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BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF REV. WILLIAM WARD,

One of the Serampore Missionaries.

MR. WILLIAM WARD was born at Derby, where some of his relations still reside, October 20, 1769. His mother was a pious woman, who was accustomed to ascribe the beginning of her serious impressions to a discourse by a female Quaker in the Town-hall of Derby. Her son, therefore, like many other eminent servants of the Redeemer, enjoyed the privilege of maternal example and counsel; and appears, early in life, to have himself become the subject of that momentous and happy change, without which no man can see the kingdom of God.

At the usual period he left home for business, and was apprenticed to a printer. While thus engaged in acquiring the knowledge of that art, which he was afterwards to consecrate to the noblest purposes on the distant plains of Bengal, he made a public profession of religion; and having been baptized, was united to the church in George Street, Hull, now under the pastoral care of the Rev. Thomas Thonger. Thus introduced into Christian society, it soon became

evident that he was endowed with qualifications for the ministry of the Gospel. To this sacred employment he was advised to devote himself; and in order that he might be the better furnished to engage in it, a generous friend, still living, undertook to place him for a season, under the care of the late amiable and pious Dr. John Fawcett, who then kept a flourishing seminary for youth near Halifax. Of this important period of his life, the following notice occurs in the Memoirs of Dr. Fawcett, lately published.

“A residence of about a year and a half at Ewood Hall endeared Mr. Ward as much to the family, as his exertions in behalf of the heathen have raised him in the esteem of the public. They witnessed the first appearance of that missionary spirit, which induced him afterwards to relinquish every other engagement for this sacred cause. His most delightful employment was to preach in hamlets wherever he could collect a congregation; and by the dispersion of short tracts, &c. to lead careless as well as inquiring souls to a serious attention to the best things.”

Before Mr. Ward left Ewood Hall, he had expressed his inclination to engage as a Missionary to

India; and at a Committee Meeting held at Northampton, Sept. 20, 1798, the Secretary was requested to invite him to attend, and preach at Kettering in the following month. With this invitation he complied, and the result was so satisfactory, that it was unanimously resolved that he should be accepted as a Missionary in connexion with the Society, and that preparations should be made for his going out to India in the spring of 1799. At one of these interviews, Mr. Ward related an incident which seems to have made considerable impression on his mind. When in company with Mr. Carey, a little before he embarked in 1793, that devoted Missionary remarked, "If the Lord bless us, we shall want a person of your business to enable us to print the Scriptures: I hope you will come after us." Thus *the words of the wise are as goads*; and there can be little doubt that this transient observation contributed, under the direction of Him *who worketh in us to will and to do*, not a little to its own fulfilment about six years after, and as a consequence to the multiplied benefits which India has since derived from the long residence of Mr. Ward in that country!

Early in the year 1799, Mr. Ward spent several months at Birmingham, supplying the church at Cannon Street, and thus became intimately acquainted with the excellent Samuel Pearce. Between two kindred souls, strongly bent on the same grand object, it is not wonderful that a close and affectionate union was speedily formed. On earth, indeed, it was not of long duration, as Mr. Pearce died before the end of the year; but it is cheering to think, that it has since been renewed, in that world where divine love has its proper habitation, and where it can never, never be interrupted more!

The service, in which Mr. Ward

(with Mr. Brunsdon) was set apart to the work of a Missionary, was held at Olney, May 7th. The work of the day was accompanied, according to the primitive pattern, with fasting and prayer, and the whole occasion was very interesting and affecting. In answer to some questions proposed by Mr. Fuller to the Missionaries respecting the motives of their undertaking, and the religious sentiments they meant to propagate, Mr. Ward replied,

"I have received no new revelation on the subject: I did not expect any. Our Redeemer hath said, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and lo, I am with you always to the end of the world.' This command I consider as still binding, since the promise of Christ's presence reaches to the utmost corner of the earth, and to the utmost boundaries of time. While I was at Ewood Hall I received an invitation to carry the Gospel and a printing-press to India, where brother Carey and others have erected the standard of the Cross. I prayed to God, and advised with my friends. In complying with this invitation I gave up all other prospects, and devoted myself to that of attempting to bless a nation of heathens. Since that time my peace and joy in God have more and more abounded. Duty and pleasure have in my employment gone hand in hand. Sometimes I have been enabled to say,

"No joy can be compared to this,
"To serve and please the Lord."

"In his strength, therefore, I would go forth, borne up by your prayers, hoping that two or three stones at least may be laid of the foundation of Christ's kingdom in India, nothing doubting but that the fair fabric will rise from age to age, till time shall be no more."

A passage had been previously secured in the American ship *Criterion*, Capt. Wickes, in which Mr. Ward, with Messrs. Marshman, Grant, and Brunsdon embarked, and left the river, May 24, 1799. It added not a little to their comfort that the Captain of the *Criterion* was a truly pious man, who considered it an honour to convey the servants of Christ to the scene of their labour, and gladly availed himself of their assistance to maintain the worship of God on board during the voyage.

While at sea, Mr. Ward was diligently employed in those exercises which tended to prepare him for the great work to which he had dedicated himself. Among other employments of this nature, he perused the Missionary Accounts of the Moravian brethren with much satisfaction. His own remarks on this subject are characteristic—“I have read Crantz’s History of Greenland, I trust with much profit. I feel towards the first Greenland Missionaries a kind of enthusiastic reverence. To say they were Howards or Thorntons would be a poor compliment, however it might embellish their names, or embalm their memories. Their testimony in favour of the blood of Immanuel will, I trust, be mine; to that I would cleave—that I trust will be the centre to which I shall be drawn, and from thence deduce every important truth. . . . I can scarce ever go to a throne of grace now, but I carry thither the congregations of Greenlanders, Esquimaux, Negroes, South Sea Islanders, and Hottentots. Thank you, Moravians! ye have done me good. If I am ever a Missionary worth a straw, I shall owe it to you, under our Saviour.”

After a favourable voyage of twenty weeks, Mr. Ward and his companions arrived at Calcutta, October 11th, but as at that time no legal provision had been made for the residence of Missionaries on the British territory, they were under the necessity of proceeding to Serampore, a small Danish Town about fifteen miles above Calcutta, on the banks of the Ganges. At that time Mr. Carey resided at Mudnabatty, a village considerably higher up the country, and he was very solicitous that the newly arrived Missionaries might be permitted to join him there. But all his efforts to procure this accommodation proved unavailing; and therefore the whole party were constrained to fix at Serampore.

This was, at the time, a severe disappointment, and it caused considerable pecuniary loss to the Society; but circumstances have since proved that the arrangement was guided by Infinite Wisdom, and that the great ends of the Mission have been far more effectually answered at Serampore, than they could have been in any other spot in Bengal.

For a long time previous to the arrival of these welcome fellow-labourers, Mr. Carey had been diligently employed in translating the New Testament into the Bengalee; and soon after Mr. Ward had established his press at Serampore, he had the pleasure of printing the first edition of that important work, in a thick octavo volume of 800 pages. In the same year (1800), Kristnoo and several members of his family embraced the Gospel; and by eating with the Missionaries, publicly and deliberately renounced caste—an event which all who know the force of this ancient and formidable institution had deemed absolutely hopeless. “All our servants,” say the Missionaries, in relating this memorable occurrence, “were astonished; so many had said that nobody would ever mind Christ, or lose caste. Brother Thomas had waited fifteen years, and had thrown away much on deceitful characters. Brother Carey has waited till hope of his own success had almost expired; and after all, God has done it with perfect ease! Thus the door of faith is opened to the Gentiles; who shall shut it? The chain of the caste is broken, who shall mend it?”

In May, 1802, Mr. Ward entered into the marriage relation with Mrs. Fountain, widow of Mr. John Fountain, a Missionary, who survives to mourn his loss. Two daughters were the fruit of this union, who are both living, and the elder of whom has lately been united to the church at Serampore.

For a number of interesting facts, connected with Mr. Ward's residence and labours in India, we must refer to the Periodical Accounts, which contain copious extracts from his journals.

Declining health rendered it necessary for Mr. Ward to revisit his native country; he arrived at Liverpool in June, 1819, and attended the public meetings in London on the 23d of that month. His address on the morning of that day at Great Queen Street Chapel, and his Sermon in the evening at Zion Chapel, in which he forcibly depicted the "abominable idolatries" of India, made a very deep impression on the numerous auditories. His health being mercifully and speedily restored, he visited many parts of the United Kingdom, and afterwards proceeded to Holland and to America. His principal object was to collect pecuniary aid for the education of pious native youth for the ministry in the College lately founded at Serampore, towards which object he obtained in all about £6000.

Mr. Ward was thus occupied about two years, and set sail with renovated health and cheerful spirits for India, in the *Abberton*, Capt. Gilpin, on May 28, 1821. He arrived in Calcutta, after an agreeable and expeditious voyage, early in October, and immediately resumed his labours in the Printing-office, and among the native converts, with all the ardour that Christian zeal and affection could inspire. Younger than either of his excellent colleagues, and having had so long the advantages of his native air, it seemed reasonable to anticipate that he might be the last who should be called to leave his work and enter into rest. But in the event which we are now called on to lament, we have a fresh proof that *The Lord's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts.*

In person, Mr. Ward was about

the middle size. His countenance bore evident marks of a long residence in an Eastern climate, and was further distinguished by a conspicuous mark over the right eye, occasioned by an injury sustained in childhood. In conversation he was not forward; and occasionally it appeared difficult to obtain from him that information respecting India, which he was so well qualified to impart; but this was far more than compensated by the edifying strain of his remarks, and the solicitude which he seemed habitually to feel for the spiritual interests of those around him. Without obtruding the subject in an unnecessary or offensive way, he would generally introduce something, be the conversation or the note ever so short, which bore upon the great concerns of eternity; and instances have occurred in which his private intercourse has proved the means of converting a sinner from the error of his way. It was evident that his whole soul was in the work—that he naturally cared for the souls of men—especially of the heathen—and that every thing in which he engaged was made subservient to this object.

Mr. Ward is advantageously known as an author. In the year 1811, he published at Serampore, in 4 vols 4to. his "Account of the Writings, Religion, and Manners of the Hindoos," containing a mass of valuable and authentic information, which he had been occupied in collecting for several years. This work was reprinted in 1815; and a third edition has since been published in this country, in 4 vols. 8vo. He also published a small volume, containing Biographical Accounts of four Converted Hindoos,—a Funeral Sermon for the Lady of N. Wallach, Esq. of Serampore, and a Sketch of the character of his revered friend, the late Rev. Andrew Fuller. While in England he printed a

Sermon on 2 Cor. v. 20, which may be considered as affording a tolerably correct idea of the spirit and style of his pulpit addresses. In compliance with the suggestion of some of his friends, he compiled, also, on his voyage from America, a volume of "Farewell Letters," in which he has, under respective heads, digested the substance of the information he was accustomed to communicate in his speeches and sermons. Since his return to India, there have appeared from his pen, a Brief Memoir of Krishnapul (or Kristnoo) the first Hindoo convert, and a work in 2 vols. duodecimo, containing Short Meditations on various passages of Scripture, arranged for each day in the year, in a manner resembling "Bogatzky's Golden Treasury."

Thus did this holy man of God *work while it was day*. Blessed is that servant, whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find so doing!

As we have already given a statement of the last illness of Mr. WARD, (vide p. 231, vol. iv.) we shall dismiss this Memoir by introducing a few reflections from the funeral Sermon, delivered by Rev. Dr. MARSHMAN, at Calcutta.

"In reviewing this sudden and afflictive providence, various reflections crowd on the mind. The first are, those of almost indescribable distress at the loss sustained, not only by the denomination to which our brother belonged, but by the church and the cause of God at large, particularly as far as relates to India. For although his family and his immediate colleagues in the work of God feel the sense of their loss increased by all that recollection of his worth as a man, a Christian, a husband, a father, a colleague, and brother, which the space of nearly twenty-four years, spent in perhaps the greatest degree of social happiness capable of being enjoyed

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on earth, must continually furnish; our brother was not a man who confined his regard for the cause of God to one denomination. He loved all who loved the Redeemer, and sought to promote his cause. Hence his death is a public loss to religion; and those particularly whose spiritual good he laboured to promote, and whose hands he laboured to strengthen by his preaching, his prayers, and his extensive correspondence, whether they be in India, Europe, or America, cannot but feel this bereavement.

"But while we thus mourn the loss of our beloved brother, and cherish the most tender affection for his memory, it becomes us to beware of sinning against God under this dispensation. It becomes us to recollect that every thing which rendered him so dear to us, and such a blessing to the cause of God, arose wholly from the grace God so richly manifested in him. This grace still remains an inexhaustible fountain. While we mourn his loss in the deepest manner, therefore, to suffer our hearts to sink in despondency as though the Great Redeemer did not still live to carry on his own work, who is the Sovereign Head of his Church, and from whom come not only every gift intended for the use of his cause, and all that diligence and love which may enable a man possessing such, to labour even more abundantly than others, but the blessing which must render these gifts and this labour effectual, and without which even a Paul might plant, and an Apollos water wholly in vain,—would be to sin against God, and to act contrary to the examples left us on Divine record. When Saul, and above all Jonathan, was removed, by whom the Lord had done such great things for Israel, David in the midst of grief perhaps never exceeded, "bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the

bow," to prepare them for future action, and exhorted the men of Jabesh Gilead, who had already distinguished themselves by their activity and energy, to strengthen their hands, and be valiant, *because* of the affliction which had then overwhelmed Israel.—When Hur, and Aaron, and even Moses were called to rest from their labours, the command of God himself to Israel was, to go forward in their way, to be "strong and very courageous" amidst the overwhelming grief which must have filled their minds at being thus deprived of all those who had gone in and out before them for so many years;—and his promise was that in thus doing he would be with them, cause them to overcome their enemies, and possess the promised land.

"In the beginning of the Gospel, also, when Stephen was prematurely removed in the midst of his high career of usefulness; a man "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," who so preached the Gospel that his fiercest adversaries were not able to resist "the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake;" how deeply must the loss of such a man have been felt by all who loved the cause of God, then so much in its infancy. We do not find, however, that while they so feelingly "made great lamentation over him," the disciples and brethren had the least idea of lying down in despondency. On the contrary, they took courage, and "went every where preaching the Gospel;" and respecting some of them it is expressly recorded, no doubt for our encouragement, that "the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord."* And when a year or two after this, James, one of the three disciples, so eminently distinguished by our Lord during

his life, and so justly esteemed one of the "pillars" of the infant apostolic church, was prematurely cut off by the sword, Peter also being seized and put in prison, we do not find that this had any other effect on the minds of the other brethren, than that of causing them to make prayer to God without ceasing for Peter, and no doubt for the cause of God in general, that it might not suffer by these afflictions. And by far the greatest extension of the Gospel was granted after this period. Unworthy as we are, we are still engaged in the same cause, and every degree of blessing must flow from the same source; and seeing we serve him who is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," we ought to renew our trust in his mercy and his almighty power, and to abound more and more in prayer and in the work of the Lord, knowing that he will never fail nor forsake those who trust in him.

"The brethren at Serampore, indeed, have been thus called to renew their trust in God while wading through the depths of affliction, even from the beginning of their course. We do not here allude merely to the fire at Serampore, eleven years ago, in which our dear brother now deceased was himself almost miraculously preserved, and which threatened to overwhelm us, but which, through the Divine mercy, was succeeded by the Divine blessing to a greater extent than had ever been experienced at Serampore before. We rather allude to the repeated afflictions we were called to sustain twenty-two years ago, when so many of our Missionary brethren were in succession carried to the grave in the very infancy of the cause here. Within eighteen days after our landing at Serampore, Mr. Grant was carried off in a fever; the four brethren and sisters having arrived on the 13th of

* See Acts xi, 21.

October, 1799, and he being removed on the 31st. The succeeding July, Mr. Fountain was removed by a bowel complaint, within four years after his arrival in the country, and just as he had become ready in the language. The next July beheld Mr. Brunson carried off by a liver complaint; scarcely twenty-six years of age, and the most forward in the language, as well as the ablest English preacher among all the four brethren who came out together.— And to complete the measure of affliction, the next October Mr. Thomas himself, who had laid the foundation of the Mission in Bengal, and had come out with brother Carey seven years before, was taken away, at an age two years below that of our now deceased brother. At that critical period, that four of the only seven Missionaries then in this part of India should be removed, and among them both the youngest and the oldest, the ablest and the most active, was indeed overwhelming, had we looked merely to human aid. Yet nearly all that has been done in this part of India has been the fruit of the Divine blessing since, experienced on humble and persevering effort, accompanied with constant prayer. Surely, then, in every affliction and bereavement, we ought to look directly and *wholly* to Him with whom is the residue of the Spirit—who cannot be unmindful of his cause or of his promise—and who has declared that all nations shall be blessed in the Redeemer—and that He, *Jehovah*, will accomplish this glorious work in his own time.

“The human mind, however, which is continually prone to run to the extremes either of presumption or despondency, is ever apt to misinterpret the dealings of God with his church. Thus when any of the servants of God are taken away peculiarly fitted for some particular work in their day and generation, we are ready to

sink in despondency, and to exclaim, “Such and such an eminent servant of God is taken away, and how can the loss be repaired?—how can the cause of God now go forward?” We forget that these servants of God, thus peculiarly gifted, were raised up to do a certain work; and that if they are now called to rest, the precise work no more remains to be done for which Divine Wisdom thus raised them up, and endued them with peculiar talents. Thus Divine Wisdom has suffered no disappointment; for these have fulfilled the work *they were intended* to accomplish, and have now entered into the joy of their Lord, leaving to others, whom Divine grace may raise up, that work which is suited to their capacity, and intended for them to fulfil. Therefore, while we so heavily mourn those removed, who are necessarily dear to us for their work’s sake, we should consider that Divine Wisdom has removed them, only because their peculiar work in the church militant below was fully accomplished; for had it not, their Saviour, who has the keys of death and of the unseen world, and who “shutteth and no man openeth,” would surely have detained them longer below.

“Thus, respecting our beloved brother, while he was so endeared to us in every capacity, that, had our feelings been consulted, we should never have suffered him to enter into rest but with ourselves; the work for which God pre-eminently raised him up, was evidently that of printing the Scriptures in India; and we believe that to him was shewn herein grace and favour granted before to very few men in that particular line. To the language of the apostle, which the brother who came out with him well recollects seeing in his diary in the course of his voyage, thus applied with reference to his own circumstances, “Unto me, who am

less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should *print* among the heathen, the unsearchable riches of Christ,"—could he have foreseen the Divine goodness to him, he might have added—"in *Twenty of their Languages*;" for the *Twentieth* version of the New Testament in the languages of India printed under his eye, had advanced to the book of Revelation at the time of our beloved brother's removal; and we believe it has been granted to few men in the church of God, ever to print the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in twenty languages spoken among the heathen. But for the preparation of all those founts of types which they required, and most of which had never before been seen in India, was his thorough knowledge of the art, his nice discernment, his assiduity, his indefatigable diligence, his love for the cause of his Redeemer, and the souls of the heathen, peculiarly suited. Yet all these founts prepared, and the difficulties attending these first editions of the Scriptures overcome, the way is now made easy;—second and succeeding editions with the same types involve so little difficulty, that the various native Christian brethren and others, trained up by our beloved brother for so many years, can go on with the work under common European superintendence.

"Seeing, then, that infinite wis-

dom and love thus guide all things, however mysterious, and that these are ever the same,—what remains, but that we all, who have seen so many of the servants of God around us removed in the past year, adore in humble silence what we are unable to comprehend—take new courage, and go forward in the work of Him who will cause his church to increase, till, like the stone cut out without hands, it shall have filled the whole earth. And to animate us thus to abound in the work of the Lord, and to do our own peculiar work in our day and generation, what can tend more than the example and the end of our beloved brother; whose life at least for the last twenty-four years, amidst all the difficulties and trials he had to share with his brethren, was one uniform course of high usefulness and happiness of mind; and who, after so long a course of bodily and mental labour, and spirituality of soul, was in heaven adoring before the throne of the Lamb, within forty-eight hours after he had delivered his last message for the glorious Redeemer below! Let us then lift up the hands which hang down, and confirm the feeble knees, and looking to Jesus, be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as we *know* that, prematurely as to an eye of sense we may seem to be called away, our labour, worthless as it may be, shall not be in vain in the Lord."

RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

For the American Baptist Magazine.

INFANT BAPTISM.

THE following narrative is extracted from a work written in the time of Charles II. and lately published in England, entitled, "Memoirs of the Life of Col. Hutchinson, Governor of Nottingham Castle and Town, representative of the Town of Nottingham, &c. by his Widow Lucy Hutchinson." Col. H. was one of the greatest