

AN ADDRESS
TO THE
CHAIRMAN
OF THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY,

OCCASIONED BY
MR. TWINING'S LETTER
TO THAT GENTLEMAN,
ON THE DANGER OF INTERFERING IN THE RELI-
GIOUS OPINIONS OF THE NATIVES OF INDIA,
AND ON THE VIEWS OF THE
British and Foreign Bible Society,
AS DIRECTED TO INDIA.

BY THE REV. JOHN OWEN, M. A.
CURATE OF FULHAM, AND ONE OF THE GRATUITOUS
SECRETARIES OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN
BIBLE SOCIETY.

“ We have been sadly defective in what we owed to God and Man, since we have had a footing in this country, (viz. India,) as well by departing most shamefully from our Christian profession ourselves, as in withholding those sources of moral perfection from the natives which true Christianity alone can establish.”

See Report lately made to the Governor and Council at Madras, by the Rev. Dr. KER, Chaplain.

SECOND EDITION.

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE
SECOND EDITION.

A SECOND impression of these Remarks having been suddenly and speedily called for, I cannot avail myself of any hints which the judgment of persons whose opinions I revere, might suggest for rendering the Address more worthy of the cause. I have, I trust, done something: but I have left large scope for the exertions of abler pens. The question at issue is of awful magnitude: and will, I trust, be felt and treated as such!

I cannot dismiss this Advertisement without warmly recommending a very excellent and able Paper addressed to the Proprietors of India Stock, subscribed a PROPRIETOR, which came into my hands while I was preparing this second impression.

Fulham, Dec. 16, 1807.

TO

EDWARD PARRY, Esq.

CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

SIR,

MR. TWINING having avowed himself the Author of a Letter addressed to you as Chairman of the East India Company, "On the Danger of interfering in the Religious Opinions of the Natives of India, and on the Views of the British and Foreign Bible Society as directed to India;" and having, in addition to the authentication of that Letter, announced his intention of bringing the matter which it contains, "in concurrence with many most respectable Proprietors,"* under the consideration of a General Court; I feel it a duty which I owe to the Society, the Company, and the Public, to trouble you with a few remarks on that extraordinary publication. While the Let-

* Preface to Second Edition.

ter to which I allude continued anonymous, I had a difficulty in persuading myself that it deserved, or would be thought to require, any serious animadversion. But whatever judgment I may have formed of Mr. Twining's production, I cannot be indifferent to the influence which it will derive from the station and character of its author;—and the countenance of those “many respectable Proprietors” who concur in approving, and have pledged themselves to support it. Under this change of circumstances, my opinion of its importance has, I confess, experienced a correspondent change. I see in it, not the hasty, random, and ephemeral pamphlet; but the deliberate, formal, and accredited instrument: not one of those fortuitous and solitary attacks upon the British and Foreign Bible Society, which have gone to their grave, without an owner to claim, or an admirer to regret them; but a solemn and concerted declaration, which is to be put upon record, of open and unalterable hostility against the circulation of the Holy Scriptures among the Nations of the East; and against all attempts whatever to evangelize one of the most populous and benighted portions of the Habitable World.

This impression, Sir, has overruled all the scruples I had about breaking that silence which my feelings and my employments equally admonished me to

keep. And I trust, Sir, it will be accepted as some apology for the little concoction and arrangement which the ensuing remarks may appear to have received, that they must be written with rapidity, in order to anticipate your discussion; and that if any other advocate had interposed his good offices, they would never have been written at all. I think it at the same time my duty to assure you, that I offer them to your consideration as an Individual, and not as an Officer of the Society with which I am connected. I write without communication with any person whatsoever: and desire to be considered as alone responsible for every thing I may advance on its behalf. Happy should I have been, Sir, had the task of maintaining so important a cause devolved upon an advocate, possessed at once of better qualifications and more leisure for doing justice to its defence.

The British and Foreign Bible Society, Sir, has been formally charged with having discovered "a strong disposition to interfere in the religious opinions of the native inhabitants of India."* Now, Sir, it will save me in the present, and your Court in a future stage of the business, much waste both of time and words, if we come to an immediate understanding upon the terms in which the accusation is couched. By Religious interference (which is the question at issue), that mode of proceeding

* Letter, p. 3.

is to be understood, which trespasses in some way or other, upon the lawful liberty of the subject in matters affecting his Religion. Interference in this sense (and in any other sense it is always innocent, sometimes necessary, and often laudable) presumes the employment of force under some of its modifications either of restraint or compulsion, either of preventing people from exercising a Religion which they choose, or urging upon them the exercise of one which they refuse.* Now, Sir, if I could discover in the views of the Bible Society any tendency to act or to countenance such interference as this in the remotest degree, I should concur with your informant in considering "our possessions in the East," and, what is still more important, the inviolable rights of conscience, "in a situation of most imminent and unprecedented peril;" and would give him my thanks for exciting you "to step forth and arrest the progress of such rash and unwarrantable proceedings."†

If any such design as has been imputed does exist, it must be found either in the OBJECT of

* "I speak not" (says Dr. Ker) "of *interfering* with their religious prejudices, or endeavouring to convert the natives by an effort on the part of the British Government. Conversion, in my opinion, must be the consequence which would naturally flow from our attention to their moral instruction, and their more intimate acquaintance with the English character."

† Letter, p. 5.

the Society, its EAST INDIAN PATRONAGE, or its ACTUAL PROCEEDINGS. I shall request your attention, Sir, to a few observations upon each of these in their order.

And, first, as to the OBJECT of the Society. You have been told, Sir, that “the *chief* object” of the Society “is the *universal* dissemination of the Christian Faith.”* With what degree of truth and correctness this assertion is made, the first Article of the Society’s Constitution will show :

“The Designation of this Society shall be the British and Foreign Bible Society, of which the SOLE OBJECT shall be to encourage a *wider* CIRCULATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.”

Art. I. P. 25. Report I.

Thus, Sir, it appears, in the very outset, that the Author has either misconceived, or misrepresented, that fundamental particular, upon which, above all others, it was important that he should have been faithful and exact. He has been guilty of a Misnomer in drawing up his Indictment, which, not only in point of form, but of substance also, must prove fatal to the Prosecution of his Cause. The Society which I undertake to defend, does not answer to the designation under which he accuses it; nor does it belong to that class in which he has placed it. Whatever may be the *end* which

* Letter, p. 4.

the Society contemplates, that only can be considered as its *object*, towards which its means are directed, and in which they all converge and terminate. That central, that ultimate point, in the case of the Society under consideration, is, as we have seen, Sir,—not “the Dissemination of the Christian Faith,”—but “THE CIRCULATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.” In this respect, Sir, the Society possesses a characteristic feature, which discriminates it from every voluntary association on an extensive scale for religious purposes now in existence, and brings the question of its merits or demerits within very narrow and convenient bounds.

There exists, Sir, in this country, as you very well know, a most venerable and useful Institution, “The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.” This Society may be accurately enough represented within the limits prescribed by its charter, (and happy should I be to see British India within those limits), as having for its *object*, the *Dissemination of the Christian Faith*. The latitude of its designation, and the generality with which its object is expressed, allow to this Society an unlimited choice of means. It may define and systemize and classify the several points of Christian Theology: it may issue Tracts on all and any matters of Doctrine and Discipline, at its discretion: it may employ Missionaries and Catechists,

erect Churches and Schools, and proceed *ad libitum*, for the accomplishment of its purposes. And why?—For the reason above given: because its Designation is *general* and its object *undefined*. Not so the British and Foreign Bible Society. It can do but *one* act for the propagation of Christianity; it can distribute but *one* Book; and that Book—the BIBLE. It can support no Missionaries, erect no Churches, endow no Schools, disseminate no Tracts; it cannot issue even a Dissertation to recommend the Bible, nor annex a single Note to explain it. Its designation and its object confine it to the circulation of the Scriptures: it can do nothing out of these limits; it can do nothing beyond them.

Such being the case, I am really at a loss to imagine, on what grounds of even remote plausibility, any man can have reasoned himself into a belief, that a Society, whose line of operation is so precisely defined, whose measures of proceeding are drawn from vague and indefinite generalities into one sole, exclusive, and cognizable object; can be chargeable with the design of culpable interference in the religious opinions of those to whose voluntary improvement its services are devoted.

Does the *translation* of the Scriptures into the native languages of India imply such culpable interference? Putting out of the question in what degree literature, and arts, and polity, are con-

cerned to cultivate those ancient and venerable languages; it cannot I think admit of a question, that we are bound, both in justice and gratitude, to impart to those nations over which Providence has given us a beneficial dominion, some portion at least of the light we enjoy, through the only channels by which they can receive it. Besides, if we derive into our own language the spurious morality of India,* it is but just that we should pour back into theirs the genuine morality of Christendom. If we acquaint ourselves, through the medium of translation, with their mythological absurdities and amatory trifles, it is but fair that we should afford them an opportunity of becoming acquainted, through the same innocent medium, with the august mysteries of human redemption, and the solid realities of the Gospel. There is, at all events, nothing rude, or offensive, or unjust, in such a commerce. It is, to say the least, giving gold for brass. Heathens have, certainly, no reason to complain of the exchange.

But if the translation of the Scriptures be innocent, the *circulation* of them may possibly be construed into an act of aggression upon the systems of India. I cannot pretend to say what answer a Brahmin might give if consulted, whether the Sooder might receive a copy of that Shaster in

* See the Code of Gentoo Laws, translated into English by Mr. Halhed.

which God is represented to be no *respecter of persons*. But, whatever way his answer might incline, it would in my judgment determine nothing. The Scriptures, as a revelation from heaven, have at least as good a claim to a free circulation, in whatever language they may happen to appear, as any Treatises upon law, or morals, or polite literature. For the mode of distribution, the Society makes no specific provision. That must depend upon local wants and facilities; and will be naturally regulated, and restrained, so far as restraint may be necessary, by the laws and usages of the several countries in which distribution is made. Persons in a situation to know the necessities and disposition of the people, will, it is presumed, either sell them as an article of commerce to purchasers, or gratuitously bestow them as a dole of charity upon petitioners. There is no room for apprehending that they will be forced upon any. They are messengers that speak not to the ear, but to the eye: they are oracles that remain silent, till they are consulted. In short, as they can do no one good who is not willing to search them, it is utterly impossible that they should be forced upon any one who is unwilling to receive them.

Since therefore the object of the Society is not, as has been stated, "The Dissemination of the

Christian Faith," but the *circulation of the Holy Scriptures*; an object, simple and determinate; and at the same time, beneficial and inoffensive;—it follows, that the views of the Society, so far as their OBJECT is concerned, are not of a description to justify the charge of *interference*; nor consequently to occasion in the Governors of India, either at home or abroad, any reasonable ground of alarm.

I come now, Sir, in the next place to consider the PATRONAGE which the Society enjoys in persons connected with the administration of INDIAN affairs. On this part of his charge, the accuser of the Society is peculiarly and rhetorically severe. "If the leading Members of that Society are also leading Members of the East India Company; and not only of the East India Company, but of the Court of Directors; nay, Sir, not only of the Court of Directors, but of the Board of Controul; if, I say, these alarming hypotheses are true, then*, &c." Now, Sir, it does certainly turn out, that these alarming hypotheses are, with a little qualification, substantially true. Mr. Thornton, the Director, is a Member; Mr. Grant, the Deputy Chairman, is a Vice President; and Lord Teignmouth, "late Governor General of India, and now a Member of the Board of Controul," is Pre-

* Letter, p. 5.

sident of the Society. But, Sir, I must caution your correspondent against inferring, and inviting others to infer, from the mere existence of such names on the list of the Society's patrons, that there is any thing in its construction and its design, which particularly identifies it with *oriental* affairs. He might as reasonably identify every society that is ushered into notice under the names of Angerstein and Goldsmidt and Bonar and Watts, with objects of monied or commercial speculation. The fact is, Sir, that the Society sought these East Indian Patrons, and not they the Society. It came, with all its machinery, ready made to their hands: and they extended to it,—as to what institution having religion and morals and human happiness for its object do they not?—the benefit of their countenance and their contribution. Really, Sir, to judge from the stress which your Informant lays upon this part of his accusation, both in the text and the notes of his Letter, one should be led to conclude, that your two Directors, Mr. Grant and Mr. Thornton, never passed a sleeping moment without dreaming about the Society, nor a waking one without labouring for it. I believe in my conscience that they have the interest of the Institution at heart, and would gladly embrace every opportunity to promote it. But it does so happen, that neither of these gentlemen

has, to my knowledge, attended a single Committee-Meeting of the Society during a period of more than three years and a half, that it has existed; though they are severally qualified to do so, the former by his Office, the latter by his Subscription. These gentlemen have deserted no duty to the Society, Sir, by absenting themselves; and must in all probability have deserted many duties both to business and benevolence had they acted otherwise. They have only declined the exercise of a privilege: but I think, Sir, it must be obvious, that they would never have allowed such a privilege to lie dormant, had they entertained the design insinuated by their accuser, of influencing the Society to particular measures, and employing it as an instrument to "disturb the religious systems of India."*

Lord Teignmouth, Sir, accepted the Presidency of the Society, not with that sort of unwillingness which is vulgarly reported to qualify the members of our order for a Mitre; but with that reluctance, which they who know his Lordship will believe to have been sincere, and which I take upon myself to assure you, Sir, was overruled by considerations, with which Indian affairs had not the remotest connection. At the time in which his Lordship became President of the Society he had *ceased* to be Governor General of India, and had

* Letter, p. 4.

not *begun* to be a Member of the Board of Control. I do not mean to say that his Lordship would have considered a connection with Government, or the India House, as interfering with his *personal* right to patronize a Society whose object approved itself to his understanding and his heart: all I mean to contend for is, that his Lordship had no such connection, when, at the instance of Personages whom it would do him honour to name, he took the Society under his Patronage; and that he therefore stands completely exonerated from the suspicion of projecting it as an instrument of interference with India. It is true, Sir, I cannot defend his Lordship's conduct subsequently to his acceptance of the Presidency upon the same principles as those which I have adopted in defending his Brethren of Leadenhall Street: much as I wish his Lordship's reputation to come pure out of this Trial, I cannot dissemble on his behalf—*Mentiri nescio*—He has not been a sleeping Partner in the concern. No, Sir, I owe the confession to truth: that for much of that order, correctness, and efficiency which have exposed it to the attacks of Bigotry and Irreligion, and made it invulnerable by them all,—the Institution is indebted to the condescending, assiduous, and patient attention which the Noble President has paid to its concerns. If a conduct like this should expose his Lordship to the displeasure of that Court in which his merits are to be canvassed; if it should not bring honour to

himself and confusion to his accusers; I can only say, that I shall envy neither the principles nor the feelings of his Judges.

I have hitherto confined myself to a defence of these gentlemen from the imputation of *blame*, for having, under their circumstances, connected themselves with the Society: but I will take upon myself to say, Sir, that there would have been some room for imputing blame to them on the other hand, if they had employed such circumstances as a ground for *declining* the connection. It must be remembered, Sir, that we are speaking of a Society, which has been shown to have a definite object, and that object unexceptionable, the circulation of the Scriptures; not in India and the United Kingdom; but in all countries that need, desire, and are capable of using them; as well as our own: in short, to adopt the Society's own designation—
AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Now, Sir, I will take things at their worst: I will suppose Mr. Thornton, and Mr. Grant, and Lord Teignmouth, to have stood, when the Institution was proposed to their patronage, in the precise situation which they now occupy, with respect to the India House and the Executive Government. These gentlemen would probably have appeared, in the eyes of their accusers, to advantage, had they severally pleaded, “ I am an East India Director, therefore I cannot join you; and I am successor to the East India Chair; therefore I cannot patronize you; and I am a Member of the Board

of Controul, therefore I must be excused presiding over you:" in mine, I confess, they would have made a very different figure. I should have concluded that they were actuated by a spirit not very dissimilar to that, which converted a farm, a yoke of oxen, and a wife, into pleas for declining a religious duty: nor do I think that I should have stood alone in adopting such a conclusion.

Indeed, Sir, if the Bible be a good book, and consequently facilitating the acquisition of it in their vernacular tongues to all nations who may be disposed to receive it, be a good thing, I am at a loss to see how any station or employment can justify a Christian in refusing to such an undertaking, his countenance and support; and, to the utmost of his ability, his co-operation. If official employment is to neutralize personal exertion, if a connection with the Executive Government, or the India House, is to operate as a disability upon those who hold it, to promote, at their discretion, the circulation of the Scriptures; to what a state of moral vassalage are the numerous members of each department reduced? For if the principle applies to any, it applies to all; and then see, Sir, what is the consequence: not a single individual in the one department, from the First Lord of the Treasury down to the lowest officer of Excise; nor in the other, from the President of the Board of Controul down to the meanest porter in the house, will be at liberty to aid the propagation of Christianity out of the limits of the kingdom,

though he should have the strongest religious motives for desiring it, and every facility for peaceably securing its accomplishment.

It would be, Sir, a waste of argument to attempt reasoning down such an hypothesis as your correspondent has set up, in his insinuations against the East Indian patronage of the Bible Society. His present Majesty's Great-grandfather, to his immortal honour, patronized the first Mission that went among the Hindoos; and if the nerves of your Correspondent will allow him to cut open a few more pages of Dr. Buchanan's Memoir, in which he thinks he has discovered "such sanguinary doctrine,"* he will find copies of two letters † from that truly Christian Monarch to the primitive Missionaries, written in a spirit very different from that which it is the object of Mr. Twining's Letter to infuse into the Court of Proprietors. His present Majesty is not less distinguished than was his royal Ancestor, by the encouragement which he has given to religion. It will not, I should think, be very easy to persuade Him, that he has endangered his government, either at home or abroad, by admitting, or rather adopting, into his councils, a nobleman

* "I really cannot cut open the leaves which contain the sequel of such *sanguinary* doctrine."—Letter, p. 27.

† This *sanguinary* doctrine of Dr. Buchanan, gentle reader, consists in a recommendation to the Civil Power to encourage Christianity among the natives of India, and to coerce the sanguinary spirit of the Mahometans by suitable restraints. See further, p. 26.

whose only fault is that he loves the Scriptures, presides over a Society that promotes their circulation, and differs from certain individuals in thinking, that their translation and distribution in the vernacular tongues of India, will strengthen the allegiance, exalt the morals, and improve the happiness of our Hindoo and Mahometan subjects.

Having said enough, Sir, I trust, to show, that there is nothing, either in the Object of the Society, or its Oriental Patronage, which can justify the suspicion that has been entertained of its pernicious design, I shall now briefly examine, whether such justification can be found in that part of its PROCEEDINGS which has been produced in evidence against it.

'Sir, I have looked most carefully over those Extracts from the Society's Reports and Correspondence which have occasioned in the mind of our accuser such suspicion and alarm; and I do most sincerely assure you, that I cannot discover any thing upon the record, by which the dexterity of special pleading itself could succeed in impugning the correctness and propriety of its proceedings. I see in them no step of which the Society has occasion to repent, no expression for which it ought to apologize, no measure at home or abroad from which it has any but the best of consequences to expect.

It appears, indeed, from these Extracts, that the Society wished to do something for China, that

great empire in which are more than 300 millions of persons, that in matters of religion cannot discern their right hand from their left.* It appears that they felt for 30 millions of Tartars, and 50 millions of Indians, and sent types for a Turkish New Testament to Karass, and 2000*l.* in aid of Oriental translations, to Calcutta. These are all the facts which the evidence contains; and what do they prove? For the Society they prove much, and will I am persuaded attach the majority of Mr. Twining's readers to its interests: but for Mr. Twining what do they prove?—NOTHING.

I have laid much stress, Sir, in the early part of this Defence, upon the simplicity and determinateness of the Society's OBJECT: it is worthy of your attention, with what undeviating fidelity and correctness that object is prosecuted through the whole of these proceedings. Whether you advert, Sir, to the text of the Report, or the Extracts of Correspondence, you will find nothing discoursed of—but the *Scriptures*. In all the Society's communications with India or the Caucasus, with Calcutta or Karass, the Bible, and that alone, is the object of inquiry and of report: details of its progress make up the whole of their recital; and when they dilate at all, it is upon the grievous topic of its scarcity, or the joyous prospect of its effects. If the Society corresponds with Missionaries, whether directly or indirectly, it does not communicate with

* Jonab, iv. 11.

them *quasi* Missionaries: nor interfere in any degree with their profession or pursuits. So precisely is the limit of the Society's object defined, that, so far as that object is concerned, it can and does correspond with members of every Christian denomination throughout the world, from the Roman Catholic Priest in Swabia, to the Chief Minister of the Baptist Missionaries* at Serampore.

But it seems the Author of the Letter does not know "who these Missionaries may be." Sir George Barlow would have informed him, in whose printed speech they are acknowledged with respect, as "the Society of Protestant Missionaries at Serampore." His Majesty's Librarian can inform him, by exhibiting to his view, upon the royal shelves, a copy of the first Bengalee New Testament imported into this country, the work of those very Missionaries, whom, it seems, it is a credit, and that in a senior merchant on the Bengal establishment, not to know "who they may be."

It has become a sort of fashion, Sir, among Authors who wish to set all the world right in matters of Religion, to affect a sort of ostentatious ignorance of the very subject upon which they profess to write. Thus, Sir, you shall read a long Caveat, the dullness of which is only relieved by its ill-humour, against Calvinists, and Enthu-

* "I know not who these Missionaries may be, but this Letter proves their intercourse with the British and Foreign Bible Society." Note on p. 14.

siasts, and Methodists; and find the Author, either in the outset or at the close, declaring that he knows not wherein either of those characters consists; and what is more, taking credit to himself for making such a declaration. As for Mr. Carey, the Chief Minister of the Baptist Mission—the Correspondent whose Letter has been produced; he is known, I presume, to all those, who do not consider Literature disgraced by an alliance with Piety. As Teacher of the Bengalee, Mahratta, and Shanscrit languages, in the College of Fort William, and a Member of the Asiatic Society, Mr. Carey is not a Correspondent whom any Institution need be anxious to disown. It is, however, Sir, important to observe that the Society's Correspondence with Mr. Carey goes no farther than to the translation of the Scriptures. It stops within that line, which defines, as I have before observed, the object of the Society; and which every atom of its history shows to have been most religiously observed.

What has been said of Mr. Carey's Letter may be applied with equal truth to that of the Rev. D. Brown. It treats of the Translation of the Scriptures, and of that alone; and therefore adds another to the many monuments of the Society's fidelity in adhering to the object of its institution. To *whom* that Letter, than which a more gratifying one to a Christian mind was never put upon record, was addressed, would have been matter

of little moment, had not an awkward attempt at Divination, and that for no very kind purpose, on the part of our Opponent, rendered it necessary to reveal it. The blank, Sir, is not to be filled up with the name of Mr. Grant, but with that of the humble Individual who has now the honour of addressing you. The cause of its *suppression** in the publication, was neither artifice nor fear, but a principle more nearly allied to virtue, for which, however, after what has happened, a Member of the Bible Society can expect to obtain but little credit with persons of our Opponent's way of thinking.

You may remember, Sir, with what rhetorical emphasis our Opponent dilated upon the potency of our East Indian Patronage. I trust I was not unsuccessful in reducing the extravagant dimensions of that bloated chimera. It is worthy of your observation, Sir, how strictly the proceedings of the Society, as produced in evidence against it, confirm the reasonings which I advanced on that particular. Carry your eye, Sir, along the 12 pages of Criminal Matter which our Opponent has gleaned from our Papers; and you will no where perceive any traces of that formidable influence which was represented as threatening such

* " I have no right to *guess* the *suppressed* name of the Gentleman to whom this Letter is addressed: but I believe I shall be correct in observing, that Mr. Brown was private Chaplain to C. Grant, Esq. in Bengal." Note, p. 13. of Letter.

disastrous effects. In one place only did he think he had found the vestige of a foot from Leadenhall Street; and in that one place was he mistaken. The inference is obvious; what Mr. Twining has failed to discover, others will look for in vain.

Let me now, Sir, be allowed to make my appeal to you, whether there be any thing in the Object, the Patronage, or the Proceedings, of the Society against which judgment is demanded, that can be construed into matter of offence to the Native Inhabitants of India. Could any object have been selected with more judgment? any Patronage have been employed with more mildness? any Proceedings have been conducted with more correctness? Has Mr. Twining showed, is he prepared to show, that the Society has aimed at any object but that which it professes; that the Patronage which it enjoys has been used for any purposes of intimidation or officious interference; that, in any one instance, it has been guilty of even an accidental aberration from the line of its profession? What then has Mr. Twining proved? I repeat, Sir, with confidence, what I have before declared,—He has proved NOTHING. I go farther, Sir, and challenge contradiction when I say, that he has not even *attempted* to prove any thing. What comments has he made on the Society's proceedings? NONE. For, if we except a few crippled Italics, and Patagonian Capitals, and a

cynical Note or two which vanished like the thistle down while we brushed over the evidence, he has left those Proceedings to speak for themselves, and they have spoken, Sir, as I trust has been shown,—every thing but what they were intended to prove.

Mr. Twining, Sir, has asserted much, predicted much, threatened much: but where are his *Facts*? He has asserted that your “possessions in the East are in a situation of most imminent and unprecedented peril:” He has predicted that “the arms of fifty millions of people will drive you” from Hindostan: He has threatened you with “the extermination” of “your Eastern Sovereignty.” But where are his premises for such conclusions? Where are his credentials for such vaticination? Has the Bible Society excited any alarm in Hindostan? Who then has been alarmed?—Has it given any offence? Who then has been offended?—Has it produced any remonstrance? From what quarter has that remonstrance come?—What Rajah, or Sultan, what Brahmin or Priest, what Hindoo or Mahometan, has audibly complained that his Shaster or his Koran are in danger? We hear of none: then where, Sir, I repeat, are Mr. Twining’s *facts*?

Why, truly, Sir, they are at Buenos Ayres and Rosetta and Vellore? What then were the expeditions to Egypt and South America undertaken for the propagation of Religion? Was this the

motive which actuated our Cabinet and influenced our Commanders, and produced the alternations of joy and sorrow at Whitehall and at Lloyd's? Doubtless the Turks liked us the less for being Christians, and the Spaniards for being Protestants: but does any human being believe, that, going as we did with arms in our hands, we should have shared a better fate, had we professed to plant the Crescent on the shores of Egypt, or the Cross on those of South America? And was the propagation of Christianity the object for shaving the upper lip of the native troops at Vellore, and forcibly effacing from their bodies the sacred mark of Cast? Will the Military Commanders who enjoined this act of personal violence, say—will the agents who executed it, say—will the Company who know the secret of the whole transaction, say—will Mr. Twining himself, with all his bias towards assertion, say—that the disasters which drenched that place in blood, had any connection, directly or indirectly, with the Dissemination of the Christian Faith? If not—then what lessons does such an occurrence teach us? Many I conceive against *Military* violence, but none that I can discern against *Missionary* kindness. It seems then, Sir, that the cases which Mr. Twining brings into comparison fail in two particulars in which parallel cases should at least agree: they have no resemblance to one another either in the *means* or the *end*. Really, Sir, a writer who confounds objects so distinct, and mea-

tures so dissimilar, may be pitied if he does it innocently, or blamed if he does it wilfully: but can in neither case expect that you should adopt his errors into your System of Oriental Administration.

And now, Sir, having done what I conceived to be my duty, I have only to apologize to you for the length of this address. I might have saved much both of your time and my own, if I could have prevailed upon myself to throw the burden of proof, where in truth it ought to rest, on the shoulders of the Accuser. I might have reasonably demurred to his gratuitous charges, and claimed an acquittal for the Society from the defect of evidence to convict it; but I wished to see it put fairly upon its trial: convinced that it would appear, upon a strict investigation, not merely innocent, but laudable; not only undeserving of blame, but entitled to commendation and support.

But while I have entered into detail where detail appeared necessary, I have scrupulously avoided it wherever it could be spared. With this view, Sir, I have not justified the Society for adopting as their opinion, that Christ will “bring *from all nations and religions, languages and kingdoms** of this world, some, as trophies of his triumph on

* This passage (extracted from the Letter of a Roman Catholic Priest in Swabia, to the Secretary of the Society, is *Italicised* by Mr. Twining, which is his typographical way of displaying the grounds of his “suspicion and anxiety.”

the Cross;" because I supposed, that they who know the Scriptures never doubted this position; and they who do not, would never be persuaded to believe it. In like manner, I have not apologized for the Society's calling Mahometanism "a Bloody and Degrading Superstition," because I did not conceive it deserved a better character; nor for its anticipating "the Downfall" of that System of Imposture, because I considered such an event to be a consummation, which Christians of every description both expected and desired. For similar reasons, Sir, I have declined affirmatively proving whatever did not seem absolutely to require it. I have not proved that it is the duty of the British Government, and therefore of the East India Company, to encourage Christianity among their Eastern subjects, because I thought a Community of Religion (so far as it could be effected) between the Governors and Governed, was recognized as a principle both of justice and of policy by all the States of Christendom.* I have not shown that the diffusion of Christianity among our Eastern fellow subjects is *desirable*, because I thought such position was distinctly comprehended in Mr. Twining's own admission of their darkness and infidelity:†

* The Portuguese, the Spaniards, and the French, have propagated the Romish faith in all their foreign settlements; and the Danes have not been indifferent to the promotion of the Protestant faith in theirs. How have the English acted in this respect?

† "Whose minds and doctrines are known to be obscured by the darkness of infidelity," Letter, p. 4.

nor have I argued that it is *practicable*, because, if the opposite opinions of Dr. Buchanan and Mr. Twining be considered as destroying one another, there still remains the recent, decided, and official testimony of Dr. Ker* in favour of such a conclusion.

I have not accounted for the *only* expression in Dr. Buchanan's Memoir which seemed to require an explanation, "the policy of COERCING the contemptuous spirit of our native subjects;" because the Society did not make itself accountable for any sentiments contained in that Memoir, but merely referred to it as evidence of a *fact*.† I might, however, have shown, that when reduced from Mr. Twining's favourite Capitals, and referred to the context from which it was unnaturally wrested, the expression "coercing" is not

* Dr. Ker, one of the Company's Chaplains at Madras, in a Report made to the Governor and Council, *by their Order*, speaks to this point as follows:

"Pure Christianity is far from being a Religion for which the highest cast of Hindoos have any disrespect," and again, "I do not mention this as an experiment, the result of which might be considered as problematical; the experiment has been already made, and the consequences have proved commensurate with the highest expectation which reasonable men could entertain."

† The Society, in its 2d Report, p. 133, as extracted by Mr. Twining, states certain Translations of the Scriptures into the Oriental languages, as actually going on in Bengal, and quotes an assertion to that effect from Dr. Buchanan's Memoir, p. 81.

only harmless, but proper. Dr. Buchanan, Sir, in describing the turbulent and bloody spirit of our native Mahometan subjects, proceeds, "A wise policy seems to demand, that we should use every means of coercing this contemptuous spirit of our native subjects." Who does not see, that the measure recommended is *civil* and not *religious* restraint. And are not all restraining laws made for the purposes of *civil coercion*? And if the civil power may not *coerce* the turbulence of its subjects, then can the magistrate never become "a terror to evil doers, but must bear the sword in vain." As for *coercion* in matters of religion, it is saying little to affirm that the Bible Society, and British Christians, and Dr. Buchanan himself, abhor the sentiment; they go further; they spurn the imputation which has attempted to fasten such a sentiment upon them.

I have not pointed out the comparative indifference, upon Mr. Twining's principles, between one religion and another, to the welfare of a people; nor the impossibility, on those principles, of India being Christianized by any human means, so long as it shall remain under the dominion of the Company; nor the alternative to which Providence is by consequence reduced, of either giving up that country to everlasting superstition, or of working some miracle* in order to accomplish its conversion;

* "I shall hope, Sir, that our native subjects in every part of the East will be permitted quietly to follow their own reli-

—because I considered such inferences as too obvious to be overlooked, and too shocking to be endured. Finally, Sir, I have ventured to take for granted, considering who would be my judges, and in what an awful crisis I write, that the Bible is the only Book which contains the revealed will of God; that the sooner it supersedes the Shaster and the Koran, the sooner will the happiness of India be consummated; and that the more we contribute, as a Nation and as Individuals, to promote this end by lawful means,—the greater blessings we shall draw down upon our commerce and our arms, upon ourselves and our posterity.

I have the Honor to be, Sir,

With great respect,

your faithful Servant,

Dec. 16, 1807.

JOHN OWEN,

gious prejudices and absurdities, untill it shall please the Omnipotent Power of HEAVEN to lead them into the paths of LIGHT and TRUTH."—LETTER, p. 31.

THE TWO LETTERS OF GEORGE I.

REFERRED TO IN PAGE 16.

“GEORGE, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To the Reverend and Learned BARTHOLOMEW ZIEGENBALGIUS, and JOHN ERNEST GRÜNDLERUS, Missionaries at Tranquebar, in the East Indies.

“REVEREND AND BELOVED,

“Your letters, dated the 20th January of the present year, were most welcome to us; not only because the work undertaken by you of converting the heathen to the Christian faith, doth, by the grace of God, prosper, but also because that *in this, our kingdom, such a laudable zeal for the promotion of the Gospel prevails.*

“We pray you may be endued with health and strength of body, that you may long continue to fulfil your ministry with good success; of which, as we shall be rejoiced to hear, so you will always find us ready to succour you in whatever may tend to promote your work, and to excite your zeal. We assure you of the continuance of our royal favour.

“GEORGE, R.

“HATTORP.”

Given at our Palace of Hampton
Court the 23d August, A. D.
1717, in the 4th year of our
Reign.

“ REVEREND AND BELOVED,

“ From your letters, dated Tranquebar, the 12th September, 1725, which some time since came to hand, we received much pleasure; since by them we are informed not only of your zealous exertions in the prosecution of the work committed to you, but also of the happy success which hath hitherto attended it, and which hath been graciously given of God.

“ We return you thanks for these accounts, and it will be acceptable to us, if you continue to communicate whatever shall occur in the progress of your Mission.

“ In the mean time, we pray you may enjoy strength of body and mind for the long continuance of your labours in this good work, to the glory of God, and the promotion of Christianity among the heathens, *that its perpetuity may not fail in generations to come.*

“ GEORGE, R.

“ Given at our Palace at St. James's, the 23d of February, 1727, in the 13th year of our Reign.”

THE END.