

CHAPTER XIII

Gradual Increase of Light

...

I often corresponded with my Christian friends at this time. I may give an extract from a letter which I wrote to Dr. M. Mitchell, in order to show what my religious state now was.

“You ask me to reply to your letter, and I doubt not you to expect to hear about my religious sentiments. I therefore write a brief but faithful account of what is intimately connected with my soul. In the first place, I acknowledge my great fault in still remaining in heathenism after being convinced of the truth of Christianity. I am almost ashamed to state the reason of this. I am not yet prepared to withstand and to suffer the persecutions and trials which a true believer in Christ has to undergo in India when he confesses his Master before his countrymen. Oh, may He grant me the boldness that Luther had at Worms! May He give me His Spirit, and encourage me to say, ‘ Here I stand; I can do nothing else. So help me God!’ Yet I fully admit that all my trials are nothing in comparison with the sufferings of Christ, who died for our salvation.

“It is true that the love of my parents and family sometimes overcomes me and makes me forget my resolution, but again the burden of my sins and the fear of the sinner’s doom in a future life greatly trouble me. Thus there is a constant struggle in my mind between the desires of this life and the hopes of a future one. My mind is not at rest. I am dissatisfied with my own righteousness. My promises to myself are in vain. I need a mighty Saviour; I need a guide to direct me, to help me, and to take me safely to through the wilderness of this world of sin and sorrow in which I am lost. My guilty conscience terrifies me when offering up prayer at the throne of the Holy God. I pray to Him in the name of One whom I have found revealed in the writings of the Prophets of old and in those of the Evangelists. Yet he is not my friend. He appears to me as a Judge, severely rebuking me for my past sins, and for the present ones in which I still live.

“Now, Sir, this is the real state of my mind at the present time. I hope you will believe me in this. I have not exaggerated or invented anything to please you. But all this is *within* me. None but God and myself knew it. I shall now tell you about my outward behaviour towards my friends and relatives. I make no *pujâ* to the idols that are in our house. I perform no *sandhyâ* but instead of this I pray to my Creator and ask His blessing. I often speak to my friends on the necessity of a Divine revelation and a true religion.” (26th Sept 1852.)

There was one thing that somewhat reconciled my dear father to me and my opinions, and that was the books that I had composed between 1851 and 1854. I published five works. He saw from these publications that I was not a mere simpleton, duped by the missionaries. He felt assured that I had an intelligent acquaintance with the subject of religion, and was able to think for myself, uninfluenced by the words of others. He also felt convinced that I was sincere, and that nothing but purely spiritual considerations controlled me.