

THE CEYLON FRIEND.

September, 1876.

THE ELDER TO THE ELECT KYRIA AND THE BELOVED GAIUS.

A STUDY FOR THE TIMES.

BY THE

REV. J. O. RHODES.

CERTAIN persons profess to be able to read the dispositions and idiosyncracies of others in their ordinary handwriting, and, perhaps, there may be some basis of truth in their theory, though, if that be the case, it is affected and modified to such an extent by constantly varying circumstances as to become a guide so utterly unfair and unsafe that nobody ought ever to rely upon it for a moment. But be this theory what it may, we confidently hold that there are no surer nor more significant indications of a man's real character, than those to be found in his private, unstudied letters to intimate friends written, freely and fully, in all the abandon of familiar intercourse, with no public interests to serve; when the scribe unbosoms and unburdens himself, without the slightest suspicion that his outpourings will ever be handled by the world at large, and when there can be no possible motive for posing so as to catch the popular eye.

The New Testament gives us three of these strictly private documents, one by Paul the aged to his "brother in the Lord," Philemon; the others by John, "the beloved apostle," to two dear friends. Some one has said that a good letter is one which you wish had not been so short, and all these epistles certainly have this recommendation. How characteristic of

St. Paul is the communication sent by the hand of Onesimus. Nothing can exceed it in consummate address. How exquisitely dignity is blended with affection, delicacy with generosity, familiarity with courtesy, grace with tact, profound earnestness with intense selflessness. Good judges have called it the "Polite Epistle," and it has universally been admired as a model composition. It is full of the deepest pathos, and yet neither here nor in his "General Epistles" does the apostle disdain strokes of humour; and indeed he deems it consistent with apostolic decorum to indulge in a simple pun. In his solemn letter to the Corinthians he dared to make fun of the boasting pretensions of upstart nobodies, and to twit them, ironically as "those very chief apostles," nay, he even did not hesitate to echo the very words of their vulgar insolence, though, in so doing, he expressed himself with more force than politeness. For instance, he told them, according to the translation by an eminent philologist of the "be burdensome to" in the authorized version of 2 Cor. xii 13, 14, that he had not "sponged upon" them—and he did not intend to "sponge upon" them. With equal piquancy, he talks here, after the fashion of John Bunyan (we adopt a free rendering) of one "Master Profitable, who was once unprofitable, but who will henceforth deserve his name." But we must not linger, though there is much to tempt us, so much that the eloquent Lavater preached thirty-nine sermons on the twenty-five verses of this epistle, and published them in two volumes. St. Paul calls Philemon's attention to one sentence, which he had written himself, as indicated probably by the largeness of the characters (v. 19); and no wonder if they were clumsy as well as big, for he penned them with the weighted and cramped hand of an arm which had been chained for months, night and day, to soldier after soldier of the Imperial guard. But St. Paul always seems to have written in "large letters" (Gal vi. 11). An old author attributes this boldness in penmanship to the force of the apostle's convictions. However, it is not in how he wrote, so much as in what he wrote that we trace the indelible stamp of his fervent noble great-heartedness.

Nor are the private letters of the apostle John less characteristic of the writer than this epistle of Paul to Philemon. John's true, strong, transparent nature is revealed in every line, with all its womanlike gentleness and sweetness and simplicity and love; and yet with all its grand intolerance of shams, with all its burning and vehement anger against sin, expressed in words so much the more terrible, because they are so very calm, John does not shrink from saying that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John iii. 15), but

none the less tenderly on that account does he remember and care for the delicate health of his absent friend, in the prosperity of whose soul he so greatly rejoiced. (3 John 2.) We might have noted in Paul's letter to Philemon the spirit of pure and high devotion, which runs right through it. He was only writing to an old "fellow labourer" on a personal matter, and that, apparently, one of simply passing moment, though it was far from being really so, since in its treatment, the very death blow of slavery was struck. Still even the apostle himself was possibly unconscious of such a result, and, anyhow, he could unbend to an innocent play on words. Nevertheless it was as a Christian brother to a Christian brother that he wrote, and thanksgivings and prayers came as naturally as though he were writing a pastoral treatise on the profoundest mysteries of the Gospel. And this feature is, at least, equally marked in John's letters; indeed of the thirteen verses in the epistle to the lady Kyria as many as eight are found in his general epistle. We feel as sure whilst we read these messages that they are from the pen of the John of the Gospels, the John of whom it was said that he was a pillar of fire from head to foot, as we are satisfied at mid-day that the light of the world is shining, without looking up into the sky. I think that it is Gilfillan who speaks of Isaiah as an "eagle of the sun, whose nest is in Calvary." May we not apply the same figure to John the Evangelist? How triumphantly do his epistles ring with the joyous affirmation, "We know," "We know," "We know;" and, yet, do we not ever find him, as of old, "leaning on Jesus' bosom." This feeling about John is so beautifully embodied in one of the earliest hymns of the Christian Church that we will venture the risk of seeming pedantry by quoting a verse:—

*"Cœlum transit, veri rotam
 Solis vidit, ibi totam
 Mentis figens aciem;
 Speculator spiritalis
 Quasi seraphim sub alis,
 Dei vidit faciem."*

How pleasant it would be to be able to write to such an authority in our difficulties! Puzzled and perplexed as some of us are in Ceylon just now, if St. John were but get-at-able, how eagerly would we seek and follow his advice! I love and honour both Paul and Peter, but, I think, in a question affecting the glory of my Master, and the relative claims of my Master and his professed servants, I would rather sit at the feet of "the disciple whom Jesus loved." I would rather

hear the "Son of Thunder," go straight to the point with his scathing scorn of all compromise and concession between Christ and anti-Christ; his instinctive impatience of all mystical speculation, all logical quibbling, however plausible.

Take a case like the following. Supposing pastors should come to a church with considerable authority and many recommendations, who, whilst in word they confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, should so explain away the facts of the Saviour's birth and life and death, as practically to deny the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and the Ascension of our Divine Lord, with all the truths and hopes that rest upon those great realities. A kindly, generous disposition might shrink from condemning such teachers; might suggest that though their judgment be at fault there is no reason why we should grudge hospitality and fellowship; might quote those misleading lines:—

"There lives more faith in honest doubt
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

But how would the apostle have us act? Would you not give a good deal to know?

Or take another case, at first sight different but, in reality, the same in origin, for the fevered disorder, with which we have to do, has its hot as well as its cold stages. Supposing these would-be guides add to the words of the Book of our God, their own doctrines of symbolisms and ceremonies; supposing they make the Cross of Christ of none effect by their traditions, and put a man, robed or unrobed, between the sinner and salvation; supposing they interpret Scripture as we heard the Chaplain of a Bishop, on July 30th, interpret the seven loaves which were multiplied by Jesus to the feeding of the four thousand, as the sacraments with *two of which especially* that congregation of Protestants was familiar. How shall we treat such instructors? They are gentlemen and scholars; they are elegant and fashionable; they are cultured and influential. It is hard to seem unkind to them. Would that we had the apostle John to direct us! If we might but get a letter from *him* to the point! Is that indeed your wish? Well then you have it gratified.

The lady Kyria was just in your position. She was a woman of some station, much given to hospitality, a dear friend of John "whom Jesus loved." It was a pain to her to close her door against any members of the household of faith who asked for admission, particularly if such were revered ministers. But the ministers now presenting themselves were not content to "abide" within the bounds of "the doctrine

of Christ," they would "transgress," or rather "go beyond" them. (2 John 9.) Dean Alford renders the last word "go before," that is, he explains, "making false or unsound advances," as though the apostle spoke ironically. They "pushed ahead too fast;" or, as their modern admirers and imitators have it, they "kept up with the spirit of the times," and thus "enlisted the sympathies of men of taste and refinement." But Kyria had "children walking in the truth" (v. 4), whose faith might become unsettled before it was properly grounded. She looks for counsel to her old pastor, now the superintendent of the circuit at Ephesus, and what does he say? Well just plainly that those teachers—bishops, priests, or whatever they called themselves—were "deceivers" and "anti-Christ" (v. 7), and "had not God" (v. 9).

John was not in the habit of mincing matters. He was not one of those vague, cloudy, sentimental philosophers who pride themselves on their broad thought—thought as broad as the unbounded atmosphere, and as thin; and who are everlastingly bidding truth and falsehood shake hands and be friends; who, as Dr. John Duncan puts it in his *Colloquia Peripatetica*," would if they were consistent settle a dispute as to whether five times six are thirty or twenty-eight, by saying, in the excess of their liberality, "*Come now, don't fight about it; you must love one another; don't be overbearing or bitter; show a right spirit; split the difference, and say, Five times six are twenty-nine.*" With John, to love Jesus was to obey, and to obey was to love; and those who did not do both he denounces in no soft, silvery accents. Some of them were ordained directly by apostolic hands, nevertheless the apostle bluntly calls them "liars" (1 John ii. 22), "false prophets" (iv. 1), and "children of the devil" (iii. 7, 10).

What would St. John have said now-a-days, had he read a letter in which the writer, referring to certain plans he was understood to have propounded, writes that he is "somewhat hurt that so extreme a construction should have been put upon what he said;" that he "must have spoken to persons already rather inclined to take fright;" and wherein he adds, "I am as far as possible, I hope, from wishing to enter upon such a course of wild injustice as that which you describe." And if, we say, after pondering on such a communication, St. John had found that within five weeks its writer had done the very thing which he rightly characterized as "wild injustice," and done it too, in the name of God, calling it God's will—and if, moreover, it appeared that the selfsame writer made up his mind to the step months before—what would, what *could* the apostle have said? It needs no great acumen to answer the

question? What said he concerning those who came to the house of the lady Kyria? Listen:—

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God.

“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed;

“For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.” (2 John 9, 10, 11.)

(To be concluded.)

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF THE LATE

REV. CHRISTIAN DAVID.

(Continued from page 184.)

SOMETIME after, I was appointed, as a member of the Committee to superintend the male and female orphan schools at Jaffna, in addition to the Tamil schools in the different parishes. This offer I cheerfully accepted and paid every attention to the situation entrusted on me.

In the year 1803, the month of February, I was introduced to the Rev. Mr. Schroter, who arrived from Colombo on a visit to his father, and a warm and steady friendship soon commenced between us, which, however, was of a very short duration. Mr. Schroter after a few weeks returned to Colombo, where he died of fever! Shortly after this, Surgeon Morton of the Royal Artillery, arrived at Jaffna, who being a pious man, it was through this gentleman that I was introduced to the notice of the hon'ble and Rev. Doctor Twistleton, who succeeded the Rev. James Cordiner, the first Chaplain and Principal of all the Government schools in this Island, and also the author of the History of Ceylon.

In April, 1803, when Doctor Christi, Superintendent General of the Vaccine Establishment in Ceylon, visited Jaffna for the purpose of introducing that salutary antidote among the native population, he found much opposition from the people who, believing, as many of them still do, that the “small-pox” is owing to the fury of their goddess Ammal, had entertained a notion that any attempt to counteract the

rage of the contagion would render them obnoxious to her displeasure; but I soon interposed, and by my influence not only removed this prejudice that existed from time immemorial but set myself the first example by allowing my own children to be vaccinated, and thus proved myself equally alive to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the inhabitants of my district.

The Rev. Mr. Cordiner after due enquiry concerning me, formed a good opinion of my public and private character, and he admitted me into a very intimate friendship, and I continued to carry on a correspondence with him till his departure to England. The Hon'ble Doctor Twistleton who succeeded Mr. Cordiner, was equally friendly with me. I had through his interest obtained the sanction of the Governor to establish an English school for the education of the natives of Jaffna. In the year 1804, the Government allowed Rds. 50 per month, the residue of the expense being defrayed by private subscription, of which the greater part was contributed by the officers of His Majesty's 66th Regiment then in the garrison of Jaffna.

In the above said year 1804, I was appointed as the first member of the Board of Commissioners for Jaffna; and the following letter from the President of the said board, which conveyed the appointment to me, shewed the confidence placed on me in every way, although I am sensible of my unworthiness to hold such a responsible situation.

“To Mr. Christian David,

“Preacher of the Gospel, &c.

“Jaffnapatam.

“Sir.—It is with great pleasure I inform you of His Excellency's pleasure in appointing you one of the first members of the Board of Native Commissioners, in particular as I think the situation His Excellency has honoured you with is a very arduous and responsible one, and that I shall receive great help from your acknowledged activity and integrity, and from your knowledge of the English language.

“I am, Sir,

“Yours truly,

(Signed) “HENRY LAYARD.

“President of the Board

“of Native Commissioners.

“Jaffnapatam, 10th April, 1804.”

In the year 1805, the late Rev. Mr Palm, one of the missionaries of the London Missionary Society, (afterwards he became a minister of the Dutch Presbyterian Church at Colombo) settled at Tillepally of the District of Jaffna, about whom the famous Doctor Buchanan speaks at large in his "Christian Researches," (p. 299) with whom I formed an acquaintance and continued to co-operate with him in the great cause for which he was sent.

In the same year by his suggestion I opened a correspondence with the London Missionary Society, and furnished them with a luminous detail of the moral and religious state of the inhabitants of the province of Jaffna and Manaar, for which I received that thanks.

In the very same year, I became well acquainted with Sir Alexandar Johnston for whom I translated several valuable Tamil books. particularly one on the names, description and virtues of Indian medical plants, and occasionally afforded my assistance in the Supreme Court as Interpreter, where trials of magnitude took place at the session. Sir Alexander had placed an implicit confidence on me, and never failed to countenance all my reasonable undertakings and suggestions concerning the extension of Christianity in the Island of Ceylon.

In the year 1805, July the 19th, on the assumption of the Government of the Colony by the Lieut. General Rt. Hon'ble Sir Thomas Maitland, the first measure adapted by him was to reduce the Ecclesiastical Establishment, and all the schools under me were at once abolished. This was a severe shock not only to me, but also to the rising generations. But however by the grace of God, I, with the assistance of Messrs. Lusignan, Layard and Mooyaart, contrived to raise a fund by subscription, and opened a school in the Pettah to which I paid all my attention; but this desirable institution was soon abandoned in consequence of the departure of several of these gentlemen from Jaffna, and I myself would have in all probability sunk into obscurity, had it not been for the support I occasionally received from the said Messrs. Layard and Mooyaart.

In the year 1806, the famous and Rev. Dr. Claudius Buchanan visited Jaffna, and attended St. John's Church, and has recorded the subjoined flattering testimony of my weak labours in his "Christian Researches" (p 300):—

"The only Protestant Preacher in the town of Jaffna is Christian David, a Hindu catechist sent over by the missionaries of Tranquebar. His chief ministrations are in the

Tamil tongue, but he sometimes preaches in the English language, which he speaks with tolerable propriety, and the Dutch and English resort to hear him. I went with the rest to his Church, when he delivered extempore a very excellent discourse, which his present majesty George the third would not have not disdained to hear. And this Hindu supports the interest of the English Church in this province of Jaffna."

From the year 1806 up to the year 1808, I went on with my ministerial duties among my flock and persons of every discription of religion. In the year 1809, the most pious and excellent Lord Viscount Molesworth was appointed as Commandant to the garrison at Jaffna. I was introduced to his Lordship by Captain Truter. My circumstances and those of Mr. Palm (who was then residing at Tillepally) soon attracted his Lordship's notice and he wrote to Government for an allowance to be granted to both of us for the support of our schools. The Government according to his Lordship's request authorized Mr. Palm and me to receive Rds 25 each per month for the purpose of establishing schools. His Lordship made arrangements for the English Service to be performed by us alternately for the garrison and others in the Fort Church every week.

In one of my letters I wrote to Dr. John, "that ever since I had the honour and happiness of the acquaintance of Lord Molesworth, Colonel and Commandant of Jaffna, I have clearly perceived, by his frequent pious conversations and actions that he is strongly resolved and well inclined to promote the glory of our Saviour and the real happiness of the poor and ignorant natives of this place.

The old church of St. John's was at this time in a state of decay, which I brought to the notice of the Colonel. and a fund was raised by subscription, which was very small, but however I went on with the repairs by my own money with which God blessed me.

(To be continued.)



Correspondence.

THE *MAPILA*, A SUPPOSED VENOMOUS SNAKE OF CEYLON; DOES SUCH A SNAKE EXIST?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CEYLON FRIEND.

Colombo, July, 1876.

Dear Sir,—On my return to Ceylon, a short time ago, I read in "*The Ceylon Friend*" for December 1875, a paper on "Venomous Snakes, by the Rev. D. H. Pereira," which I consider calculated to continue a superstitious terror respecting a reptile which I believe is no more dangerous than a Rat-snake.

From your position as a Christian Missionary, and Editor of a paper intended to expose superstition and unnecessary terror of all kinds, I trust you will give me space in the "*Friend*" to expose the gross fallacy that a venomous snake known as the "*Mapila*" exists in Ceylon.

I have great respect for the Revd. Mr. Pereira, and especially for his knowledge about Ceylon snakes, to which he has paid intelligent attention, I am therefore sorry to find that he has lent the weight of his authority to confirm his countrymen in what I believe to be a superstitious dread of a venomous snake which does not exist in Ceylon. If Mr. Pereira had told his readers that he had seen a "*Mapila*," that he had opened its mouth, and found it to have *poisonous fangs*, which I know he is capable of doing, we would then be bound to believe him; but notwithstanding the strong statements of "*Facts*" which he quotes to prove the dangerous effects of the bite of the *Mapila*. I emphatically assert that no such snake exists in Ceylon, unless under this native name for one of our already well known species of Ceylon venomous snakes, and I feel sure that Mr. Pereira, when he obtains a "*Mapila*," will confirm my statement, viz., that it has no *poison fangs*, or that if it has it is one of our already known venomous snakes.

Of venomous terrestrial Colubrine snakes, of the family *Elapidæ*, we have the following:—

1. *Naja tripudians*, Merr The Naya of the Sinhalese, and the Cobra de Capella of Europeans, is too well known to require description

2. *Bungarus Cœruleus*, Schneid. A small blueish black snake when full grown, but often with whitish marks on its sides, and marked with whitish cross bands underneath, not unlike the Cobra. I have received specimens of this snake from Colombo, Jaffna, Galle, and different parts of the Kandyan country, and it is known to be a deadly snake in Southern India. I never got a Sinhalese name for it, but I do not believe it is ever called a "Mapila."

3. *Bungarus Ceylonensis* Gthr. This is a smaller and more slender snake than the other, and is distinguished by a series of white rings quite round its body, but judging from a large series of specimens I am not sure that it is not the young of the other. I have the authority of Mr. Pereira and other intelligent Natives for this latter snake being the *Karawala*, par excellence of the Sinhalese, and I believe they are correct. Its bite is troublesome, but not deadly that I am aware of.

Of Sea snakes we have several around the coast of Ceylon, and though most of them are venomous, the "Mapila" cannot be amongst them.

Of Viperine snakes, of the family *Crotolidæ*, or pit vipers, we have the following:—

4. *Trimeresurus trigonocephalus*, Merr. This is well known by the Natives in Ceylon as the *Pala*, or leaf colored *Polonga*. It is a nocturnal snake with a prehensile tail, is peculiar to Ceylon, and distinguished from a large number of Indian species of the same genus by the peculiar plates on the fore part of its snout. This is a green snake blotched with dark spots. It is common in the Western and Central Provinces, and is often found on Coffee plants; its bite is troublesome but not dangerous that I am aware of. I do not think that it can be called a "Mapila" in any part of Ceylon.

5. *Hypnale nepa*, Laur. This is a small, oily looking, flat headed, marbled snake, and I have the authority of Mr. Pereira and other Natives for this being the *Kunakatuwa*, *Polon-Telissa*, and some other native names, notwithstanding the fact that it is figured in Davy's History of Ceylon as the "Carawala." I do not believe it is ever known as the "Mapila." Dr. Anderson, the Curator of the Calcutta Museum, has given a long description of another species of this genus as a native of Ceylon, and which he calls *Hypnale affinis*; but after a careful examination of a considerable number of specimens I could not distinguish this species from the other and I therefore do not believe we have but one species of *Hypnale* in Ceylon.

Of true Vipers of the family *Viperidæ*, we have
 6. *Daboia Russellii*, Shaw. The well known Tit-Polonga,
 very common in Ceylon, and I do not believe it is ever called
 a "Mapila."

We have then briefly the following venomous land snakes
 in Ceylon:

1. *Naja tripudians*, or Cobra—deadly.
2. *Bungarus Cœruleus*, No native name?—deadly.
3. *Bungarus Ceylonensis* the Karawala—not deadly.
4. *Trimeresurus trigonocephalus*, Pala-polonga—not deadly
5. *Hypnale nepa*, Kunakatuwa—not deadly.
6. *Daboia Russellii*, the Tit polonga—deadly

I believe that none of the above six snakes will turn out
 to be called a "Mapila," and I feel most confident that no
 other poisonous land snake exists in Ceylon, whether Mapila,
 Magamaruwa (death on the road), Manminiya, Hotadiya,
 Sulunaya, Henakandaya, or whether known by any other
 name which may strike the natives with terror, and dread,
 notwithstanding all the authorities dead or alive that may be
 quoted and instances given where death is said to have arisen
 from the bite of a Mapila. You may safely tell your Native
 friends that the deadly effects of the snake called the "Mapila"
 is a *delusion and a snare*, in fact a *myth*.

I shall now with your permission go over Mr. Pereira's
 article on the Mápilá paragraph by paragraph, and I hope
 I shall be able to convince even Mr. Pereira himself that
 instead of referring to one particular snake, he has a regular
 kettle full of them.

On page 295 of the "*Friend*" for December last, Mr.
 Pereira quotes a passage from Sir J. E. Tennent's Natural
 History of Ceylon to prove that the venomous snake known
 as the "Mápilá" exists in Ceylon, and Mr. Pereira adds:—

"This information appears to be correct, and is supported
 "by well authenticated facts, we need not, therefore any
 "longer suspend our belief in the existence of this formidable
 "reptile, the poison of which is very fatal."

I have carefully read all the evidence brought forward
 by Mr Pereira to establish "*the well authenticated FACTS*,"
 but I feel certain, Mr. Editor, that neither yourself nor any
 Judge of a Court in Ceylon can find a single *fact* established
 by Mr. Pereira to prove that any person in Ceylon has been
 killed by the poison from the bite of a Mápilá!

In the 2nd paragraph Mr. Pereira dwells at great length
 on the deadliness of the bite of "*this snake*," said to be dreaded

more than the bite of any other venomous snake in Ceylon, and so fully and graphically describes the fatal symptoms, that one is led to suppose that Mr. Pereira is referring to what actually occurred in his presence. I feel sure that the information intended to be conveyed in this paragraph is mere hearsay or report, and that if it refers to any Ceylon snake it must be to one of the six I have enumerated above.

The 3rd paragraph p. 266 is as follows:—

"There are several varieties of this snake, some resembling the Garandiya (*Coryphodon Blumenbachi*)," now called *Ptyas mucosus*, "both in colour and size, others closely approaching the ordinary shape and spots of the Cobra (*Naja tripudians*)—one which is called *mápilsabaralá* is green. Whatever may be their colour and size, there is an all but unanimous concurrence of opinion that they are all venomous."

Surely this paragraph is an illustration of my statement that Mr. Pereira has got into a kettle full of snakes. Just fancy the varieties of this deadly snake being like the Rat-snake, the Cobra, and at the same time *green*. There are no green snakes in Ceylon except the harmless Whip-snake (*Passerita mycterizans*) said by the Sinhalese to attack peoples' eyes, and the Pala-Polonga given in my list above. If there is another Green Snake in Ceylon I should like very much to see it. The fourth paragraph p. 266 contains descriptions of "*these reptiles*"

"The principal characteristics of these reptiles are the compression of the head, its lozenge form [circular I suppose! W. F.] and the disproportionate length of its tail which is no doubt prehensile." The Pala-Polonga has a prehensile tail. "These reptiles are partial to water, taking to it as their natural element. A *Mápilá* will cross a rapid stream with the greatest of ease, and is most commonly found on marshy land, twining itself on the branches of the mangrove trees or other marshy plants." This latter description applies to our Fresh water snakes none of which are venomous.

"These snakes are also found in the hollows of large decaying trees, and herd together in large numbers." This applies to some species of Tree-snake. "If one is killed in a house frequently many more make their appearance in the same locality, and probably this indicates that they are polygamous in their habits." Mr. Proctor Van Cuylenberg sent me three or four young specimens of a snake from Kalutara which the Natives there called *Aharakukka*, one of them was killed on the verandah of his house, and the others came and coiled themselves near it. These were fresh water snakes

(*Tropidonotus stolidus*). "If a *mápile* takes his abode in a house, it generally lies coiled between the roof and the main beam for the sake of concealment, and roams about in the night for its prey." This clearly indicates that the snake referred to is a species of *Dipsas*, is nocturnal in its habits and therefore has the pupils of its eyes erect. I feel quite sure from what I know about native names for snakes that if Mr. Pereira applies for the *Mapilas* as above indicated, he will get two or three species, and that none of them will have poison fangs.

"Another curious fact which has been verified is that when the *Mápile* is wounded, the quantity of blood which issues out of its body is so large that it seems quite disproportionate to the size of the animal."

I question this statement, but if true it does not prove that the *Mapila* is a venomous snake.

I now come to the 5th paragraph of Mr Pereira's article.

"That the venom of this reptile is very noxious can also be ascertained from the various alarming things the natives believe about the habits of this snake. They are said to be vampires, sucking the blood of persons whom they attack, and to coil themselves together and descend from the roof to the ground for the purpose of inflicting a wound on an unconscious sleeper."

That a very large proportion of the natives believe such things I feel quite sure, but I believe that what I have above quoted of this paragraph proves that they are imbued with a superstitious dread of a great evil which does not exist, and I consider it very unfortunate that a person in the position of Mr. Pereira should lend his aid in confirming his countrymen in a false belief about the existence of a venomous *Mápile*.

The concluding part of this paragraph is as follows:—

"But a more credible way of determining the quality of the poison of the *mápile* is by considering the following effects of its poison on the human frame."

One would imagine from this that Mr. Pereira is going to prove that persons have been killed or severely injured by the bite of a *mápile*, but there is not a bit of reliable evidence in all the cases he gives to prove that the snake or snakes called the *Mápile* is or are venomous.

Page 267 is taken up with the description of a case where a person is supposed to have been bitten by some deadly snake. The reference to the "*hissing*" of this snake, its *color* and *size* indicate that it was either a *Cobra*, or a *Dipsas*. I need not

take the trouble to analyse the evidence of this paragraph. It certainly proves that the Mapila is not such a deadly reptile as it is said to be, if it proves anything

The next four paragraphs give cases of persons said to have been bitten by snakes but *proves nothing* against the *Mápilá*.

The last paragraph on p. 268 indicated that the snake there referred was a species of *Dipsas* for which the description agrees.

In reference to what is said in the first paragraph on p. 269 about the information given in a renowned medical work called the *Susruta*, I beg to give the following extract from an article by the famous Dr. Shortt, of Madras, as perhaps referring to the same work, and also showing that the Natives of India have as great a dread of the poisonous effects of bites of various kinds of Lizards as those of Ceylon have of the unknown *Mápilá*, whilst "a distinguished naturalist has already stated that a venomous Lizard is an anomaly, unknown in creation." Dr. Shortt's article will be found in *The Madras Monthly Journal of Medical Science* for August 1872. It was written to prove that two Lizards, called *Tuckatoo* and *Bish Kopra*, whose bite was believed by the natives to be poisonous, were like all other lizards nonvenomous. There are lithographed drawings of these two lizards given with this article. Notwithstanding the proof of the erroneous idea on the part of the natives that lizards are poisonous, it is believed in the Northern Province of Ceylon that the bite of a small ground lizard known under the Tamil name of *Aranai*, is deadly, but of this further on:—

"A learned work in Tamil termed the "*Sittar Vedum*" or work of the "seven sages," pretends to give an account of all poisonous animals; snakes, centepedes, spiders, beetles, lizards, dogs, cats, tigers and monkeys being placed in the same category of venomous animals.

"This book is to be readily had in the bazaars for two or three annas, and I believe a similar work exists in Ceylon among the Cingalese. The popularity of this work I fear, at least in this part of India, gives rise to such stupid and false notions of animals. It is firmly believed by the natives of Southern India that the Iguana, *Monitor dracæna*, Linn., bites severely and will not cease its hold till a donkey brays! That the natives believe that most lizards and some species of toads are poisonous there is no doubt. Some years ago, when Zillah Surgeon of Chingleput, I remember on one occasion a native came running to my house, he was almost

breathless, streaming with cold perspiration, looking pale, skin cold, pulse small, holding the thumb of his left hand in his right and complaining of being bitten by a Chameleon, *Chameleo vulgaris*, on the tip of the left thumb, and requesting with the tears in his eyes that I would do something to save his life, nothing that I could say convinced him that the Chameleon was harmless and the bite not poisonous, but to satisfy the poor fellow I applied some Liquor Ammoniaë to the part said to be bitten and where there was a slight abrasion of the skin and gave him a little brandy and water to drink. He sat down for a while in my verandah and then went away apparently quite well, that the man was in a great *fright* about his life there was no doubt from the state of his pulse, skin and general appearance when he presented himself before me."

WM. FERGUSON.

(To be concluded.)



Religious Intelligence.

The Meeting at Exeter Hall. MR. EATON said: Sir, I never appreciated the difficulty of making a Missionary speech until I entered this noble hall, saw the vast audience before me and listened to the eloquence of the gentlemen who preceded me. I have only ten minutes allotted me, Sir, for speaking, and have, therefore, to compress all I have to say within that time. I come from a part of the world which represents the scene of the earliest labours of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. I need not here recount the history of that stupendous enterprise. How it originated, how it was carried out Harvard's narrative tells you better than I can. Those who

were the pioneers of that vast undertaking have all ceased from their labours and gone to their rest.

"The sea, the blue, lone sea, hath one,
He lies where pearls lie deep."

It was a fitting close to a life whose latest and maturest longings were evoked on behalf of the teeming millions of the East that no western grave should hold his remains. It seems to me, Sir, most appropriate that all that was mortal of a man so large-hearted, so Catholic in his sympathies as the late Dr. Coke was, should lie deposited in no narrower grave than an eastern ocean-tomb, beneath the blue dome of an eastern sky. But though the men who commenced

that Mission are all dead, the spirit, the God-given, God-breathed spirit that animated them, survives still. It lived, and still lives, in their noble successors. Was it not the same spirit that enabled Daniel John Gogerly to consecrate his great intellect to the life-work of grappling with the subtleties of Buddhism and leave behind him a name which has won for itself an undying reputation amongst the sages of the West? Was it not the working of the same spirit that took Robert Spence Hardy away from the comforts of home and the joys of his family fireside, to scatter broad cast through the highways and byeways of South Ceylon the seed of the Gospel with an energy that revived in him the fires of youth? He was a noble and true hearted Minister of the old Methodist type. Fearless of consequences, wherever he went, he maintained the right, and did the right. He came amongst us, for the third time in his life, as comes—

“some strong-souled prophet back
Our craven heart to cheer;
Whose fear of God constrained the lack
Of every meaner fear.”

And the spirit that enabled him to do all that, is the same that is to-day animating the Ministry of Methodism in South Ceylon. I am afraid, Sir, that my ten minutes are fast running out, and I must hasten from the generalities of Mission work to tell you of that which, after all, is uppermost in my thoughts, and nearest my heart. One gentleman who spoke to-day said there was no Circuit like

his own. I am bound to say, Sir, there is no Circuit like mine. You can understand the difficulty of working such a Circuit, when I tell you that we were put upon terms by the Missionary Society such as were never exacted from any other Circuit in Ceylon. It was demanded of us, Sir, that we should raise annually £150 towards the Minister's salary, as the condition of our very existence as a Circuit. We have not only done that year by year, but we are now paying our Native Ministers salary, and contributing also to the Mission Extension Fund. By incredible persistency in begging, and self-denying liberality in giving, and with the valuable pecuniary help afforded us by the Missionary Society, we have erected a church which cost about £2,400 and which my friend Mr Kilner characterised as “The Cathedral of Methodism” in Ceylon. I am glad to say there is not a penny of debt on this chapel. We have also purchased a Mission house which cost us £1,000, and this debt too is being annually reduced by a well settled source of income. All this has been done, Sir, within the last eight years. But what is best of all is, that from the very moment when that Circuit was recommenced, the Kandy Church has been a living Church, a working Church, a Revival Church, making constant aggressions into the kingdom of Satan, and winning therefrom jewels, bright jewels, for the Redeemer's crown. And how, Sir, were these results brought about? By patient labour in the spirit of a patient faith —

that faith which one of our fathers in Methodism, on his dying bed, described as an obstinate faith, a faith that laid hold on the promises of God, and recognised the Gospel as the "power of God unto salvation."

"I have seen, Sir, some wonderful instance of the coming of this power. It came to Thomas Hanscombe a British sailor, dying of dysentery in the Bogambra Hospital at Kandy. He knew he was dying, and dying too without hope and without God. The scenes of his earlier years and the home of his youth were fitting past before him, and as from out the haze of the vanished past, there stood in bright relief one loved form that no human memory has ever suffered willingly to perish he cried as only a dying son can cry, "Oh my mother." In that moment power came with the word which sought to connect the mother that "may forget," with that "brother born for adversity," who has said, "I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee," and before many days had passed away, the radiant joy that beamed in his countenance testified to his emergence "from darkness into light," from "the power of Satan into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." There was a memorable morning after that. It was my privilege to listen to that man praying for his mother and I believe (for reasons which I have no time to enter upon now) that *that* prayer was answered 7,000 miles across the ocean that very day, if not that very hour. Contrary to all ex-

pectation he recovered from his sickness, the Ceylon Government sent him to England as a distressed seaman, and twelve months after he left Ceylon, he wrote me from Algoa Bay, giving me as the proof of his fidelity to the Lord this testimony: "Tho' I have a drunken captain and swearing messmates, many a night when I have to stand alone at the wheel, I feel as if the Lord is standing by my side. My feet are firmly planted on the Rock—Christ Jesus."

The same power, Sir, came to a learned Buddhist in Kandy. He was very ill and felt that death was very near, for consumption had seized upon his frame. He knew that Buddhism gave him no hope after death, that its *summum bonum* was utter extinction. No enquiring soul, Sir, could ever rest contented in a creed like that. There are primal intuitions within that rebel against the cold and dreary dogma of annihilation, and this enquirer felt that death could not obliterate existence. He broke through the trammels of prejudice, he cast aside for ever the bands of a cruel superstition. He read the Christian's Bible and sought the Christian's God. It was the privilege of the Rev. G. Baugh and his native assistant to point him to the Saviour of sinners. He lived for the remainder of his days, a holy, consistent Christian, and died a happy and triumphant death. He withstood the most fervent appeals of his family and friends who were violently opposed to his change of faith, and he continued, notwithstanding all this,

steadfast in his belief in the Saviour, till life ceased. You have been told here to-day, Sir, what difficulties there are in the way of a Hindoo becoming a Christian. I tell you, Sir, there are just as great difficulties in Ceylon as there are in India, in the way of a man who desires to profess Christ. To give up Buddhism implies a struggle, a revolution in a man's position in life, and in his feelings so far as his family and friends are concerned, of which you can have no adequate notion here.

And now, Sir, what is our duty in this matter? Our duty is to encourage the men who are engaged in this work, to give them our sympathy and our prayers, and to afford them that pecuniary help which is necessary to enable them to carry on that work. Let us support these men in their work. Let us band ourselves together for the purpose of furthering this great work. The enemies of Christ are doing all they can to oppose the Gospel! Let us as Methodists be up and doing too. Let our rallying cry be "The Bible for the world!" It is around that Bible that the contest thickens! The most heterogenous forces have combined to seek its overthrow. Sophistry has tried its cajolery to wean the minds of men from the verities contained in that word. Speculation has run into the wildest theories that but caricature and mimic its teaching. But that Bible has prevailed and is prevailing still. Let us encourage the men who are preaching the truths of that Bible! Let us rally round the

Cross of Christ. I have said our watchword should be "*The Bible for the world.*" let us add to that another, "*The world for Christ.*" His kingdom must prevail! His government must be universal. Every enemy shall be conquered! every form of opposition shall be destroyed. "The loftiness of men shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be laid low. And the Lord alone shall be exalted that day. And the idols He shall utterly abolish!"

Temperance. Extract from the Report, read at the fourth Annual Meeting of the KANDY TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY.

Work accomplished. During the past year our membership has increased, but not to such an extent as in former years. There is now a rival in the field in the "Good Templar" movement, and what has been our loss has been their gain, we are both working for the same end, only on different lines, and our Society has nothing but good will for the Good Templars and their good work.

As usual we have had applications for membership from out-stations, presumed reached by means of our literature.

Our annual sermon was preached by the Rev. John Scott, and the Society is much indebted to that gentleman for his kindness then as on all occasions when we have asked his aid.

Our New Year's tract was from the pen of our President Rev. R. Tebb. A thousand copies were distributed in different parts of

the island and good resulted from the effort.

A copy of Dr. Richardson's work "*On Alcohol*," was sent to each of the medical men in the island, and also to the newspaper editors. When it is remembered that Richardson is one of our foremost experimental physiologists, that he has made the effects of alcohol his special study, and that his conclusions are strongly in favour of total abstinence, it will be seen that the Society did well in circulating this book.

The "Band of Hope" continues to meet from month to month and is fairly attended. The Magic Lantern, which this time last year was a thing talked of is now a realized fact. Much credit is due to Mr. Alfred Paterson for his efforts in arranging and providing for this matter.

Work in prospect. In regard to the new year we are now entering on, we propose as usual the publication of a New Year's tract. The "Band of Hope" will continue to meet and the Library will be open to readers.

A series of nine illustrated lectures to be delivered fortnightly in the Town Hall, will be commenced on the 21st August.

The pictures will be dissolving and be produced by two powerful magic lanterns, burning the lime light. These lectures we hope to make instructive and entertaining, in fact offer to the Kandy public a healthy and innocent amusement at a figure low enough to be within the reach of almost all. The lectures alone will be worth the money, and the pictures (nearly 300) as it were given away. The following gentlemen have kindly promised to lecture. Rev. J. O. Rhodes, on "*The Franco-Prussian War*;" the Ven. Arch. Matthews, "*David the Shepherd-King*;" Mr J L Dewar, "*Religions of the World*;" Rev. R. Collins, M. A., "*Scripture Natural History*;" Mr. W. D. Gibbon, "*Aberdeen and the Highlands*;" Rev. C. Carter, "*The Unseen, the source of true Heroism*;" J. Loos Esq., M. D., "*The circulation of the blood and the senses in man*;" Rev R. Tebb, "*Life of Bunyan and Pilgrim's Progress*;" Mr. Alfred Paterson "*The Martyr Church of Madagascar*."

The cause of Temperance will be promoted by public meetings distribution of literature, and all other means likely to further the object in view.

Notes of the Month.

H. E. The Governor. We are glad to learn that the Rt. Hon. Sir W. H. Gregory in his recent tour in the Southern Province has visited several of the stations of the Wesleyan Mission, and expressed himself much pleased with what he saw. He is said to have admired the good sense displayed by the Wesleyans in their enterprizes.

Perse School. J. B. Allen Esq., M. A., the recently appointed head master of the Perse Grammar School, Cambridge, has dismissed one of the masters, Mr. Maxwell, a Cambridge M. A. on the ground that the latter is a Wesleyan. Mr. Maxwell holds high testimonials from the late head master, and even from Mr. Allen himself, as a most efficient teacher, a firm disciplinarian, always popular with the boys, a leader in their sports while stimulating them in learning, a man of "thorough devotion to a schoolmaster's work and thorough Christian integrity;" but all these excellencies could not save him. Although the school was not a denominational one, but supported by endowments in which all the nation is interested, the head master dismissed Mr. Maxwell for the crime of Methodism. "A Churchman myself," says Mr. Allen, "I object to a Non-conformist colleague, and no considerations could affect my views upon the point." The *Spectator*, from which journal we extract the above statements, is strongly in favour of the Established Church, but adds, "This at least is certain that if there be many such clergymen as Mr. Allen—equally supercilious, equally frank, and equally indifferent to the danger of turning a Christian clergy into a social caste—no considerations of policy or religion will be able long to avert the fall of the Establishment.....Sincerely as we believe in the moral, and religious and political uses of the Establishment, we could not withstand the moral effect of any very large body of evidence proving, as neatly as Mr. Allen has managed to prove, that the Established Church, sometimes at least, fosters the spirit of a narrow and unchristian caste, behind the veil of a comprehensive theory and a sober and moderate demeanour." The following lines are also from the *Spectator* :—

A Head Master's Soliloquy.

"A Friend in the play ground, a scholar in school,
A master to teach, and a master to rule;

Who holds a firm hand without using the cane,
 And guides boys by love 'stead of forcing by pain.
 A gentleman also, I 'm bound to admit,
 High minded and zealous, and every way fit
 For the post that he holds,—and a Christian too;
 But alas a Dissenter; and so he won't do
 For a master of Perse, where one's social position
 Is really, you see, an essential condition.
 No doubt he is all very well in his line,
 But a Noncon. shall never be colleague of mine;
 His creed must be false, though his life's in the right,
 And a Methodist is not respectable, quite;—
 One hardly knows what, but there's something about him
 Which makes it a duty for Churchmen to scout him.
 What matter his virtues, his scholarship too!
 A Dissenter takes rank with a Turk or a Jew;
 And to speak my mind plainly I hate the whole crew.
 What then must be done? It is time he should know
 That at Perse his Dissent is not yet *comme il faut*.
 And though for five years Mr. M. has been Master
 And dismissal may prove a most painful disaster,
 Yet schismatics are vulgar, Dissent unrefined,
 And my teachers shall all hold a creed to my mind.
 Indeed 'tis a service I owe to the school,
 And to snub a Dissenter's an excellent rule;
 So I 'll write him a letter, and tell him 'twere best
 That a bird of his feather should find a new nest."

J. D.

To the Editor of the "Ceylon Friend."

My dear Sir,—Since controverted points on ecclesiastical affairs have found recognition in the "Friend," allow me also space for a few thoughts on those matters, even though my notes be outside the usual groove of your correspondents.

The "Friend" is now looked upon as a Wesleyan magazine, and its opinions are accepted as those of our mission. But Methodists do not all take one side on Church questions, therefore one-sided views of ecclesiastical subjects will not

represent Wesleyan principles. *Because* of our diversified belief on such topics, the British Conference has never engaged in discussions on church and state, no District Synod of Britain has ever voted upon state endowments, and our fathers in this Sinhalese mission omitted all reference to disestablishment in their periodicals. That historical silence is now broken. The "Friend" printed our Memorial to Lord Carnarvon against supporting Christian ministers from public funds, papers opposed to "Church and State in Ceylon" were inserted in last year's issue, and several paragraphs have lately appeared in condemnation of Dr. Coplestone's demands and claims. Recollecting the previous neutrality of Wesleyan missionaries, you need not wonder if surprise and wonder are felt at this changed attitude. Many well-wishers of the "Friend" have been sorry to see it used for ecclesiastical controversy; but the die is cast, and cannot be reversed.

Is there not a generous side to the position thus taken, and cannot something be said for the objectors to that new situation? Let it be frankly acknowledged in the "Friend," that whatever some ministers of the Anglican Church may have done, all have not run down and injured our work; while the Presbyterians of Ceylon have been our true supporters for above threescore years. Our contributions from Episcopalians also have been most noble and handsome for more than half a century. Our sentiments towards these donors are not altered, and we openly express our cordial esteem and gratitude.

Then, what has changed the Wesleyan silence into strongly expressed protest? Not any matter referring to political or social precedence; no minor variations of ritual or methods of pastoral government; but a deepening conviction that the Church which *their* fathers revered and loved, is *not the same* still. In this anxious and painful dispute between the Bishop of Colombo and the Church Missionaries, we see a more serious question than mere personal variance among ministers equally sincere. For the intrusions made, or contemplated, into our stations, there is a profounder cause than mere sectarian extension. And it is *that* superior principle which has so affected thousands of Methodists in the west, as well as their brethren in Ceylon. What is that principle? So-called "Catholic" enmity to Protestant teachings. This is the central point, let all secondary ones sink before it. The present developments of ritualistic assumptions and extreme sacerdotalism, sweep away our neutral ground, and drive us to open protest against state support to deadly error and anti-Protestant practices.

Beyond this, there is the strong objection, that monies raised from taxing heathen people, cannot fairly be used for paying ministers who are bound to oppose all heathen systems of religion. The public funds are not used to support Buddhist, Hindu and demon priests, neither do they ask for official salaries. The neutrality of Government as to matters of faith, is the only righteous policy in Ceylon, but that justice is undoubtedly impaired by payments made to an ecclesiastical department out of our colonial treasury.

Now permit me to mention my sorrow for one part of your critique in the August "Friend." It would have been more humane and courteous to have omitted all reference to that "sad accident." Wesleyan missionaries sometimes drive fidgetty horses, and any of them might be the cause of injury to people, while "driving in one of the crowded streets of Colombo." But we should not approve of quoting in that case, the hunting Archbishop, specially when all gentlemanly reparation had been made to the bereaved family

Earnestly disclaiming all feelings of unkindness towards those who disagree with these opinions, again avowing my warm appreciation of all ministerial and Christian sympathy shewn towards us. asking that mutual respect may continue, even where convictions come most into strong antagonism, and in open straightforward confidence,

Believe me, Faithfully yours,

J. NICHOLSON.

Matara, August, 1876.

[We are glad these reasons should be given for the Wesleyans in Ceylon breaking their silence on the subject of the state subsidies for ecclesiastic purposes. There is a vast difference between the churches by law established in Great Britain and the payment of salaries to Bishop and clergy as members of the Civil Service in Ceylon. We have never attacked any church, and have the kindest feeling for both Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Archbishop Abbot was not, we believe, habitually a hunting man; but as he was a Puritan and the hope of those who suffered from the numerous ecclesiastical persecutions of those days, the High Church party, when his accident happened clamoured that he was unfit for the exercise of episcopal functions. In a sympathizing spirit we wished to point out how differently, how gently, Dr. Coplestone had been dealt with. For himself under those distressing circumstances, we were, as we said, sincerely sorry. ED. C. F.]
