

from science and the narrowing of instruction in science to its utilitarian aspects.

I have said nothing of Dr. Appleton's main positions as to the necessity of some provision for research. I am at one with him as regards his general aim; only I contend that general experience, and that of Owens College in particular, point to the conclusion that this can best be pursued in harmony with, and not by superseding, the ordinary academical machinery. Moreover I have shown, first, that, so far from illustrating, in this regard, the vice of educational endowments, Owens College has done more, perhaps, in proportion to its means, than any other like institution for the direct encouragement of research on the part both of teachers and of students; and, secondly, that in our case, Mr. Owens' endowment has been reasonably successful, in circumstances which might have been presumed to be unfavourable, both in feeding and in creating the demand for instruction in liberal studies.

J. G. GREENWOOD.

THE LONDON PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Trieste, March 30, 1875.

CAN YOU or any of your readers give me a word of information concerning a firm styling itself the "London Publishing Company"?

Early in the present year the L. P. C. applied to me for biographical notes, a photograph, and other matters. After supplying them, I was coolly assured that the expense of printing these would amount to about 10*l.* or 11*l.*, and also, that I must bind myself to take a certain number of copies of the work, which was described as being very expensive, price not stated. I wished to do a service to some literary man, and found that I had unwittingly fallen into a trap. Of course the money was not paid; at the same time, I am anxious to recover my notes and negative; and if my notes, &c. are not returned, these lines may serve as a warning to others.

R. F. BURTON, F.R.G.S.

MR. F. W. ELLIS.

MY attention has been directed to an interesting description, by Mr. R. C. Caldwell, in the *Athenæum* of December 5, of a Tamil MS. in the Library of the India Office, in the course of which he refers to me for a confirmation of some of his statements.

I am glad to have an opportunity of expressing the pleasure I have received from perusing the careful analysis of Beschi's work by so competent a Tamil scholar, and of confirming the accuracy of his narrative as far as relates to the portion with which I am connected. Mr. Caldwell is right in correcting my version of the occasion on which the MS. came into the possession of Muttusámi Pillei, an error into which I ought not to have fallen, since the sketch of Beschi in the eleventh volume of the *Madras Literary Journal*, was prepared by Muttusámi at my suggestion, and in a foot-note, at page 257, he describes the discovery of the volume in Tanjore (not Madura) exactly as given by Mr. Caldwell.

The mission of Muttusámi, however, to collect materials for a life of Beschi took place in 1816, and he must have received the precious volume from Mr. Ellis, who died in 1819, earlier than Mr. Caldwell supposes.

Dr. Rost kindly allowed the MS. to be exhibited to the Turanian Section at the meeting of the Oriental Congress, in September, on which occasion Baron Textor de Ravisí, late Governor of the French Settlement at Carical, enlarging with enthusiasm on the beauty of the composition and the perfect condition in which the MS. had been preserved, made the observation which Mr. Caldwell has quoted. I was able then to inform him that, before leaving India, the Proviseur of the Collège Royal at Pondicherry had obtained the loan of it, for the express purpose of printing a new edition, founded on the most accurate text procurable. I cannot recall the exact date of this publication, because the copy with which he was good enough to present me was destroyed, with

many other books and papers, on the voyage home. The MS. volume was bound before it came into my hands.

The mention of Mr. Ellis in connexion with this subject, induces me to add a few particulars regarding one, whose merits as an Oriental scholar are too little known, and whose untimely death in the prime and vigour of life, proved an irreparable loss to the cause of Dravidian literature.

Arriving in India as a young civilian in 1796, he early devoted himself to the study of the languages, history, and antiquities of the land in which his lot was cast. For upwards of twenty years he devoted all his spare time to the cultivation of Sanscrit and the various dialects peculiar to Southern India. Having determined to publish nothing until he had exhausted every available source of information, he had amassed a vast amount of material, the elaboration of which would have shed a flood of light on the still obscure history of that region, and likewise anticipated much of the knowledge of its philology and literature which recent researches have brought to light. When his task was almost completed, he undertook a journey to Madura, the Athens of the South, for the elucidation of some minor details, and resided for some time with Mr. Rous Petre, the Collector of the District. During a short excursion to Rannad, in the same province, he accidentally swallowed some poison, and died on March 10, 1819. No one was at hand who understood or cared for his pursuits. His ordinary tangible property was sold by auction at Madura and Madras, under instructions from the Administrator-General, but all his papers were lost or destroyed.*

The Madras Literary Society thus alludes to the sad event, in recording the loss "of several of its most able contributors; among whom stood pre-eminent, for indefatigable and successful research into the languages, history, and learning of Southern India, for extensive knowledge, ancient and modern, Oriental and European, for accurate judgment and elegant taste, Francis Whyte Ellis. This distinguished scholar carried to his early tomb the stores he had accumulated; for he had resolved to dedicate his life to investigation until the age of forty, and before that time to prepare nothing for communication to the world. Scarcely had he completed the prescribed period of preliminary investigation, when death, with awful suddenness, deprived the world of the benefit of his labours."

But such a man could not pass away without leaving some traces of attainments so highly esteemed by his contemporaries. The first article in the *Transactions* of the Literary Society is a paper by Sir Charles Grey, afterwards Chief Justice in Bengal, founded on a series of disquisitions† on Hindu Law, which Mr. Ellis had read at meetings of the Society. In introducing it, Sir Charles observes, "I have here endeavoured to give the substance of the first lecture. The subject has been treated of by Sir William Jones and by Mr. Colebrooke and by Mr. Ward; but by none of them, as it seems to me, so perspicuously as by Mr. Ellis." As draughted by Mr. Ellis the treatises filled five hundred folio pages, but having been roughly prepared for delivery, were not in a fit state to be published, and he had intended on his return to revise them for that purpose.

Some discussion having arisen with reference to proprietary right in land, particularly in the provinces of Malabar and Canara, into which the oppressive fiscal system of Mohammedan rule had scarcely penetrated, the Madras Government, in 1812, circulated a series of questions to officers in charge of districts, requiring them to report fully on the incidents of the tenure known as *Mirás*, a term approaching in many respects to

* It used to be currently reported that they served Mr. Petre's cook for months to kindle his fire and singe fowls!

† They consisted of three lectures, and a note of some length in answer to the observations upon the Hindu Laws in the fourth chapter of the second book of Mill's *Hist. of Brit. India*. The first lecture treated chiefly of the Law Books of the Hindus.

our fee-simple. Although Mr. Ellis was then Collector of the Presidency only, which afforded little scope for such inquiries, his answers were so full, so exact, and so copiously illustrated by references to the ancient literature and history of the country, that the Government ordered them to be printed, and "Ellis's Replies to Seventeen Questions relative to Mirási Right" [pp. 65, with two appendices of pp. 85 and 31, folio, Madras, 1818] continues to this day to be the standard authority on the subject.

Another fragment is a selection of stanzas from the first book of the *Cural*, an ethical poem greatly esteemed by the Tamils. A free metrical version is given of each couplet, followed by a critical analysis of the text, and the subject-matter is then illustrated by numerous quotations from the best native writers, interspersed with valuable notes and disquisitions on the mythology, philosophical systems, and sectarian tenets of the people. Mr. Ellis had proceeded as far as eighteen chapters of the first book when he left Madras, and of these only thirteen were printed, filling 304 quarto pages, without title or date.

He probably also left other minor compositions; such as his essays on the Tamil, Telugu, Malayálim (and perhaps also Canarese?) tongues, for the use of the students in the College of Fort St. George; of the third of which a few separate printed copies exist, and the second is embodied in the Introduction to A. D. Campbell's Telugu Grammar, but the first I have never seen. Among some refuse papers at the College, I one day discovered a translation by him of the Jewish copper-plates at Cochin, and inserted it in vol. xiii. pt. 2 of the *Madras Literary Journal*.

Imperfect as these Reliquiæ are, they suffice to show what might have been expected from so ripe a scholar, had he lived to carry out his long-cherished design.

WALTER ELLIOT.

THE SURVEY OF PALESTINE.

THE survey of Palestine is making rapid progress. By the end of May it is expected that the whole of the southern portion will be finished. Very bad weather has prevailed in Palestine, which necessitated a retreat to Jerusalem. Here Lieut. Conder and Kitchener made good use of their time in examining the recent excavations of the Muristan, and those of Mr. Maudslay on Mount Zion. The former is a site of great historical though not Biblical interest. It is an area of 170 yards east and west by 150 north and south. The eastern half has been given to the German Government, and is now completely excavated, showing the piers and walls of the large church (date 1130) of Ste. Marie la Grande. Under the western portion lie the remains, yet to be recovered, of the buildings of the Knights Hospitallers, which were erected in the reign of King Amaury. The works of Mr. Maudslay have extended our knowledge of the rock scarp of Zion, and the course of the first wall.

The chief new identification recently proposed is important—that of Bethabara, the place where John baptized. Lieut. Conder points out that the site hitherto generally received, Bethnimrah, is too far south, one condition being that the place must be within two days' journey of Cana and Nazareth. He has examined all the fords of the Jordan,—there will be fifty in the new map, against eight in Mr. Murray's latest map,—and finds one twenty-five miles from Nazareth, which not only seems to answer all the conditions but also preserves the name. It is called Makhádheth Abára, the "Ford of the Crossing-over." As Bethabara means the "Town of the Crossing-over," this identity of name might be met with at any of the fords, so that the identification must be supported on other grounds. Besides the condition of distance, the new site, however, is the ford over which the road down the Wady Jalud to Gilead and the Hauran passes. Here the river-bed is more open than at other places, the steep banks of the valley are further retired, and a broad space is left, suitable for the collection of the great crowds which followed John