infanticide have been prohibited; slavery has been abolished; civil disqualifications upon conversion to Christianity have been in some measure removed; the remarriage of widows has been sanctioned by law. But there remain other measures of a like kind, especially such as are required for the rescue of the female sex from its present degradation; for the suppression of the public exhibition of indecency in so-called religious rites, and for the discouragement of caste distinctions as forming a barrier against Christianity.

"... *Let Government education comprise the teaching of the Word of God.*"* A system of grants in aid to schools of all denominations having been established, Government has given a general encouragement to education; yet in its own schools it excludes the Bible. The pretence that the Bible will offend prejudices is proved unsound by the fact that missionary schools educate far larger numbers of heathen and Mohammedan children than Government schools; and heathen rajahs introduce the Christian Scriptures into their schools as an important part of western literature. Why, therefore, should a Christian Government put such dishonour upon the book of God?"

A striking analogy subsists between Popery and heathenism. In fact Popery is heathenism concealed under the mask of a mock Christianity. Bishop Horsley justly remarks:—"What heathenism was to the Old Testament dispensation, the same precisely is Popish idolatry to the Evangelical." Again:—"The idolaters of antiquity and the Papists of modern times are much upon a footing. The Church of Rome is at this day a corrupt Church, a Church corrupted with idolatry; with idolatry very much the same in kind and in degree, with the worst that ever prevailed among the Egyptians or the Canaanites."†

Dr. Wm. Whitaker says:—"For whom and of what kind do they make God, when they serve innumerable idols, and fill the whole earth with their own idolatry? For where, either among the Greeks or the Egyptians, or the ancient Romans, were images ever more frequent, or idolatry more foul, than has been, and we know yet is, in the Papal Church?" See a translation of Dr. Wm. Whitaker's "Thesis de Antichristo," in the "Protestant Journal" for January, 1833, pp. 16-43.

Bishop Burnet says:—"This, we believe, is plain idolatry, when an insensible piece of matter such as bread and wine, has Divine honours paid

* The grand remedy for the ills of unhappy India is an OPEN BIBLE. Our chief efforts, therefore, should be directed to promote the circulation of the Word of God throughout the whole of that vast and benighted empire.—EDITOR.

† For further information on this subject see a pamphlet entitled "Popery in Alliance with Heathenism: Letters proving that where the Bible is wholly unknown as in the Heathen World, or only partially known as in the Romish Church, Idolatry and Superstition are inevitable." By John Poynder, Esq. Second Edition. 1835.

to it, when it is believed to be God, when it is called God, and is in all respects worshipped with the same adoration that is offered up to Almighty God. This we think is gross idolatry. Many writers of the Church of Rome have acknowledged that if transubstantiation is not true, their worship is a strain of idolatry beyond anything that is practised among the most depraved of all the heathens."

There is no difference of opinion among pious and learned divines as to the gross idolatry of the Church of Rome. The language of the Church of England upon this subject is most emphatic and decisive. Such being the case it ill-becomes those statesmen who profess their attachment to the Established Church to assume that the Church of Rome is free from all taint of idolatry and then act accordingly.* There is reason to fear that the majority of British legislators regulate their Parliamentary proceedings by a wretchedly low standard. With them, it is not what is *morally right*, but what is *politically expedient*. They deem it expedient to try and conciliate the favour of men, who regard them as heretics, by an indirect system of bribery! Such ignoble policy, so unworthy of Englishmen, has called forth the indignant reproof of our Transatlantic brethren. Dr. Tyng, of New York, in a speech at a public Meeting in London, May, 1857, thus expressed himself:—"I have heard with delight, in the debates of your Parliament, the continued reiteration of a purpose to withstand that degrading grant which stands in the face of the whole Protestant world as a tribute paid to a supreme controlling power—a tribute to purchase peace, a sum paid to buy off the threatened attacks of the forces of that power against the safety of your land. Why, how the blood of every Englishman to his fingers' ends would blush if he was called upon to pay a tribute to buy off the hostility of France or Spain. To us I confess it is a wonder

* When Dr. Magee was Archbishop of Dublin, Lord Holland asked his Grace if he really believed the doctrines of the Church of Rome to be "damnable and idolatrous." The Archbishop gravely replied and with much dignity:—"My Lord, it cannot be of much importance to your Lordship to know my opinion on this subject, since your Lordship has yourself solemnly sworn that such is your own belief."

Bishop Burgess in his Letter to Lord Melbourne on the Idolatry and Apostasy of the Church of Rome says:—"You object, my Lord, to the imputation of idolatry, as applied by the Protestant Prelates of the Irish Church to the Church of Rome. The charge of idolatry was so applied by our Reformers of the sixteenth century, who were born and bred Papists, and knew by their own experience and knowledge what Popery was. It is so applied in our Liturgy and Homilies; and has been so applied by the best informed and most learned Protestants from their time to the present. It may be sufficient to quote the testimony of Bishop Jeremy Taylor:—"We know idolatry is a damnable sin; and we know, that the Roman Church, with all the artifices she could use, never can justify herself, or acquit the common practice (image worship) of idolatry." It is the legitimate language of Parliament, and has been the language of your Lordship's own solemn declaration, as often as you have taken your seat in either House of Parliament—in terms expressive of the most unequivocal *belief*, that 'the invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary, or any other saint, and the sacrifice of the mass, as now used in the Church of Rome, are superstitious and idolatrous.'"

that Englishmen, with all their pluck, should go on supporting with their money what they know to be iniquitous; and excuse me if I add, what your Government must know to be degrading, in order to preserve peace with the Pope of Rome!"

Our leading statesmen, *of all parties*, seem to be entirely destitute of *moral* courage. They constantly act under the influence of fear, and are deterred from doing their duty lest they should offend the religious prejudices of some party or another. Both India and Ireland afford abundant proofs of this timid, vacillating, pusillanimous policy. When Christianity is concerned they never go straightforward in the path of duty and leave the consequences to God: a worthless godless expediency comes in the way and says:—"We shall lose our Indian Empire;"—"We shall have a civil war in Ireland," or some such idle bugbear.

Many of our statesmen compromise their principles, and stultify, if they do not violate their oaths. They solemnly swear that they believe the religion of the Church of Rome to be idolatrous, but give no practical evidence whatever of such belief. Nor do they stop here: they have the temerity to denounce those who act more conscientiously and consistently. Even some of our leading statesmen are so forgetful of the obligations due to an oath that they pay little or no regard to it. Such moral obliquity may remind us of the dishonesty of the Tractarians, who put a non-natural construction upon Articles of religion which they have solemnly subscribed. Farewell to all confidence between man and man if oaths and solemn pledges are to be thus trifled with by Ministers of State and ministers of religion! A better example than this ought to be set the humbler classes of society. If those who fill offices in the State were men who fear God, and had the best interests of their country at heart, we should then see a little more *patriotism* among our public men. They should, moreover, be men of *Christian principles*, with moral courage to maintain those principles. We should then see God's blessing upon our country instead of his sore judgments.

The time has arrived when British statesmen should be called upon to discourage and discountenance idolatry in every possible way. All grants to such an idolatrous community as the Church of Rome ought at once and for ever to be discontinued. The endowment of Maynooth is a *great national sin, eminently calculated to call down God's judgments upon our country*. To support this endowment is to support and encourage idolatry. We have seen the terrible consequences of pandering to this sin in India, and what can we expect if our statesmen tamper with it in England? They have shown every disposition to foster the Popish element, their sympathies being with Popery rather than with Protestantism. In Ireland, especially, Protestants and their religion have not been protected as they ought to have been. Add to which, large grants from the public purse are being annually made to Popish seminaries, where children are brought up in falsehood, superstition, and idolatry, and are taught to believe all the fabulous legends

and pretended miracles which the priests of Rome, even at this time of day, have the effrontery to palm upon the world as Christian verities.

The Maynooth Endowment Act, like the Romish Relief Bill, has entirely disappointed the expectations of its advocates. Why then add folly to sin by perpetuating such an endowment?

The Petitions presented against the Maynooth Grant, although they have reason and religion on their side, have not met with the respect to which they are fairly entitled. The following, from the Bishop and clergy of Down, Connor, and Dromore, may be taken as a good specimen of these Petitions. It states "that many of the doctrines held by the Church of Rome are, in the belief of your Petitioners, inconsistent with, and contrary to, the truths contained in Holy Scripture, and many of the practices observed in that Church are idolatrous and superstitious; and that, therefore, no assistance ought to be given out of the national resources of a Protestant State for the propagation of such doctrines and practices.

"That the instruction given in the College of Maynooth is such as to strengthen the belief of such unscriptural doctrines in the minds of those who are educated there, and thereby to propagate the same doctrines through the country; and that it can be proved, on an examination of the system of instruction there pursued, that the class-books used in the said College are of a pernicious, irreligious, and immoral character.

"That it is notorious, from inquiries already made by public authority, that the government and discipline of the College of Maynooth are administered by persons who are, almost without exception, members of the Society of Jesuits, a Society whose principles lead to the subversion of lawful authority and social order, and the extension of which was expressly sought to be prevented by the Act passed for the relief of Roman Catholics in 1829."

The above reasoning is unanswerable, and must carry conviction to every candid and unprejudiced mind. But the advocates of the Maynooth Grant are deaf to reason, and shut their eyes to the real character of Popery. They do not believe that it is an anti-Christian, anti-social system, wholly antagonistic to Christianity, nor are they aware that it is the greatest of all curses for a nation to be under its thralldom. The Rev. Charles Bradley, in a sermon preached on November 5, 1843, observes:—"We Englishmen know not how to appreciate Popery; most of us have never seen it; we know not what it is; our forefathers had seen it, they knew what it was, and they detested and abjured it. . . . That our land is in danger there can hardly be a doubt. Let us, one and all, beseech Him that if He must visit this guilty land with his judgments, he will visit it with any judgment rather than Popery. I have seen it in its mastery, where it was unfettered with human laws; and I can only say, that it never entered my mind to conceive the deformity of the thing, the degradation to which it could sink man, and the misery it could inflict on him, until I so beheld it. Among all the sore judgments that God holds in his hand for a sinful Christian

nation, there is scarcely one so much to be dreaded as this. Oh! may God in his great mercy save our dear England from such a curse."

May this solemn warning have its due influence on our minds now that God has a controversy with us on account of our national sins. The Rev. G. Townsend, in his "Accusations of History against the Church of Rome," says:—"I have called Popery '*the enslaver and curse of mankind*,' and the most deliberate survey of the state of Europe justifies the severity of my expression."

We meet with the following remarks in the "Quarterly Review" for June, 1856, p. 215:—"Of all bad Governments that of the Pope is generally acknowledged to be the worst. After reigning for centuries over a favoured territory, teaching and moulding at its will a race richly endowed with physical and intellectual gifts, the result is that two foreign armies are required to repress the just irritation of the people towards its rulers. Far from desiring to effect improvements, the endeavour of the Pontiff is to retard all progress, and shut out every ray of light which could relieve the mediæval darkness in which the Papacy had its being."

Robert Hall says:—"From a settled persuasion that Popery still is what it always was—a detestable system of impiety, cruelty, and imposture, fabricated by the father of lies—we feel thankful at witnessing any judicious attempt to expose its enormities and retard its progress."

Surely, if anything is calculated to lower our leading statesmen in the esteem of the public, it is the servile manner in which they truckle to Popery for the sake of place, and their attempts to make it appear that there is but little difference between the religion of the Church of Rome and that of the Church of England.

Lord Derby, in his speech on the Oaths' Bill, is reported to have said,— "With regard to the highest interests and principles of our religion, we are closely identified with the Roman Catholics, though with them we have broad differences of opinion, differences respecting which it was thought necessary, in our legislative capacity, to impose certain restrictions; nevertheless, in all the great truths of religion we and the Roman Catholics are one."

Bishop Burgess, in his letter to Lord Melbourne, who had asserted that "the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church are fundamentally the same with those of the Church of England," says,— "My Lord, the doctrines of the Roman Church are so far from being fundamentally the same with those of our Church that they are fundamentally and essentially opposed to them, and subversive of them."

There is something in official life that serves to cauterize the conscience. Statesmen of the present day are a degenerate race. Coquetting with Popery,* pandering to idolatry, and trifling with oaths, have blunted their

* The "Christian Observer" says:—"The marked countenance given to Popery by those who call themselves the 'Liberal' party, is one of the most strange features of these eventful times. Formerly Popery and arbitrary power were considered coincident; and what has occurred to separate them? We know of nothing."

moral perceptions, and rendered them incapable of discerning between Christianity and idolatry. Even the "Times" says:—"Late years have, as we have often observed, contributed in an unusual degree to the destruction of political reputation, and it is expedient on every ground that this process should be arrested at the earliest possible period."—April 14, 1856.

Again, the "Times" says:—"We are ashamed, in construing the words and writings of noblemen and gentlemen who have held high office, and aspire to hold it again, to expose arts such as moved the indignation and pointed the irony of the author of '*Provincial Letters*,' but it has come to this; those doctrines of mental reservation, and of words taken in their non-natural sense, which disgrace the followers of Loyola, have become stock arguments in the mouths of Members of the British House of Commons."

Once more:—"Of all professions," says the "Times," "statesmanship is that in which the greatest laxity of practice is tolerated by the usages of society. Concealment, evasion, factious combinations, the surrender of convictions to party objects, and the systematic pursuit of expediency, are things of daily occurrence among men of the highest character once embarked in the contention of political life."

Some of our public men are so reckless of reputation that they side with our enemies against their own country. Their speeches have been translated and widely circulated on the Continent. Lord Palmerston has on more than one occasion remonstrated with those whose political conduct is thoroughly unpatriotic and disloyal. His Lordship observed in the House of Commons, that "It was customary with some Members of the House to take part with every foreigner against every Englishman." Again, in reference to the Chinese war, in his Address to the electors of Tiverton, his Lordship asked,— "Will the British nation give their support to men who have thus endeavoured to make the humiliation and degradation of their country the stepping-stone to power?"

The truth is, as the "Times" justly remarks, "The subjection of all a man's faculties to party spirit prevents him from rising to the level of patriotic feeling." As water cannot rise above its level, neither can statesmen rise above their principles. Pressure from without may force them to adopt better measures, but they manifest no disposition to alter their *policy*, which is essentially atheistical. It is based upon the assumption that God is *not* the moral Governor of the world, and that they can do without Him in their councils. Their whole dependance is on "an arm of flesh," and they proudly and rebelliously say,— "We will not have this Man to reign over us."

We may confidently hope, and ought devoutly to pray, that the dreadful atrocities which have been perpetrated in India may be overruled for good; that the eyes of our countrymen may be opened to see that all false, superstitious, and idolatrous religions are a terrible scourge in the world, and that those who are the slaves of such Satanic systems are wholly unfit to be entrusted with power.

It is clearly the duty of Christian rulers to make themselves acquainted with the *character* of the people whom they govern and employ, especially when they are entrusted with weapons of war. If their religion is of such a debasing kind as to transform them into fiends and demons, whose element is treachery, cruelty, and lust, what confidence can be reposed in them? It needs but a little common sense, which everyone has a right to exercise, to see that it was the height of folly and infatuation to strengthen the fortifications of the principal arsenal in India, and then consign it to the keeping of such degraded creatures. Men reap as they sow. We have sown the wind and are now reaping the whirlwind. Every effort should be made to Christianize and civilize the natives, and raise them from their present abject, base, and miserable condition. Here it is that the British Government in India has been so criminally remiss; instead of advancing the cause of Christianity in India, they have done everything to impede it.

If Protestants will arouse themselves from their lethargy and rise to the present great emergency, they have now a golden opportunity of urging upon the Executive and Legislative authorities, with a voice that cannot be resisted, the necessity of a *total change of policy*. Christianity, that best of God's gifts to fallen man, must no longer be ignored, discouraged, or dishonoured, whilst false, blasphemous, idolatrous, cruel, and obscene religions are cherished and supported. Such atrociously wicked policy can no longer be endured. These authorities have been, and still are, chargeable with such policy. They may try to whitewash Popery, and connive at the impurities of the confessional and the cruelties of the Inquisition, but they only betray their own ignorance and damage their own reputation by pursuing such a course. Idolatry must be called by its own appropriate name. All who make light of this sin, or palliate and excuse it, should be ranked among the opponents of Christianity, be their position in the country what it may. Idolatry is so offensive to God, and so destructive of man's happiness, both, here and hereafter, that there ought to be no halting between two opinions upon this subject. Protestants need be very decided and outspoken when this sin is in question, and allow no false notions of charity to come in the way of their faithfulness. No confidence should be placed in mere worldly politicians. Their object has hitherto been to un-Christianize the Legislature by admitting into it Romanists and Jews. Expediency is their god, and they recognise no other in their public proceedings. Many of them, it is to be feared, have been brought up without any acquaintance with the elementary truths of Christianity: hence the ignorance they betray whenever they venture to touch upon the subject of religion. One, formerly distinguished for his love of economy and reform, had the impiety to say that the doctrine of Divine Providence was all "cant, humbug, and hypocrisy." This involves disbelief in the inspired volume.

Notwithstanding the efforts made by Satan and his emissaries to defeat God's beneficent designs, and his gracious purposes of salvation to our lost and ruined race, a faint streak appears in the horizon, giving promise of

that "Sun of righteousness," whose glorious beams will dissipate the mists of error, sin, and prejudice, and whose coming will be attended with the overthrow of all Antichristian powers, which the Lord "shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming." Then shall "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever."

Blessed be God, a great movement is being made in the right direction. The Word of God is being extensively circulated, the principles of the Gospel are being widely diffused, and enlightened Christians, full of ardour and zeal, are devoting themselves to the missionary cause. All this must sooner or later tell upon the strongholds of our great spiritual adversary. Hindooism, Mohammedanism, and Popery, those formidable antagonists of Christianity, which have so long kept their victims in ignorance, vice, and superstition, are likely to receive a terrible blow. The Indian revolt, and the conduct of Romanists in reference to this fearful catastrophe, show what man is without Christianity, and when the restraints which keep him in check are removed.

To conclude in the solemn words of that illustrious patriot and martyr, Lord William Russell:—"I believe that Popery is breaking in upon this nation, and that those who advance it will stop at nothing to carry on their design. I am heartily sorry that so many Protestants give their helping hand to it; but I hope God will preserve the Protestant religion and this nation, though I am afraid it will fall under *very great trials and very sharp sufferings*."