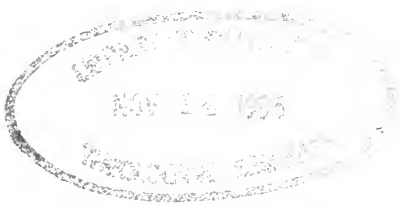


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From his honor's office
M.S.

SEVENTH MEMOIR

RESPECTING

The Translations of the Sacred Scriptures

INTO THE

LANGUAGES OF INDIA,

Conducted by the Brethren at Serampore.

NEARLY Five years have elapsed since the Serampore Brethren, whom recent circumstances* constrain to act as a Committee for conducting Translations in certain of the Languages of India, published their last Memoir respecting the progress made in them; and they now feel themselves compelled to lay the state of these Translations before the Public at large, in the hope of obtaining that aid which they find themselves under the imperious necessity of soliciting for the sake of carrying them forward. In these circumstances therefore, they feel it their duty to submit to the various Bible Societies in Europe and America, to the Christian Public at large, and to every one in particular who feels interested in the Scriptures being given to the heathen, a concise view of what has been already done, and of the advantages possessed for ac-

* The circumstances alluded to are, the dissolution of the Corresponding Committee of the Bible Society, from its being no longer necessary; and their generous request to the Committee of the Parent Society that they would consider the Serampore Brethren as a distinct body, and as such transmit their future grants directly to them.

complishing the rest under the blessing of Him who has hitherto so graciously smiled on their humble attempts.

Twenty-six years have elapsed since the commencement of the first of these translations, that in the Bengalee language; and sixteen since they submitted to the public their plan of extending them to the various languages of India. Circumstances therefore enable them now to judge with a degree of certainty relative to this work, particularly as in this period their attempts to introduce the gospel into various provinces of India, have made them better acquainted therewith, as well as impressed them more deeply with the importance of the work.

In their last Memoir it was stated that the whole of the Sacred Scriptures were published in *two* of the languages of India, and the New Testament in *seven* of them. They now have the happiness of stating, that the whole of the Scriptures are published in *five* of them, and the New Testament in *fifteen*. Of the state of succeeding editions, &c. in these languages, they proceed to give a brief account.

Languages in which the whole Scriptures are published.

1. In *Bengalee*, the *fifth* edition of the New Testament containing five thousand copies, which was printed off about three years ago, is nearly exhausted; and of the different parts of the Old scarcely a single copy has been left for some time past. The continual demand for this version, therefore, has rendered it necessary to lose no time in printing a new edition of the whole Scriptures. This edition, which will form the *sixth* edition of the New Testament, and the *third* of the Psalms and some other parts of the Old Testament, will consist of four thousand copies, and of the New Testament two thousand extra, the demand being so very

great. With the view of studying economy in an edition so large, the Serampore Brethren have prepared a new fount of types, which while perfectly clear and legible, are of a moderate size : and with these they are printing this new edition in double columns in a large octavo page, which they hope will bring the whole five volumes into one volume of about thirteen hundred pages royal octavo, or two very moderate volumes, and the New Testament into a neat duodecimo of about four hundred pages. For this edition they are preparing a paper of a suitable size made of the *sun* (*crotonia juncea*) which though inferior to English paper in point of color, is equally impervious to the worm, and far more durable, being made of the raw material the fibre of which possesses a superior degree of strength. Independently of the advantage arising from thus comprizing the whole bible in one portable volume, this edition will secure a saving of more than half the paper, and full two-thirds of the expense of binding. This appears so important a consideration when the demand for the Scriptures in India is so constantly increasing, that the brethren think few things will more effectually serve the cause of religion and the interests of those Societies in Britain and India who so generously labor to evangelize the heathen, than endeavouring to ascertain by what means the largest editions of the Scriptures can be given to the numerous millions of India, at the least possible expense; and a careful examination of the various characters current, enables them to hope, that in most of the languages of India the Scriptures may be ultimately brought into one volume without injuring their legibility, or rendering the volume too unwieldy for common use. The present edition of the Bengalee Scriptures, which will they trust receive considerable improvement in going through the press, they expect will be completed within two years.

2. In the *Sungskrita*, the last volume of the Old Testament was printed off above two years ago. The First Edi-

tion of the New Testament is quite exhausted ; and the numerous calls for the Scriptures in this language by the literati of India, especially those in the western provinces, have induced the Serampore brethren to put to press a second edition of the whole Scriptures. This will be likewise printed in double columns in the large octavo size, and the whole Scriptures be comprized in one volume. It will consist of Two Thousand copies, with an extra number of two thousand for the New Testament.

3. In the Hindee also the last volume of the Old Testament was published nearly two years ago. The edition of the New Testament being nearly exhausted, and the Rev. John Chamberlain having prepared another version of the New Testament in this language, for which his long residence in the western provinces of India, and his intimate acquaintance with their popular dialects, eminently fit him, the brethren at Serampore have resolved in this edition to print his version of the New Testament instead of their own, as a comparison of independent versions made by persons long and intimately acquainted with the language, will be of the utmost value in ultimately forming a correct, chaste, and perspicuous version in this widely extended language. Of this edition of the New Testament, which is more than half through the press, they are printing three thousand copies.

The *Kyt'hee* character, an imperfect imitation of the *Deva-Naguree*, being far more read in some parts of the country, than the *Deva-Naguree* itself, particularly by the trading part of the community, the brethren at Mr. Chamberlain's particular request, have caused a fount of types to be cut in this character from the best models they could procure ; and are also printing Three Thousand copies more of the Hindee version in this character, that it may meet the wants of those who, already familiar with it, are too old to acquire

the Deva-Naguree. That in the latter character is advanced as far as the Acts.

4. In the *Orissa* language the whole Scriptures have been long published. The first edition of the New Testament being exhausted, and the demand for this version still increasing, the Serampore brethren have put to press a second edition, which is now more than half through the press. It consists of four thousand copies.

5. The last volume of the Old Testament in the *Mahratta* language was published many months ago, so that a version of the whole Scriptures in that language is now completed. Of the First edition of the New Testament, not a single copy being left, they have put to press a second edition in a duodecimo size. A certain number of copies however, are printed with double columns in the large octavo size to bind up with a second edition of the Old Testament, which they hope to put to press in that size when this edition of the new is finished.—In these *Five Languages* the whole of the Scriptures are now published and in circulation; in the last four of them, *second* editions of the New Testament are in the press, and in the first, the Bengalee, begun twenty-six years ago, the *sixth* edition of the New Testament. In the following ten languages the New Testament are published or nearly so; and in some of them the Pentateuch, and other parts of the Old Testament.

Languages in which the New Testament is published.

1. In the *Chinese* language the translation of the Old Testament was completed several years ago. In addition to the New Testament, the Pentateuch, the Hagiographa, and the Prophetic Books, are now printed off. The Historical Books, which will complete the whole Scriptures, are in the press; and as the work becomes gradually more and more easy, the

whole of the Chinese Scriptures will probably be published before the end of the ensuing year.

2. In the *Shikh* language, beside the New Testament, the Pentateuch and the Historical Books are printed off; and the Hagiographa is advanced as far as the middle of the book of Job. So strong however has been the desire of this nation for the New Testament that the whole edition is nearly distributed, and a second edition will probably be called for before the Old Testament is wholly published. Beside the Mugs on the borders of Arracan, no one of the nations of India has discovered a stronger desire for the Scriptures than this hardy race; and the distribution of almost every copy has been accompanied with the pleasing hope of its being read and valued.

3. In the *Pushtoo* or *Affghan* language, the nation supposed by some to be descended from the Ten Tribes, the New Testament has been printed off. The Pentateuch is also advanced at press as far as the book of Leviticus.

4. In the *Telinga* language, often termed the *Teloogoo*, the New Testament was published two years ago, and the Pentateuch is printed as far as the book of Leviticus. This translation however, when the Pentateuch is finished, the Serampore brethren intend to resign to the Madras Auxiliary Bible Society, now one is formed at that Presidency.

5. In the *Kunkuna* language, the New Testament was completed above eighteen months; and the Pentateuch is advanced at press as far as the book of Numbers. As this province comes immediately under the care of the Bombay Bible Society, it is intended on the completion of the Pentateuch at press, to relinquish this translation to them.

6. In the *Wuch* or *Mooltanee* language the New Testament has been printed off these eighteen months in its own character. But as the opportunities of the brethren for distributing this version have been exceedingly limited, and they

have little prospect of being able soon to establish a mission in that province, they have dismissed the pundit, and discontinued this translation, till these circumstances, with those of a pecuniary nature, shall be more favorable.

7. In the *Assam* language also the New Testament has been printed off nearly two years; and the vicinity of this country to Bengal rendering it highly desirable to proceed with the translation, an edition of the Old Testament has been put to press in the large octavo size with double columns, which will very considerably lessen the expense, the character being similar to the Bengalee both in form and size. The simultaneous progress of the *Sungskrita*, the Bengalee, and the Assamese versions in precisely the same size, tends to facilitate the labor of bringing them through the press.

8. In the *Gujuratee* language, the New Testament is now happily brought through the press, thirteen years after retaining the first pundit in this language. It makes between eight and nine hundred pages, and is printed in the *Deva-Naguree* character. The province of Surat however, being so near to Bombay, and the Serampore brethren having at present no missionary there, they intend to resign this translation to their brethren of the London Missionary Society who are now studying the language, that they may give their attention more fully to those in which no others are engaged.

9. In the *Bikaneer* language also the New Testament is now finished at press. It contains eight hundred pages, and is printed in the *Naguree* character. The *Bikaneer* version was begun nearly seven years ago.

10. To these we may add the New Testament in the *Kashmeer* language, which version has been in hand nearly eight years and will be finished at press in about a month. It is printed in a neat type of its own as mentioned in a former memoir. In these Ten languages the New Testament may be considered as being published.

Beside these fifteen in which the New Testament is completed, there are *six* other languages, in which it is brought more than half through the press. These are, the *Kurnata*, the *Nepal*, the *Harotee*, the *Marwar*, the *Bhughulkund*, and the *Oojein* version. About ten months more they have reason to hope, will bring these through the press; and thus in Twenty-one of the languages of India and those by far the most extensive and important, will the New Testament be published. It is the intention of the brethren to relinquish the first of these, the *Kurnata*, to the Madras Bible Society on the New Testament being completed, that they may be able to attend to the remaining languages in which no version is begun by any one beside, with greater intenseness of mind.

The remaining versions now in hand are the following ten which are all in the press :

The <i>Jumboo</i> printed to John.	The <i>Dogura</i> or <i>Palpa</i> to Mark.
The <i>Kanouj</i> to John.	The <i>Mogudha</i> to Mark.
The <i>Khassee</i> to John.	The <i>Kumoon</i> to Matthew.
The <i>Khoshul</i> to Mark.	The <i>Gudwal</i> to Ditto.
The <i>Bhutuneer</i> to Mark.	The <i>Muni-poor</i> a to Ditto.

In these ten versions therefore a sufficient progress is made to render the completion of them in no way difficult.

In this state of the work the brethren feel constrained to acknowledge with the deepest gratitude the goodness of the Father of Mercies, who has so graciously preserved them and those who have assisted them in this work till the greatest and most difficult part of it has been thus completed. And they feel it their duty to express their obligations to the public both in Britain and America for that generous aid which has carried them through their work far beyond the highest expectations they had formed sixteen years ago, on first addressing the public on the subject. Nor does it lessen their satisfaction to contemplate how many in this period have been

stirred up and encouraged in various denominations to assist in this important work. From the beginning their object has been, as they then declared, to secure the completion of the work regardless by whom it was done if really accomplished; which has made them encourage all of other denominations to engage therein within the verge of their acquaintance; and when they have had reason to believe that any version would be carried through, they have gladly relinquished it to others, unless the language appeared sufficiently important to deserve the labor of two simultaneous versions, as is the case with the Chinese, and some few others.

That the progress already made, renders the rest easy of accomplishment, if life be spared and means afforded, will appear evident to those who consider that the Twenty-One languages in which the New Testament is either published or nearly brought through the press, comprize not only the parent languages which originate most of the dialects in India and indeed throughout Eastern Asia, the *Sungskrita* and the Chinese; but also the principal branches sprung from them, which pervade the greatest extent of population, and from which the neighbouring dialects have been formed, although now so varied in their terminations as to form distinct languages. The New Testament being printed off in these, the other ten, which have precisely the same mode of construction, and above nine-tenths of the same words, would be perfectly easy, were they now to be begun. But the progress made in printing these, sufficiently shews that a beginning is made in them all, and that in some of them, two or three of the gospels have been brought through the press. The principal difficulties of this work therefore, which at the beginning created so much anxiety, have now been nearly overcome. To those who have brought one edition of the New Testament through the press, any part or the whole of the Old Testament can create little

difficulty, if it be advisable to proceed therewith. And a second edition of the New Testament in any one of them, must be rather a work of delight than of difficulty. In almost any language a first edition, if it be at all correct, removes so many of the difficulties of a language as almost to secure the rest as matter of course.

Relative to second editions however, or even to carrying the translation through the whole Scriptures in each one of these languages, the brethren intreat permission to submit to the public the following ideas. Respecting the leading languages of India, and those which are spoken through the largest extent of country, they apprehend, that there can be but one opinion on this subject among all who feel interested in the planting of the gospel in India. In these, not only should the whole of the Scriptures be given; but successive and improved editions of them be published as they may be required, till the version be rendered complete, and the country evangelized. Further, in the languages of those countries into which missionaries have been sent, although they may be comparatively small, it seems desirable not only that the whole Scriptures should be given; but that succeeding versions should be published as they may be needed. Wales contains a far less number of inhabitants than the population among whom some of these languages are current, that of Orissa for example, yet what wisdom would there have been in denying to Wales the whole Scriptures or even successive editions of them? But respecting those countries which, while not very large in extent, are as yet without any one either European or Native to carry to them the word of life, it may not be improper to delay proceeding with the rest of the Scriptures, till Providence may put it into the heart of some one to carry the word of life into these countries. The New Testament once printed, it can be distributed to those of its inhabitants who may be met with in other parts of In-

dia, and these may carry it into their own country, and possibly make way for the dissemination of the gospel there; since it is but for one or two of those natives to meet with the Scriptures while sojourning in other parts, and to be instructed in them by some one who is acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus, and if their hearts be touched, they may at once perform the work of missionaries for their own country, and like the Ethiopian Eunuch, carry thither the gospel they themselves have received.—Moreover a version of the New Testament contains a sufficient quantity of matter to form a key to any language; the grammatical terminations, the construction, and the orthography exhibited by so large a volume, will completely prevent the knowledge of any language being lost, and open the way for its being carried further whenever this may appear desirable. Till there be therefore an immediate prospect of the gospel's being carried into any province, the brethren conceive it will not be unwise to pause for a season at the completion of the New Testament.

It may be hoped also, that in some instances wherein the terminations of two or three of these languages nearly approximate, and the words in all three are nearly the same, one version will be ultimately found to suffice for two or three of these provinces, and thus the labor and the expense be in some degree lessened when second editions may be required. If this can be effected only in a few instances, the fact is worth ascertaining, which can be done effectually by circulating a first edition of the New Testament in each of these dialects, and waiting relative to a second, till due examination shall have been made.

In comparing this Memoir with that published five years ago, the reader will perceive that in several of the languages therein mentioned the translation has been discontinued. On discovering the low state of their funds, and weighing the

heavy expense which the second editions of the Scriptures now in the press in the Sungskrita, the Bengalee, the Hindee, and the Orissa languages, in which they were so imperiously required, would necessarily involve after every degree of economy was studied, they were constrained, though with the utmost regret, to give up several which they had begun, as they feared to continue them all lest the expense should appear to the public too heavy a burden. In discontinuing these however, they have been guided by a due consideration of the importance and the distinctness of the different languages in which they are engaged, as well as of the ease with which pundits could be again procured should the public enable them to take up these again. Should any language retained appear less important therefore, than some of those dropped for the present, the reason may be sought in the difficulty with which pundits in this language could have been obtained, had they been once dismissed.

Having thus briefly stated the progress which has been made under the Divine blessing in the work of publishing the Scriptures in the various languages of India, they beg leave to add a few observations relative to the importance of this being attempted, and the means afforded for doing it as constituting this attempt an imperious duty, since "to him that knoweth to do good and doth it not, to him it is sin." On this subject they have occasionally seen remarks thrown out, too vague and indistinct indeed to need of a refutation, and yet capable of distressing the minds of those partially acquainted with the nature of the circumstances which render the work both easy of accomplishment and a sacred duty. The following observations on the subject are not intended as a refutation of any thing which has appeared on the subject, therefore, but merely to convey information to the minds of those who really desire to see India under the influence of the word of God.

1. It seems important that the *WHOLE* of India should obtain the light of the gospel, and that as speedily as possible. As a nation we are debtors to the whole of India, and not merely to one or two provinces; and the whole of it is in nearly the same circumstances. It is in a state of almost equal darkness: the whole is filled with the same monstrous delusions, that God and his creatures are one, or rather that there is no Creator,—and hence no Law-giver able to save or to destroy—nor a Supreme Judge of all, separately from the creatures he has made. Nor is this darkness likely to be removed by the light of truth being confined to one place or one province. A city is not illuminated by filling abundantly with light a single house, or even a small street therein, but by distributing light through all its principal parts. To enlighten India effectually, the Scriptures must be given in the dialects of its different provinces; and their effect in dispelling the terrors of superstition and drawing general attention to the gospel, will be more speedily produced by enlightening various provinces at the same time, than by its light being concentrated in one province or city. That one city in India should indeed renounce Hindooism, or manifest any very general attention to the gospel, while the rest of the country continue bound by the chains of *cast* and of superstition, will not be expected by those who are thoroughly acquainted with the state of things.—The dialects of India are also nearly of the same nature, all of them almost equally allied to the *Sungskrita* and all of them capable of receiving a translation of the Scriptures: and through the leadings of Providence within these few years past, and the success with which the counsels and the arms of Britain have been crowned, nearly all the provinces of India wherein these various languages are spoken, are now rendered easy of access. It is therefore exceedingly to be

desired, that the *whole* of India should be enlightened by the gospel with as little delay as possible.

2. It is impossible for this to be fully effected *without the Scriptures being translated into the various languages current in India*. Respecting the number of these the information formerly obtained was very defective. It was once supposed, that in a country which equals Europe both in extent and in the number of its inhabitants, there were not more than ten or twelve different dialects current, although the British Isles alone comprize five, and require five translations of the Scriptures for the use of the common people. The bounds fixed to its various provinces by its Mahomedan conquerors, however, could by no means change their languages; and prior to the appearance of a Musulman army on its borders the Hindoos had possessed their own country above two thousand years, undisturbed by any beside their Babylonian or Grecian invaders, who, whatever were their predatory conquests, could interfere but little with the various languages spoken in the country. It was during this long period, in which Europe and Western Asia were convulsed with revolutions, that the various dialects of India were formed and too firmly fixed in their respective provinces for a conqueror to make any great impression on them. It is now demonstrated that during the seven centuries in which they held India, the Musulmans were able to affect its languages merely as spoken in its chief cities. And even in these, that deference which the conquered naturally have for their masters, and which led the chief Hindoo inhabitants in some degree to incorporate their language with their own, little affected the natives in the interior of the country, who, seldom accustomed to the sight of their Mahomedan masters, continued to speak the language which their forefathers had spoken from age to age. This may be naturally inferred from the state of things in Calcutta relative to the language

of those who now rule the country ; although a few of the natives have acquired the English language, it is a fact that notwithstanding the length of time which the British have possessed India, English is not become the language of the natives in a single street, or in the smallest corner of the city. The languages of India therefore, may well be supposed to be now, nearly what they were two thousand years ago, and the hope of rooting out or of changing languages, which have been fixed in their various provinces for more than two thousand years, is completely futile. The only method of conveying information to its inhabitants, appears to be, that of carefully ascertaining the language in which they are accustomed to convey ideas to each other, and making that the medium through which to convey ideas contained in the Sacred Scriptures.

The exact number of these is not easily ascertained ; but nearly Forty have been already found, including those in the south of India. That such an extent of country and population, should contain so great a number, will not appear strange to those who attend to the hints found in the Greek writers respecting the number of nations into which the inhabitants of India were then divided, which in some instances is said to have exceeded a hundred. Porus boasted that he had six hundred chiefs or rajahs subject to his sway ; and though we may suppose that many of these resided in one province, yet it will not appear strange that there should have been among these nearly forty languages, when Mithridates's army, assembled from Asia Minor, is said to have contained so great a number as twenty-two. That a continent which so justly deserves the name of Asia Major, should be divided by a still greater number of languages, will appear to follow almost of course. And that while their system of superstition, their manners and customs, and even the form and fashion of their garments, have continued the same from generation

to generation, any of their languages should have perished, or have undergone any very great alteration, is not likely even in the nature of things.

If the tidings of salvation therefore be ever fully imparted to the inhabitants of the various provinces of India, this must be effected by giving them the Scriptures in their own languages, small as may be their extent or circulation. To give them in that of some neighbouring province, may enable a few individuals acquainted with the language of their neighbours to understand them; but will do little towards the gospel's obtaining a permanent abiding in the country itself. Of this the Welch, and more recently the Gaelic and the Irish languages, furnish sufficient proof. The currency of the Scriptures in the English language, was not sufficient to make them the means of salvation among the Welch. After nearly a hundred and fifty years had elapsed, it was deemed necessary to give them the Scriptures in their own vernacular dialect small as was its extent of circulation; and from that time they have brought forth fruit abundantly. Nor did their being in the general language of Britain, render the Scriptures intelligible to those who spoke the Gaelic in the Highlands of Scotland, the Native Irish in the remoter parts of Ireland, or the Manks in the Isle of Man. After generation upon generation of these has passed away, unblessed by the Oracles of truth, the friends of mankind have at length deemed it worthy of the labor and expense to publish the Scriptures in these languages, notwithstanding their limited extent; and this after the English language had been cultivated around them, with the Scriptures current therein, for more than two hundred years.

3. While there appears no way of permanently enlightening the various provinces of India *without* giving the Sacred Scriptures in their different languages, *there is nothing which will so much assist the endeavors of the Living Preacher in attempt-*

ing to evangelize a province. The sphere of labor occupied by any missionary who has not the Scriptures to distribute in the language of the province, will be found exceedingly narrow. Should he succeed in attracting the attention of a few, so as even to raise a small church, unless he has the Sacred Scriptures ready to nourish their minds and to enable them to hold forth the word of life amidst their neighbours, they can effect but little ; they *may* gradually die away, and the little handful of proselytes become extinct. But with the Scriptures in their hands, however imperfect a first translation may be, even natives will be able to appeal to their neighbours in the most powerful manner, demonstrating to them that their faith is not without foundation ; and while they nourish their own minds with the words of sound doctrine, and train up their children in the perusal of the Scriptures, able to make them wise unto salvation, they can circulate them far and wide among their own countrymen. This consideration is strengthened by the fact, that a deep reverence for writings deemed sacred, is a prevalent feeling throughout most of the provinces of India. Literature is not as yet so widely diffused among them, as to take away a regard for books in general ; but writings which come recommended to them by an idea of their being *Divine*, attach to themselves a strong degree of veneration. In Bengal no opposition has ever been made to the Sacred Scriptures ; many have manifested indifference relative to them, but few have ever treated them with contempt.

4. While a translation of the Scriptures into the dialects of India, will so increase the efficiency of the missionary's exertions in attempting to plant the gospel, *it may in some instances effect this important object without the aid of a Missionary from Europe.* The similarity is great between the various languages derived from the *Sanskritæ* : and a

Native of India to whom one of them is indigenouſ, as he is already acquainted with nine-tenths of the words it contains, can eaſily acquire a neighbouring one. It is not uncommon indeed to meet with intelligent natives who underſtand three or four of theſe languages, which they have acquired in the courſe of buſineſs. Further, India poſſeſſes even at the preſent time, Natives who have from the heart obeyed the goſpel; and there are Youth now riſing among theſe, who, from their parents or elder relatives having embraced Chriſtianity ſixteen or eighteen years ago, have grown up in the peruſal of the Scriptures. For theſe the College lately inſtituted at Serampore, provides the means of improving their minds in knowledge both human and divine. Among thoſe therefore, who have thus turned from idols to ſerve the living and true God, or among their children ſtill more fully imbued with the knowledge of the Sacred Oracles, may perhaps be found ſuch as taking a verſion of the Scriptures, will enter another province of India with the language of which they are familiar, and there diſſuſe abroad the knowledge of that way of life in which they have been trained up from their youth: for which work their intimate acquaintance with the habits and ideas of their countrymen, their being accuſtomed to the climate, and hence able to travel on foot from village to village and from houſe to houſe, with various other circumſtances, fit them far beyond foreign miſſionaries who may arrive from Europe or America too late in life to ſuſtain the heat of the burning climes of India.

5. Further, *it is poſſible in ſome caſes for a verſion of the New Teſtament in ſome of the languages of India, even to create its own expounders.* If bleſſed to this end by its Divine Author, it will be found quick and powerful, ſharper than any two-edged ſword. But has the Divine Spirit ever thus bleſſed the mere peruſal of the Sacred Scriptures? This is no uncommon caſe even in Britain and America, where

there is no want of living instructors : and in India more than one instance could be pointed out even among our own countrymen, wherein the Scriptures have been made the only means of bringing the mind to a knowledge of the Redeemer. Nor would it be difficult to name the village in which a New Testament in the Bengalee language, left at a shop many years ago for public perusal, was the means of bringing five or six persons to the knowledge of the Saviour of men, of whom two died some years ago in the enjoyment of Christian hope, the others are at this day respectable Christians, and one of them a highly acceptable preacher. If such be the case, what a powerful means of spreading the knowledge of Christianity throughout Eastern Asia may the Scriptures be rendered ! How great might be the effect of an edition of the New Testament introduced into a nation, to whom it may be scarcely possible at present for missionaries to obtain access ! A Thousand copies might pervade almost a whole country ; and a copy might convey the news of salvation to a man of reading in the most unobtrusive manner ; it might be perused by him at a season in which a missionary could not obtain access to him, in a moment of retirement, when the mind, sickened with the enjoyments, or wearied with the cares and oppressions of the world, might listen with joy to the Saviour, declaring himself the only rest “ for the weary and heavy laden.” The sacred invitation might be consulted repeatedly, and weighed with that attention scarcely capable of being given to the fleeting voice at a first or even a tenth address from a man of a foreign nation and accent. It could moreover be read to an intimate friend, or amidst a family circle inaccessible to a foreigner. If the Scriptures should enlighten the mind of one individual, he might impart his ideas to others,—and these to others in their turn, till a number of *living preachers* were created by the Scriptures themselves ! Thus, through the Divine blessing, might the Sa-

cred Scriptures themselves diffuse a knowledge of Christianity in countries as yet scarcely accessible to foreign Missionaries.

Were it not indeed for encouragement of this nature, what could we reasonably expect from the Two Hundred Thousand copies of the New Testament, which have been with so much wisdom and piety distributed by Leander Von Ess among the Roman Catholics in Germany? These go forth unaccompanied by any living instructor, as a preacher could at present scarcely gain admission into these countries, who yet receive a copy of the written word. But are these copies of the Scriptures sent forth without the living preacher, sent in vain? Had the British and Foreign Bible Society judged thus, would they have encouraged the distribution of the Scriptures by this excellent man, as they have so wisely done from the beginning? Do these copies of the Scriptures, however, find those *converted* to whom they come? Are they not enveloped in darkness scarcely less palpable than that which covers the natives of India? It is evident however, that all hope of fruit from this amazing distribution of the Scriptures in Roman Catholic countries, must be founded on the expectation that the Divine Spirit will render the Scriptures themselves the means of enlightening the mind and changing the heart. But are these influences of the Divine Spirit confined to countries called Christian?—may we not humbly hope that God will pour out his spirit on the Heathen also? Should he not indeed, what can be effected by the labors even of the living preacher? But is not this hope imperative on us as to providing the Sacred Scriptures as far as it may be in our power? From a review of all these circumstances it appears impossible more effectually to promote the cause of God here, than by endeavouring if possible to carry the translation of the Scriptures into every dialect current in India.

6. Nor may it be improper to add, that while the

Scriptures impart to one missionary the efficiency of many, *the expense of a version of the New Testament is not equal to that of even One missionary for three years.* Relative to the *living messenger* of the gospel and the *written word*, things at present are precisely the reverse of what they were in the days of the apostles. While the extension of knowledge is such almost throughout the whole world, or at least through that part of it which is under European influence, that, compared with the state of things in the days of the Apostles, the *ability to read* is increased more than a hundred fold, the expense of furnishing a Hundred copies of the Sacred Scriptures at the present day, must be far less than that of preparing *One* in the Apostolic days. Then, after the canon of Scripture was completed, when each manuscript copy, (for such alone existed,) was the labor of years, what must have been the expense of preparing for any country one hundred copies of the New Testament alone! Surely to furnish even Ten Thousand copies at the present time, occupies less time, and involves a less portion of labor, than preparing only One Hundred in manuscript, although each copy is read with such superior ease. This seems to point out the path of duty relative to evangelizing every nation which possesses a written language. God is pleased to suit his gifts to the various periods of his church; the present age he has not favored with the gift of working miracles, nor with that of tongues; but the Sacred Scriptures may be made to speak in every tongue, and so multiplied as to find their way to every town and village, and almost to every house: they may even exercise a kind of *ubiquity*, and speak in ten thousand places at the same moment.

This peculiar feature in the present age will strike the mind still more strongly, when we also consider the vast disparity between the expense of sending forth *living messengers* of the Gospel at the present day, and that of their going forth in

apostolic times. Then, as long as the gift of tongues was continued, a man often went forth with little or no previous preparation : a heart filled with the knowledge and the love of the gospel, enabled multitudes to go forth at their own charges into countries and climates little different from their own, recommended to the grace of God indeed by the believing brethren with whom they were connected, and followed by their ardent prayers ; but, from the age and the nature of the work in those days, expecting no pecuniary supplies from their brethren to follow them. This in the present day is almost wholly impracticable. A certain degree of preparation is generally necessary ; and from the distance of India both from Europe and America, before missionaries can reach the scene of operation, the expense of a long voyage is unavoidable. When they have arrived there, the unfriendly nature of the climate renders it impossible for the foreign missionary to travel from place to place without an accumulated degree of expense. When we add to this the disadvantage of speaking a strange tongue acquired when the organs of speech have ceased to be flexible, and the enfeebling effect of a burning clime on every exertion made to convey the word of life to others ; it will appear that even when life is spared, and the expense of preparation and the voyage is not rendered abortive by death, still the difficulty and expense of furnishing a living preacher must be nearly *ten times* greater than that which lay on the churches in apostolic times. Contrast this with the superior facility of imparting copies of the *written word* at the present period ; and while the necessity for living instructors is fully acknowledged, it will still strike the mind, that since the difficulty and expense with which the one is furnished in the present age compared with the other, is *as a Thousand to One*, the widest extent of operation should be given to the written word in aiding the exertions of living instructors. If the Great Head of the

Church, suiting his gifts to the present state of mankind in their increasing attention to letters, has rendered the diffusion of the written word so easy and inexpensive, compared with that of sending forth and supporting the living messengers of the gospel, wisdom itself dictates that the latter should be employed chiefly with the view of giving efficiency to the former; and that they should be occupied principally in the work of circulating the written word through the various countries now without the gospel, till, the whole earth being filled with the word of God, this disposition of them be no longer necessary:—and we may reasonably expect, that while they are thus employed, God will by their means raise up numerous native preachers in various countries, to whom the Scriptures will be absolutely necessary, and who with them in their hands will be able to assist in the work in a most extensive degree, as was the case even in apostolic times.

The importance of the work being evident, it only remains to enquire whether advantages exist for carrying it forward sufficient to warrant the attempt; and this can easily be seen by briefly noticing those which have been for years in a train of preparation and through Divine goodness are now in full operation.

1. *Advantages are enjoyed for Printing any Version whatever, and that at a moderate expense.* The necessity of suitable Founts of Types to print the different versions is self-evident; and this was severely felt on first engaging in the work. This necessity however, Divine Providence has now met in the most effectual manner. Beside different founts of Deva-Naguree, the most ancient of the Indian characters and the origin of all the rest, when the founts in hand are finished, the Serampore Brethren have now *twelve* alphabets, embodied in as many different founts, the letters in all of which as far as they are found, being substantially the same

in name, order, and power, with those in the Deva-Nagaree alphabet, much as they may differ in form from that and from each other. These are, the *Orissa*, the *Telinga*, the *Tamul*, and the *Cingalese*, which embrace the language current in the South of India, and the three last of which have been employed for printing editions of the Scriptures at Madras, and Ceylon,—the *Bengalee*, the *Mahratta*, and the *Kyt'hee*, which render the Scriptures legible to nearly thirty millions in the central part of India;—the *Mooltanee*, the *Goojuratee*, and the *Shikh*, current in the more western part;—the *Kashmeer*, current in the north west;—and the *Burman* which is read throughout that vast empire, as well as by the Christian brethren in the Mug country, and the inhabitants of Arracan. In addition to these may be added, a new fount of *Arabic* now employed in printing a version of the Malay Scriptures; and a fount of *Persian* in preparation under the eye of the best judges of that character in India. With these various founts of types, there are few versions of the Scriptures in any of the languages of India which cannot be printed with ease. The labor of twenty years has also formed a Printing Establishment comprizing Seventeen Presses, and workmen of every description; and the value of it in reducing the expense of a version is by no means inconsiderable. To this is now added the advantage of a Paper Manufactory on the spot. The importance of this to the diffusion of the Scriptures throughout India has been long felt: it is vain to expect that the Scriptures can be printed in sufficient quantity for extensive distribution on paper brought fifteen thousand miles: the expense will fall too heavy on the Christian public. A first edition of which the number is necessarily small, may be thus printed; but how can second and succeeding editions, in which the number of copies it may be hoped will continually increase, be given on paper imported from Britain? The paper formerly made in India however,

became so quickly a prey to insects, that some have preferred a small number on English paper, to a far greater which a few years might consign to destruction. But a perseverance for twelve years in attempting to produce a superior kind, has been so far crowned with success, that, as already observed, paper equally impervious to the worm with English paper, and of a firmer texture, though inferior in colour, is now made of materials the growth of India. The advantage of thus procuring for these versions, paper made on the spot, and hence free of all expense of carriage, will not appear small when the number of versions requisite is considered and the increased number of copies in every succeeding edition. These circumstances united, seem themselves to encourage persevering exertion in a work so important to the evangelizing of India, independently of other things. There are however others more intimately connected with the work itself, among which are,

2. *The number of learned Natives now trained up and accustomed to the work of translation.* These, who are in general well acquainted with *Sungskrita*, have in some instances an acquaintance with three or four of the languages derived from it, beside their own. They, moreover, have now acquired a pretty clear idea of translation, as consisting, not in the exchange of a number of words for an equal number in another language, but in transfusing into one, precisely the ideas expressed in another. This is a matter of such importance, that without it the very nature of a translation is misunderstood. Yet it is by no means easy to convey this idea to the mind of a native, though a man of learning. To do this effectually, is often the labour of years spent in the most assiduous instruction. But when this has been once attained in the case of able pundits eminently skilled in the parent language as well as their own vernacular dialects, the work of translation is thereby exceedingly facilitated. Some of these

will take a piece in the Bengalee language, possibly relating to general knowledge, and render it into another dialect, with a fidelity and a happiness of expression, scarcely imitable by a European after years of the severest study. When such men are already prepared, it is wise to employ their knowledge and talents in forwarding the most important of all objects. The loss of such men a lapse of many years or even of an age might fail to supply.

3. *In the course of so many years a certain degree of experience in the work has been necessarily obtained.* There are difficulties in the work of translating the Scriptures which cannot be easily surmounted without a considerable degree of experience. Passages, the general meaning of which may be strongly felt, often create difficulty in rendering them into another language, of which few who have not made the trial, have an adequate idea. There are also Variations in the Text of different kinds; not only are there passages in which the original is acknowledged to differ much from the sense given in the authorized English version; but many wherein the original itself is understood differently by eminent biblical critics. This requires caution in those who conduct a translation of the Scriptures: without some acquaintance with the original, the sense of many passages can scarcely be given in any way, and in the present rage for critical emendations, there is danger lest a strong attachment to studies of this nature should create almost a new text. In the course of years however, a degree of experience may be acquired favorable to the work: that examination of the original Scriptures which three or four versions successively require, gives an opportunity for weighing passages, which one scarcely affords. Ideas relative to a doubtful passage or a various reading, which in a first version seemed indubitable, may be weighed in a second or third, and the novelty of them having disappeared, they may perhaps appear to have little besides to recommend them. There are

indeed difficulties found in translating the Scriptures into the languages of India even where the meaning of the text is perfectly clear; and these are so numerous, that to surmount them requires nearly as much practical skill and experience as the exercise of a distinct art or profession. These it is not easy to describe to those who are unacquainted with the work. Perhaps some idea may be conveyed by the fact, that although the translation of the New Testament into the Bengalee language was not put to press till the translator had been seven years in the country, he himself, in the second edition, altered nearly every verse therein to render it conformable to the Indian idiom. Whatever be the learning or talents possessed by any who may engage in the work of rendering the Scriptures into the languages of India, therefore, experience in the work is by no means unimportant. Opportunities for the acquisition of experience of this nature however, do not often occur; and when they have occurred, to improve them to the utmost for the cause of God, seems a sacred duty.

4. There are certain things which may be highly improved for the advancement of these versions. Among these is, the *assistance to be derived from our own countrymen in various parts of India who are acquainted with any one of its dialects*. It has long been the study of the brethren how the knowledge possessed by these friends, might be brought to bear on this great object; and it has occurred to them that few would be unwilling to examine a version of the Scriptures in any dialect with which they are acquainted. Their assistance therefore was solicited about two years ago in an article published in one of the Numbers of the "Friend of India" but effectually to secure their help, a circular letter has since been drawn up more fully requesting it, which has been already sent to some and will be sent to others as occasion may offer. In this letter they are invited not only to

contribute assistance themselves, but to put a version or part of a version into the hands of any respectable native near them competent to the task of examining it, with the assurance that every expense shall be defrayed which may attend this in the way of copying or otherwise. They are ready to hope that this will gradually bring to bear on this important object, nearly all the knowledge of this kind possessed by their countrymen in the various provinces of India; and that if it does not render accurate the various versions of the Scriptures in these dialects, it will do as much towards effecting this as circumstances at present will permit to be done. This letter is given in the Appendix.

5. But relative to the completion of these different versions of the Scriptures in the dialects of India, *their hope under the Divine blessing rests chiefly on the exertions of the Natives themselves.* To bring these exertions to bear on the Scriptures is one object of the New College at Serampore. Indeed for an object so important as that of perfecting the various versions of the Scriptures in the languages of India, almost equal to Europe itself in extent and population, preparation ought to be made and suitable means provided. A work of this nature ought not to be left to chance, nor to the mere operation of the common course of events. As well might David when he had set his heart on building the house of God, have left all the materials, the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, the wood, and the various kinds of precious stones precisely where he found them; particularly as he was told by the prophet, that he himself was never to complete the house. Such however was not David's feeling; he loved the house of his God too well to slacken his diligence on that account; he prepared of all things for the building almost without weight and number, and this the Divine Spirit has been pleased to record in terms which endear David and his example to this very day. Thus should provision be

made for bringing all that philological knowledge into this work in which the natives of India are so profound. This accurate knowledge of the structure of language in general, as well as of the *Sanskrita* and its cognate dialects, ought not to be left wholly in the possession of idolaters; it ought if possible to be transfused into Native Christian Youth, who are now growing up in an acquaintance with the Scriptures. Where philological knowledge so highly valuable as that possessed by the learned in India does exist in any country, it ought to be obtained by the advocates of truth. To deny it them, if it can be imparted, is to betray the cause of truth and righteousness, and to sin against the best interests of mankind. How important is it then that this knowledge should be imparted to them at the period when the word of God is about to be given in every dialect of India! And how possible it is to impart this knowledge in the fullest manner, when their own superstitions are done away, the proficiency made by the Native Christian Youths who have already entered the College, sufficiently demonstrates.

6. It seems reasonable that *Native Christians in India should not remain for ever without a knowledge of the Languages in which the Sacred Scriptures were given*; a little reflection may indeed convince us, that a knowledge of these will ever be desirable. Translations of the Scriptures, however excellent, can never equal the original: were there no other difference, it will always form an important one, that there are many words both in the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures, which have more than one meaning. Now to suppose that any translator, however faithful and able, shall in every instance express precisely the idea intended by the Divine Spirit, and with exactly the same force, is to suppose, that every translator is infallibly guided in the whole of his work by the Spirit of God, which would be equivalent to a new inspiration. The probability of discrepancy

will appear the stronger, if we consider that the Scriptures differ widely from all human writings ; in the latter, a translator of congenial taste and even equal genius, if he should not express precisely the idea conveyed by his author, may in some instances express it with superior force and energy. But in a translation of the Holy Scriptures to express an idea more forcibly than it is expressed in the original, is a departure therefrom, and, as far as it extends, a misrepresentation of the mind of God as revealed in his word. While the bulk of mankind in every country, therefore, must make themselves acquainted with the Divine will through the medium of a translation, it seems desirable that in every nation which embraces Christianity, there should be, even to the end of time, certain persons able to refer to the originals themselves, lest otherwise, as every exposition may possibly recede somewhat from the original, the genuine meaning of the Sacred Oracles should be at length entirely lost among them. If this be to be deprecated respecting any single nation, how much more respecting the whole of India, in extent equal to Europe itself ! Surely it cannot be desirable that the whole of this vast continent, when they receive the Scriptures as the way of salvation, the rule of life and practice, should be without a single person capable of examining their original meaning. Yet this may be the case should no Native of India become acquainted with the languages in which they were delivered. It seems important therefore, that knowledge of this kind should be imparted to Native Christian Youth with as little delay as possible. When the gospel is made known to the natives of India, the Scriptures given them in their vernacular tongues, and a knowledge of the originals themselves imparted to them, they may be safely commended to the grace of God ; and under His divine guidance and blessing, though foreign missionaries should no longer visit them, the gospel may no more perish from India than it did from England at

the Reformation, or from the various countries of Asia Minor when no longer visited by Jewish evangelists.

Nor let it be deemed strange for the natives of Eastern Asia to apply to the study of Greek and Hebrew. As to Hebrew it is more naturally theirs than ours: it belongs to Asia, and justly forms a principal part of Oriental Literature. That one of the most ancient languages of Western Asia should be deemed less congenial to the ideas of its eastern inhabitants, than to those of the most distant isles of Europe, can arise only from our want of reflection. The manners and customs described in the Sacred Writings assimilate far more with those in India, than with those existing in modern Europe; and numerous words occurring therein, are at this day used in India in their proper and natural sense. But the capacity of Native youth to acquire the Hebrew language, is placed beyond all dispute by the fact, that there are already to be found many natives of India eminently skilled in Arabic, so much more complex and copious than the Hebrew.—To the Greek language the *Sanskrita* scholar has an unerring clue. No two languages of different origin resemble each other more strongly. In its nouns, the singular, dual, and plural numbers, in its verbs, the active, passive, and middle voices—its twenty prepositions almost the same in sound as well as in force and meaning,—its wonderful facility for compounding words and expressing the nicest shades of idea, render the *Sanskrita* quite a counterpart to the Greek language; while its grammatical structure is so accurate and exquisite, that, compared with the most concise of the *Sanskrita* grammars, the fullest Greek grammar now in use, is little more than an imperfect sketch compared with a finished picture. To a youth trained up in the study of *Sanskrita*, therefore, the acquisition of the Greek language can form no hardship. The cultivation of both the original languages by a select number of Native Christian Youth previously trained up in *Sanskrita*, can

easily be secured in the College at Serampore ; and their application of this knowledge in future years to the improvement of the versions of the Sacred Scriptures, in the perusal of which they have been trained up from their infancy, we may hope will ultimately impart to them that almost inimitable felicity of expression given to the English version by our British Divines in the reign of king James, and which could scarcely have been imparted by any beside persons born and educated in Britain.

7. *The collection of such Works as exist in the Popular Languages of the country whether in prose or verse,* may greatly assist in this work. Although from some of these, highly valuable facts may be gleaned relative to the antiquity, the history, the geography of India, the intention is to collect them, not so much for the sake of the ideas they contain, or the information they may convey, as for the sake of ascertaining with precision the different languages of India with a view to the Translations of the Sacred Scriptures. This collection will form a considerable feature in the Library of the College at Serampore ; and from the number of works already obtained, and the generous readiness of friends in various parts of India to aid herein, there is reason to think that such a collection of works in the popular languages of the country will soon be made, as has not yet been found in any one library in India. These works will form a rich treasure for the examination of Native Christian Students who may possess a philological taste, and furnish possibly the best means of deciding relative to the different languages of India. From all these means united, therefore, they humbly hope that under the divine blessing, as great a degree of improvement in the versions of the Scriptures in the various languages of India, may be anticipated, as can be reasonably expected in present circumstances.

There is indeed a certain season wherein every thing can be done to the greatest advantage : and this is not whol-

ly inapplicable to the ultimate improvement of the versions of the Sacred Scriptures. Our excellent English version was not brought to its present degree of perfection in the age of Tindal, nor during the reign of Edward the Sixth,—nor even in the long and peaceful reign of Elizabeth. Could this have been accomplished indeed, till the learned certainly knew what they had to alter, and what words or phrases to substitute in the room of others? Who will say that the reign of Elizabeth, wherein the Scriptures were so thoroughly examined by all parties, was not in some degree necessary to prepare the best philologists of that age for the formation of our present excellent version, early in the seventeenth century? How much more may this be expected to be the case in India? How few Europeans have as yet made Indian philology their study for any number of years? And as for the Natives, from whom the ultimate improvement of these versions may be so justly expected, their minds must imbibe divine truth, become acquainted with the contents of the Sacred Writings and enter into their nature and meaning, before they can bring to any degree of perfection the various versions of the Scriptures.

If these versions however be at present imperfect, still the most imperfect version ever made under the direction of those who understand the literal meaning of the Sacred Scriptures and their design in producing repentance and faith in Christ, has contained the substance of all Christian doctrine, and has been capable of making men wise unto salvation. Who will say that even the Rhemish version of the New Testament, which, according to Fulke and other divines of Elizabeth's reign, contains so many false renderings intended to pervert the pure doctrines of the gospel, was never the means of salvation to one soul amidst the many thousands who have made it their study? How much more then may we hope that a version will prove the means of salvation to

heathens which may be conducted under the direction of those who desire to set every truth in its clearest light, though it should hereafter admit of numerous verbal alterations. Not a verse of the Bengalee version of the New Testament, was left unaltered in the second edition; yet *Krishnoo*, who was brought to the knowledge of the truth while reading it, long preferred it to the second edition as a daily manual of devotion. Further, when a version is once in circulation, not only will every European Missionary who may labor on the spot, be able to examine it and enrich it with his remarks; the Natives themselves will become gradually able to compare it with some version of the Scriptures in a neighbouring language, the Bengalee, the Hindee, &c. which may have gone through various editions; an ability to read which, if not to read that in the parent *Sanskrita*, will be possessed by some few in almost every province, although the bulk of the inhabitants may be acquainted with no language beside their own dialect. If a version of the Scriptures be brought to a good degree of correctness in a few of the leading languages of India, therefore, those in the others will soon obtain the same degree of correctness, it being easy to transfuse ideas published in one of these cognate languages into all the rest. Thus a version of the Scriptures once put into circulation in any one of the Indian languages, is almost certain of becoming gradually correct, while it may make thousands wise unto salvation in the course of its thus working itself pure.

The brethren who form the Committee for conducting and printing these Translations, now intreat permission to submit to the public the state of the Fund intrusted to them for this purpose, which, will be found to contain a balance of somewhat more than One Thousand Pounds. But this balance is so much more than absorbed by the editions now in the press, that the work must have stopped had they not borrowed funds on their own credit to carry it forward. The sum al-

ready expended on these editions, with that which must be advanced before supplies can be received from Europe, exceeds by several thousand pounds the balance now in hand, as will appear from the following particulars.

The gracious providence of God in stirring up the mind of the late excellent Mr. Hey of Leeds to interest himself so deeply in the Indian versions, on reading the last Memoir, as to propose a fund for meeting the expense of those of the New Testament therein mentioned, calls for the warmest gratitude to the Giver of all good: nor is it less matter of gratitude that the Bible Society have taken up this plan with the determination to carry it into effect. The Ten versions of the New Testament already mentioned as the least advanced,* however, have necessarily a certain outlay made upon them. It is evident, that before a version can be put to press, types and paper must be prepared to print it, and that when begun, the wages for printing must commence. Hence the Bible Society at Calcutta, on every version they have requested the brethren to print, have made an advance before-hand to meet the expense of the outlay. On these ten versions, as some of them are already advanced to St. John's Gospel, it will not be beyond the truth to say that the outlay on them has been already Fifteen Hundred Pounds. But on the Eleven others, (exclusive of the three for which the five hundred pounds have been already voted by the Bible Society,) of which four are finished and copies sent to the Bible Society, one in the Revelation, and the other six likely to be completed within a twelve month from this time, the outlay already made is very considerable. And as the sum is not paid till each version be printed off and delivered, the expense of bringing them through the press lies in the mean time wholly on the brethren who conduct them. While their previously providing this sum

* See page 8th of this Memoir.

however, lies heavy on the brethren who conduct them, still as the Bible Society, in generously undertaking to carry into effect Mr. Hey's plan, have ultimately provided for the expense of them when brought through the press, the brethren consider these versions of the New Testament as happily taken off from the general fund in their hands for translating and printing the Scriptures.

For the versions of the Old Testament now going forward in the *Teliaga*, the *Kunkuna*, the *Shikh*, the *Pushtoo*, and the *Assam* languages, they have been constrained to make an outlay from the general fund to the amount of nearly nine hundred pounds, that they might put them to press. As the two first of these languages will be relinquished when the *Pentateuch* is finished, this sum will probably meet the expense of printing the *Pentateuch* in them and that of the conducting the rest of the Old Testament in the *Shikh*, *Push-too*, and *Affghan* languages for some time longer. The Old Testament in the Chinese language is as yet carried forward by the grant of a thousand pounds made by the Bible Society for that express object.

But the new editions of those versions which have been the longest in circulation, the *Bengaiee*, the *Sungskrita*, the *Hindee*, the *Mahratta*, and the *Orissa*, are those which form the heaviest part of the burden now lying on the general fund for translation. These new editions however are absolutely necessary to the diffusion of the light of the gospel in India. The first four of them are in the chief languages of India and those widest in circulation; and in all five of them the Scriptures are more sought than in any other languages in this part of India. Nothing therefore can at present be of greater importance to the cause of God here, than a supply of the Scriptures in these languages. The desire for them has been such that the former editions of the Old Testa-

ment in the Bengalee and Sungskrita are now exhausted, as well as those of the New. Hence to print less than two thousand copies of the Old Testament in Sungskrita, or of four thousand in Bengalee, would only have increased the expense, since from the wish for them being so much increased, a small edition would have been distributed almost as soon as printed off; and another edition begun immediately, would have increased the expense to answer no valuable purpose. But a version of the Old Testament, containing two thousand copies, no Society have ever yet been able in India to bring through the press for less than Three Thousand pounds. From the arrangements they have made, however, the brethren are ready to hope that they shall bring the Sungskrita version containing two thousand copies, through the press for about Two Thousand pounds, and that even the Bengalee version of four thousand will not greatly exceed Two Thousand Five Hundred. If this can be done, the two principal editions of the Old Testament containing Six Thousand copies, will come much within Five Thousand pounds sterling; but of this sum full Two Thousand must be expended for paper, types, and wages, before supplies can arrive from Europe, particularly as the largest of these editions, the Bengalee, has advanced to the book of Numbers.

For the same reasons the edition in Bengalee of the New Testament required an increased number, as the last edition including five thousand was distributed within four years. Six thousand copies as a supply for the increasing numbers who enquire for them among at least twelve millions of people, did not appear too great. Nor did the Hindee appear to deserve a less number, particularly when the one-half is in the Deva-Naguree and the other three thousand in the Kyt'hee character. The Sungskrita New Testament, which will be circulated among the learned in every part of India, seemed to demand an editi-

on of at least two thousand.* The Orissa, in which the opportunity for distribution is so great, could now scarcely have less than four thousand; nor could the second edition of the Mahratta be brought below three thousand. These five editions of the New Testament will form a supply of Twenty Thousand copies in those languages of India in which they are most needed; and while this will be a supply of the most seasonable kind, it may suffice for some years to come, unless it should happily lead to a spirit of enquiry far beyond present expectation. These twenty thousand copies of the New Testament the brethren hope to bring within Four Thousand pounds sterling. Of this sum however, nearly one-half will be needed before supplies can be received from Europe, as one of the versions containing six thousand copies, the Hindee, will they trust be finished at press before that period, and one or two more be considerably advanced. From this statement it will be evident, that independently of the versions of the New Testament not yet finished, this new supply of the Scriptures in the five languages in which they are most read, will require an out-lay of nearly Five Thousand pounds sterling before November next. The balance of the Fund now in hand however is little more than One Thousand pounds; and no other way remains of carrying forward these new editions so essential to the enlightening of India, but that of the brethren's obtaining the other Four Thousand pounds on their own credit, which must bear interest till again replaced.

In these circumstances they beg leave earnestly to appeal to the Christian public both in Europe and America, and particularly to the various Bible Societies, and those friends

* The brethren had intended to print 4900 copies of the *Sungskrîta* New Testament when the first pages of this memoir were put to press; but on ascertaining the very low state of the Fund, they feared to go beyond two thousand in the present edition.

in America and Britain who have already so liberally encouraged these translations. They humbly hope that their rendering themselves responsible for these sums through their confidence in the good faith and liberality of the public, rather than suffer the work to stop, will not be imputed to them as a crime, since they have done it purely from a desire to advance the cause of God, and this on the maturest consideration, grounded on a knowledge of the circumstances of the country. To give the Scriptures to India indeed has formed their chief object from the time they arrived there, from a full conviction that this would prove one of the most effectual means of evangelizing the country: and in doing this it has constantly been their care to render the burden of expense on the public as light as possible, that they might be encouraged to carry forward the work. With this view they have taken on themselves the expense of cutting the various founts of types formed, that the public might have nothing to meet beside that of printing and paper;—and with the same view they have been labouring for more than twelve years to produce paper, durable in its texture and impervious to the worm, at a cheaper rate than paper can be imported, which they have now the satisfaction of doing at little more than half that price. In these various experiments however, including a Steam engine and Paper mill, full Fifty Thousand Rupees have been expended wholly with a view to the translations. When in the paper manufactory, and in forming the various founts of types, therefore, they have sunk scarcely less than Eight Thousand Pounds Sterling, for which they never desire any other recompense than that of seeing the work done,—and have now to render themselves responsible for nearly as much more, that the work may not stop, they feel assured that they need add no more to a generous public who have hitherto ever exceeded their hopes.

They rejoice however in the prospect that this call on

the liberality of the public for aid in thus publishing the Scriptures will not be permanent, and perhaps never be again necessary to the same extent. In two or three years the greatest part of the yet unpublished versions of the New Testament will they trust be brought through the press; after which the chief expense will be that of carrying forward the translation of the Old Testament in such of the languages as demand them,—and of publishing successive editions of the New, as they may be needed. The present supply in the five languages in which the Scriptures are chiefly sought, however, will probably suffice for several years; and at any rate they are not likely to occur simultaneously to the same extent again. They therefore conclude by intreating those who have so liberally assisted them in this work, both in America and Britain and particularly the British and Foreign Bible Society to accept their warmest thanks, with the assurance that whatever they may be further pleased to intrust to their care, shall be applied with the utmost faithfulness, not only to the work in general, but to that particular part of it for which any donation may be expressly designed. The fruits of their liberality may be either transmitted directly to the Committee for conducting the translations at Serampore, or consigned to the care of the Secretaries or any of the Members of the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society in Britain,—or in America, to those of the Baptist Convention, who will faithfully transmit them to the brethren at Serampore.

SERAMPORE, }
Dec. 1, 1820. }

CIRCULAR ADDRESS.

THE Brethren who form the Committee for conducting Translations at Serampore, having been for many years engaged in the Translation of the Scriptures, have felt convinced, in proportion as they have applied to this work, that in no way can the best interests of India be more effectually promoted, than by a version of the Scriptures being given if possible in the dialect of every province and tribe in India, notwithstanding the difficulties which attend the completion of the work.

With these difficulties it is impossible that they should be unacquainted, engaged in the work as they have been for so many years. But if difficulties are suffered to deter from an undertaking of this nature, there can be little hope that light will ever be diffused throughout India, or that the numerous tribes of Eastern Asia, which comprize a full half of mankind, will ever enjoy those blessings with which Britain is so highly favored. They have found in the course of their work that the dialects of India and of Eastern Asia, numerous as they appear, may almost all be traced to two sources, the Sungskrita and the Chinese; and therefore that a knowledge of these two languages, sheds a prodigious degree of light over the various languages of India. This circumstance among other things enables them to view the difficulties in the way of accomplishing it, as easily surmountable by a course of steady perseverance; particularly if steps be taken to bring into operation that knowledge of the various dialects of India already possessed by our countrymen here. They humbly trust that the College recently established at Serampore, in which Native Youths of talent and ability, conversant with the various languages of India, will be instructed in the languages wherein the Scriptures were originally written, as well as in their own classic tongue, will prove highly important in this great work, which can be brought to due perfection only by efforts continued through a succession of years. But they feel assured that assistance of the most important kind may also be obtained from their countrymen in various parts of India; and it is with the view of respectfully soliciting this assistance in the improvement of the versions of the Scriptures they have already published, that you are now addressed.

This request they feel encouraged to make from the consideration that the Word of God is equally the portion of all Christians, by whatever name or denomination they may be known. It is indeed to *men* that this glorious revelation is made; and every man who loves his race is bound to interest himself to the utmost of his power in causing to be made for his fellow-men of every nation, a faithful and perspicuous version of the Divine Writings. The Committee for conducting Translations at Serampore, therefore, wish to interest in this important work, every friend to the

Scriptures in India who feels willing to contribute his aid in the improvement of even a single version, with whom they wish to exchange ideas on the subject in the most free and candid manner, for the sake of improving the various translations of the Divine Word which they may conduct.

How to secure this, so as to bring to bear on the Sacred Writings that knowledge of the dialects of India now possessed by gentlemen who reside in its various provinces, has long been with them matter of serious consideration, particularly as they wish to include the assistance of learned Natives in various parts of India in examining and judging relative to the style of such versions as are made in their respective dialects. The unavoidable distance of those so capable of affording this assistance, from them and from each other, increases the difficulty of frequent communication. They however humbly trust that the following plan will obviate most of the difficulty which exists in the present case. They respectfully propose,

1. That every gentleman willing to correspond with them on the subject of Translations, be intreated thus to contribute his aid to the improvement of some one of the Indian versions, and therein to obtain the aid of every learned Native over whom he has influence.

2. That such gentlemen be not called upon to incur any expense in examining any version of the Scriptures; but that whatever expense they may thus incur, be defrayed by the Committee for Translations at Serampore.

3. That an interleaved copy of any one version of the Sacred Scriptures, or of a single book in the language with which any gentleman may be best acquainted, be sent him, on his kindly requesting it.

By thus combining all the help procurable in *examining* the various versions, as editions are successively printed, most of the translations of the Scriptures will, they trust, ultimately be brought to a happy degree of perfection. But whether it be sooner or later, the Committee feel determined by Divine assistance never to withdraw their attention from this object till it be accomplished. They beg leave to observe, however, that in thus attempting to promote this important work, they have no wish to interfere with any friend who may be already conducting a translation in any of the dialects of India; on the contrary, to every such friend they cheerfully tender that assistance they respectfully solicit from others, their grand wish being, to see the work accomplished by whomsoever it be done.

They therefore respectfully intreat your assistance, dear Sir, and that of any friend near you, whether European or Native, in examining any one of the versions they have already brought through the press, a copy of any part of which interleaved, and particularly of the version in the language, shall be thankfully sent you on your kindly intimating your wish.

State of the Translation Fund, from June 30, 1816, to April 30, 1820.

DR.	TRANSLATION FUND, JUNE 30, 1816.			CR.
	RECEIPTS.	Rs.	A. P.	
By Balance in hand, . . .	1739	3	11	To Pundits' Wages, . . .
Collected in England, . . .	25,891	7	6	Chinese writers, cutters,
American Board of				and paper, for print-
Commissioners, . . .	4170	1	6	ing,
Bible Society, . . .	8000	0	0	3973 10 10
M s. Rebecca Cox, . . .	4000	0	0	Printing Memoirs, . . .
Donation from Dr. Ca-				100 0 0
rey, toward the Guju-				Charges Extraordinary, . . .
ratee translation, . . .	100	0	0	8 11 0
A Friend,	299	12	0	1000 copies of the Hindee
Mr. Robert Gordon, . . .	100	0	0	Hagiographa, . . .
Mr. Wright,	100	0	0	2000 0 0
Sir E. H. East,	50	0	0	1000 copies of the Mahrat-
				ta Historical Books, . . .
				3000 0 0
				5000 copies of the Benga-
				lee New Testament, . . .
				800 0 0
				26,467 7 19
				Balance,
				17,893 1 1
				Sa. Rs. 44,360 8 11
	Sa. Rs.	44,360	8 11	

DR.	TRANSLATION FUND, JUNE 30, 1817.			CR.
	RECEIPTS.	Rs.	A. P.	
By Balance,	17,893	1	1	To Pundits' Wages, . . .
Bible Society,	8000	0	0	Chinese writers, cutters,
Ditto ditto,	8000	0	0	and paper,
Baptist American Board, . . .	2059	14	6	2012 1 4
				Binding for the last three
				years,
				4875 0 0
				Sundries,
				31 12 9
				20,625 0 9
				Balance,
				15,327 14 10
				Sa. Rs. 35,952 15 7
	Sa. Rs.	35,952	15 7	

DR.

TRANSLATION FUND, APRIL 30, 1818.

CR.

RECEIPTS. <i>Rs. A. P.</i>			DISBURSEMENTS. <i>Rs. A. P.</i>		
By Balance,	15,327	14 10	To Pundits' Wages,	13,533	0 2
Mrs. Webberly,	100	0 0	Chinese writers, cutters, and paper,	1561	5 6
Bible Society,	8000	0 0	Mahratta Hagiographa,	2000	0 0
Ditto ditto,	8000	0 0	Shikh Pentateuch,	3000	0 0
A Friend,	100	0 0	Sungskrita Hagiographa,	2000	0 0
Balance of Interest,	1151	13 1	Hindee Prophets,	3000	0 0
			Binding to April 30th,	582	5 0
				25,676	10 8
				Balance, 7003	1 3
	<u>Sa. Rs. 32,679</u>	<u>11 11</u>		<u>Sa. Rs. 32,679</u>	<u>11 11</u>

DR.

TRANSLATION FUND, APRIL 30, 1819.

CR.

RECEIPTS. <i>Rs. A. P.</i>			DISBURSEMENTS. <i>Rs. A. P.</i>		
By Balance,	7003	1 3	To Pundits' Wages,	15,658	0 0
268 Dollars from America,	547	6 0	Chinese writers, cutters, and paper,	1841	14 4
Money collected in Eng- land from Oct. 1814, to Sept. 1817, £.5189 4 2			Charges Extraordinary,	59	2 3
Exchange at 2s 7d. and 2s. 8d. the Rupee,	39,690	10 3	Binding,	1200	0 0
			Mahratta Prophets,	3000	0 0
			Shikh Historical Books,	3000	0 0
			4000 copies of the Four Gospels in Hindee,	3250	0 0
			1000 copies of Matthew & Mark in Bengalee, Mr. Ellerton's translation,	750	0 0
			Matthew in the Roman Malay 500 copies,	300	0 0
			Advance on the Assam, Telinga, Kankuna and Pushtoo Pentateuchs,	7000	0 0
			Interest, Commission, &c.	383	1 9
				36,142	2 4
				Balance, 10,798	15 2
	<u>Sa. Rs. 47,241</u>	<u>1 6</u>		<u>Sa. Rs. 47,241</u>	<u>1 6</u>

DR.

TRANSLATION FUND, APRIL 30, 1820.

CR.

RECEIPTS.		<i>Rs. A. P.</i>	DISBURSEMENTS.		<i>Rs. A. P.</i>
By Balance, . . .	19,798	15 2	To Pundits' Wages, .	14,617	9 9
Received from the Cor- responding Committee of the Bible Society, 17,839	6	0	Chinese writers, cutters, paper, postage, &c. .	863	13 0
			Printing 1000 Arabic Malay Matthew, . .	500	0 0
			Binding 500 Jitto in lea- ther and 500 in boards, 625	0	0
			Printing 3000 copies of Mr. Chamberlain's Hin- dee Four Gospels, .	2,600	0 0
			Interest on money bor- rowed,	943	14 7
			Commission on disburse- ments,	263	9 0
				<hr/>	
				20,413	14 4
			Balance,	8,224	6 10
				<hr/>	
<i>Sa. Rs.</i> 28,638	5	2		<i>Sa. Rs.</i> 28,638	5 2
				<hr/>	

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