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FAREWELL SERMON.

PREACHED BY THE REV. W. M. PUNSHON, LL. D.,

In the Metropolitan Church, Toronto, on Sunday Morning May, 11, 1873.

"But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you."—GALATIONS iv. 18.

There is an inner experience in the life of a minister of Christ of which the world wotteth not, and which ordinary Christians can only partilaly share. Not only is he a man of like passions with those whom he addresses, exposed to the same temptations, subject to the ebb and flow of the same tide of feeling, but there are trials peculiar to his office if he rightly esmate it, and if its obligations are faithfully discharged. The Church is represented as a commonwealth in which each shares the gladness, or is thrilled with the sorrows of the other; and if the members of the church feel this interpenetration of sympathy, with how much greater intensity will the minister feel it to whom the pastorate of the flock has been committed, and who is the minister of God to them for good, and who watches for their souls "as one that must give account." The husbandman has his own anxieties during the long months which intervene between the scattering and the gathering. Solicitous at the seed time, he is not less solicitous until the corn is housed There is much of ban or of blessing to him in the face of the sky. He cannot be indifferent whether storms pelt or sunbeams shine. He is called to mourn sometimes over that which the tempest has smitten or which the sun has scorched; he is called sometimes to rejoice with a full heart in the time of harvest; and surely the spiritual husbandman, if he be not a hireling, but one who loves the sowing and who sows for the harvest, should watch jealously over the fortunes of the scattered seed. It may be that in his congregation there are some whom the world has grasped, whom unhallowed associations are causing to wither, or who in the engrossments of the secular are being weaned from their first love, over whom he may look and say—"I stand in doubt of you" There he may implore pitifully in his Master's name and words—"Will ye also go away?" and yonder he may remonstrate in wounded affection—"Ye did not run well: who hath hindered you that ye should not obey the truth?" Shall he not mourn over these as a father over his wayward child? and if there are others in his congregation whose course is bright and prosperous, shall not their consistent walk and ripening graces fill them with a strange joy? Into this ministerial solicitude none entered so deeply as the great apostle of the gentiles; and it is to his roused and startling feelings that we owe the epistle to the Galations. Tidings were brought to him at Corinth, whither he had gone with a mind already saddene by the defective discipline of the Corinthian church, that the Galations also had gone from their attachment, and that they had become entangled in that yoke which the Judaizing teachers were ever ready to fasten upon the infant churches of the Saviour. He therefore writes to them in a style in which rebuke and tenderness are inimitably blended, vindicates his own apostleship, claims exclusive truth for the gospel which he preaches, denounces everything that is opposed to it as accursed error, argues for the superiority of evangelical over legal privilege, and then appeals to them by the memory of their former affection—an affection which seems to have been enthusiastic in its expressions of attachment—if haply he may bring back their stray desires to the obedience of Christ, and break the spell of that accursed witchery under whose fatal glamour they had come. The appeal is very touching and very tender, and they must have callous hearts who could resist it—"Ye know how through the infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first; and my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not nor rejected, but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record that if it had been possible ye would have plucked out your own eyes and have given them to me. Am I, therefore, become your enemy because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, but not well; yea they would exclude you that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you."

There is a great truth, brethren, embodied in these words, which may profit the churches of all time, and there are many among ourselves who, conscious that we are imbecile of purpose and vacillating or intermittent in action may well take to ourselves the memory of the apostle's words—"It is good to be zealously affected always"—there is the point of them—"*always*"—"in a good thing."

Just for a few moments let us dwell upon the nature, upon the perpetuity, and upon the profitableness of christian zeal. "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing."

I. Zeal may be defined as the heat or fervor of the mind, prompting its vehemence of indignation against anything which it conceives to be evil—prompting its vehemence of desire towards anything which it imagines to be good. In itself it has no moral character at all It is the simple instinct of energetic nature, never wholly divested of a sort of rude nobility, and never destitute of influence upon the lives and upon the characters of others. The word "zeal" is used indiscriminately in scripture in order to denote a strong feeling of the mind whether bent upon evil design or on cultivating the things which are of good report and lovely. Hence in the 17th verse of the 5th chapter of the Acts of the apostles, we read that the high priests and they that were with him were filled with envy,"—with zeal, as it is in the original; while in the Book of Numbers, Phinehas is commended for the zeal with which he rose up against those who had violated the law of the Lord, and when once, just once, in the Redeemer's incarnate life his disciples saw his holy indignation burn as the merchandise was scattered and the baffled money-changers driven from the temple they had profaned, they remembered the place where it is written—"The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up."

Zeal in itself, then, is neither morally excellent nor morally blameworthy, and it becomes Christian zeal only when it springs from Christian motive—when it is displayed in a Christian manner—when it is used for Christian ends. The great constraining motive of Christian zeal, as of every other grace or energy that is hallowed, is "the love of God shed abroad in the heart," and kindling a pure disinterested brotherly love to the fellow-man. All true Christian zeal bears this mark of the mintage. Where this is not, it is mere counterfeit coin. Whatever may be the special manifestation in which zeal embodies itself—whether it be in Christian enterprize, whether it be in indignant rebuke against the insolence of error, whether it run with willing feet to answer some claim of distress, or to respond to some summons which has been passed from the chamber of the dying- love must be the source from which all its movements spring, if it be not the offspring of love it will be a blind distempered emotion, consuming rather than cheerful, serving the altar of God with strange and heathen fire. And then, in like manner, not only must the motive of Christian zeal be pure, but its expression must be tolerant and merciful as it becometh the gospel of Christ. Full often in the history of human opinion, zeal hath burned with the fierce heat of natural passion, rather than with the flame, lambent and luminous, of heavenly love. In times of ecclesiastical dominance, zeal has grasped the persecutor's sword, and kindled the martyr's fire; and even in the milder times of toleration it has not spared to wield the scoff and fling the sneer. It were alike profitless and cruel to enumerate the occasions in all ages, and alas, in all churches, in which charity has been wounded to the death in her contest with intemperate zeal; but Christianity has neither act nor part in a spirit that is ruthless and cruel. Christian zeal will discriminate as well as Christ has discriminated. Christian zeal will know how to rebuke sin, while with clasping tenderness it welcomes and would embrace the sinner. Christian zeal will neither be disingenuous to opponents, nor willfully blind to the excesses of friends. Christian zeal will hasten to acknowledge an involuntary error, and will spurn the unworthy artifice and tortuous policy away. Christian zeal will rejoice not in popular iniquity, but in prescribed and unfashionable truth. Christian zeal will cling to an opinion only so far as it is right, will disclaim it when it has no credential but authority, and no argument but the custom of the ancestor or the tradition of the school-man. Christian zeal, even in the warmth of its enthusiasm, will reagrd the most cherished dogma as of infinitely less value than the most indifferent man. Christian zeal will care for more souls than for systems, and will shrink with the scrupulous haste with which men shrink from being accessory to a murder, from anything which will prejudice a brother from the truth, or alienate his heart from a new and right affection.

And then again, in Christian zeal all the objects on behalt of which its energy is exercised must be according to the mind of Christ, and must tend to the futherance of God's millennial purpose of "peace on earth, and good will towards men." Hence the chief object of christian zeal will be the spread of the religion of Jesus—that which is the great cementing bond of all social relations, here, and which links them in a higher fellowship with the brotherhoods of heaven. Hence in the spread of the religion of Jesus there is a worthy sphere for its highest energies and intensest cares—here, where calmness is impiety, and transport temper—here where heaven lavishes its generosity to stimulate the generosity of earth—here, where for the sake of those so dearly loved and so costily ransomed, to secure their salvation from the ruin born for them it was befitting that the son of God should die. And is it not strange, brethren, that of all enterprises this should be left so often to the undevoutness of luke-warm devotion, while in all other matters enthusiasm is commended—at once considered the pledge of sincerity and the augury of success? This, the highest and the most inspiring principle is pleaded for with a prose of piety and a moderation which would not offend a stoic. The world applauds the zealous in everything but religion; the world predicts the truimph of the zealous in everything connected with her province. The warrior whose breast shall shine with stars—the scholar who makes a hush and pant as he appears, as if men held their breath in wonder—they are those who set an object before them and strive for it through the hazards of years, and would deem themselves a shame and unworthy, if they did not put heart into their work. And shall not the Christian be in earnest with a cause that ennobles, with a responsibility which he may not transfer, with the destinies of his fellows for ever, trembling in the balance and in some sort committed to his fidelity as a witness for God? With the solemn concerns of the soul shall there be trifling? When a moment's opportunity welcomed or slighted may decide the fortunes of an eternity, shall languid counsels prosper, or faint desires prevail? When a real strife is waged, fiercer far than the fabled battle between the giants and the gods, and heaven and hell are in earnest for the possession of the man, shall those who have been won for God be craven or traitorous in the fight? No! Surely if worldly objects fire ambition and claim advocacy as earnest as their presumed importance demands, religion, best among the good things, best in intrinsic value, best in the magnificence of the issues in which it shall terminate, shall have its zealously affected sons, shrinking from no sacrifice to promote it, contending bravely for it in the very heart of incumbert peril, and sparing not, in their heroism of devotion, the costly offerings of the life and of the blood. Brethren! the summons is to you. Let the tones stir you like like a clarion! You are called to rise into this exalted and energetic consecration. There is a climax of encouraging circumstances to day, and there is a vast compression of claim. Motives of transcending authority crowd upon your memories and are failing upon your hearts with power. Oh, respond to them! Let to-day be the last of the indifferent and the first the devoted ones, and in the fervency of a resolve passed too deeply to be forgotten, let your vow be breathed—"For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

II. And then, secondly and chiefly—for here, as we reminded you, lies the pith of the apostles's warning—"It is good to be zealously affected *always*,"—always—"in a good thing."

The Galatians in the presence of the apostle were warm and extravagant in their professions of attachment, both to himself and to the cause to which he had given his life, but they needed his presence. They needed his prescence to prevent the relapse of their affections into indifferance—nay, not only into indifference, but into opposition, inveterate in in proportion their former enthusiasm. He therefore reminds them that zeal, to be valuable, should be permanent—that it should not be based upon the shifting sand of favorable circumstances, but rooted in a well principled conviction, which like a rock, will be granite to the storm as well as granite to the sunshine.

Evidences of the same necessity are occuring in the ordinary relations of life. It is so in nature. We do not value an intermitting spring so much as the clear brooklet which our childhood knew, and which has laughed on its course unheeding, and which could never be persuaded to dry up though it has had to battle against the scorchings of a jubilee of summers' suns. We do not guide ourselves by the glow worm's bead of light, or with the marsh-lamp's fitful flame. No, we look to the ancient sun, which in our infancy struggled through the window and danced upon the wall of the nursery, as if he knew how much we delighted to see him light up the flower-cup and peep through the shivering leaf. And, for ourselves, we do not value the affection of a stranger awakened by some casual congeniality, and displayed in kindly greeting or in occasional courtesy. Our wealth is in the patient bearing, and the unnoticed deed, and the anticipated wish, and the ready sympathies, which make a summer and a paradise, wherever there is a home. And not only in the natural and the social relations, but in the enterprise of the world, in the busy activities of men, the necessity for unformity in earnestness is readily acknowledged. Society very soon brands a man if he has got a preseverance as well as an earnestness about him. Society soon puts its mark upon the man who lodges in a succession of Utopias, the unwearied but the objectless builder who never roots his house, either because he was unable to finish, or because some more brilliant speculation dazzled the builder's brain. The world has got no matter-of-fact now that it jostles the genius off the footpath, while the plodder, whose eyes sparkle less brilliantly but more evenly and longer, steadily proceeds on his way to success.

Brethren, I trust you have allowed these illustrations to have weight with you. The zeal which you feel for God, the zeal which you feel for Christ, the zeal which you feel for the cause of the Saviour, must be as the vestal fire of old, never suffered to go out either by day or night. The church is ill served by the geyser heat of occasional passion which subsides ere its warmth is suffered to pervade. It wants a continual energy which, in humble imitation of the Great Giver of good, pours out its wealth of blessing, never stops its hand, and never says, "It is enough."

There are temptations to the lack of perseverance in religion which do not operate so forcibly in reference to anything besides. There is a perpetual enmity without—there is an unsubdued traitorousness within, which go far to account for the defective zeal, over which we have to mourn, and for the fact written regrettully to the angels of other churches than that of Ephesus, that they have left their first love. There is, for example, the undue prevalence of individual attachment, and there is the altered state of the family arrangements, and there is the transition from the lower to the higher room in the general house of wealth, and there are a thousand other causes which defy the classification of language, but which are powertul in their influence to damp and deaden the once ardent zeal for God. How many are there in the churches of to-day—how many are there in *this* church—who were useful and earnest when they were poorer men, but who seem to have invested their energy—to have sunk their individuality in their money, as if a dead coin—a coin with the image of its Cæsar—were an equivalent for a living man—a man with a heart and a will! How many are there in all churches who are full of enthusiasm when the pet plan is carried out, or when the favorite minister preaches, but who at other times inert and listless, as if their hearts were a cabinet of which only one kept the key, or as if they were a sort of curiously wrought automaton capable of many movements, but one skillful hand alone know how to pull the strings.

Brethren, if there are such here, I should like to arouse you this morning to an acknowledgement of the apostle's word. It religion is a good thing it is always a good thing. It is the portion of the rich man, as well as the treasure of the poor. It is good, by whomsoever recommended; it is good by whomsoever disgraced; it is good, whether the stammerer's lips pour out their painful advocacy, or whether from eloquent lips the words leap in living thunder. It is not to be saluted with the traitorous kiss either of time-serving or of treacherous lips. It claims the life; it claims the soul; it claims the all. Its obligations deepen as the shadows gather on life's day, and as the sands drop from life's hour glass, and as the great hour of retribution comes stealthily on. Oh! if ever there were arguments to awaken your interest, those arguments are ten times more powerful now. The soul is as precious as ever it was, and the heritage to which it aspires is yet attainable, and life is as uncertain as the tenure upon which all its opportunities are held. All the privilege and all the experience of the past come to charge the present with interest, and are hoarded to freight the future with all the wealth of accumulated years.

Brethren, with all possible earnestness, and with all possible affection, I exhort you to be "zealously affected *always* in a good thing;" and forgive me if I add, with no claim either to apostolic fervor or to apostolic authority, but with a yearning for your spiritual welfare, of which God is my witness—"Not only when I am present with you." If the ministry to which you have listened from this pulpit has been in any measure blest to you—if there are between us those mysterious and tender relations which must ever subsist between those who sit at the feet of Jesus and those who are privileged to lead them there, I pray you do me not this wrong—let not your languid or your failing piety make my glorying void! The long bond which has united us is now of necessity loosened. From other lips you will listen to the words of eternal life. Our interest in each other, fresh and vivid, and hearty now, will become—by a law that is common, and of which, therefore, we may not complain—fainter and fainter, until down the long corridors of memory we must gaze, to recall with an effort the names and the circumstances which are so familiar to-day; but deeply in a heart which does not soon nor readily forget, will be graven, in distinct lettering, the name of this house of prayer, and of the congregation which has gathered and harkened within its walls. God is my witness how greatly I long for you in the bowels of Jesus Christ! There are prophets who predict your halting: there are, I fear, malignants who would rejoice in it. Be it yours to prove the prophets false ones; be it yours to have over the malignants, the nobility of a gospel revenge. As the fathers die, let the children be baptized for the dead, and, by a bright succession of manly and intelligent piety, prevent the burial ground from becoming richer than the Church.

The same truth will be preached to you; I am bold to declare that. No diluted gospel will ever be proclaimed within these walls; no trumpet will ever vainly flourish in blasts of uncertain sound; no bald morality, no unhallowed speculation, no jargon of daring and mystic rationalism will ever be preached here. The truth as it is in Jesus, as at once the highest source of holiness, and the spring of the grandest morality, will be spoken here. Be you eager to espouse, be you manly to maintain it! "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit with one mind—striving together for the faith of the gospel," and that others come to you, too, imploring the shelter of your presence—"We will go with you, for we have heard that God was with you"—and that your church may be rich, not only in ancestral tradition, but in living experience, honor to God, as was the upper room, renowned for the rushing wind and [illegible] to be zealously affected in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you."

III. My time is gone to enlarge upon the profitableness of Christian zeal. "It is good" No higher praise can be given to it. "It is good"—the very thing that was said of the fairly finished earth, on the morning of Jehovah's rest and pleasure. "It is good" the very thing that is spoken of God himself; "Thou art good, and doest good." "It is good to be zealously affected always, in a good thing." It is good in itself; it is good in its influences. Where the heart preserves the ardour of devotion, it will preserve the ardour of enterprise. It will be always at work for the best interests of men. There will be no time for dalliance with temptation; there will be no time for the misgivings of unbelief. The active love and the loyal heart will be mutually helpful to each other, and the man will grow like a cedar—his roots wedging themselves close and firm into the Rock of Ages, his branches flinging themselves upward with such graceful aim that no tree in the garden of God shall be like unto him in his beauty. "It is a good thing to be zealously affected always in a good thing." And who shall estimate the effect upon the progress of the Redeemer's Kingdom, when the Church is filled with the spirit of Christian zeal? Oh! a prospect of ineffable spiritual beauty rises up before the prophetic eye, informed by the spirit of the Master. Each member of the Church becomes a missionary of the truth, and there is neither silence or faltering in the testimony; the cords of love, which are the bands of a man, enclose thousands in the gospel fellowship; the Church itself, in growing purity and strength, becomes the dominion of ever-ripening authority; the world, charged by the word as the living epistles speak it, bows its rank, and its intellect, and its pride, at the feet of Jesus; he reigns, "whose right it is," over a regenerate people made "willing in the day of his power;" and "then cometh the end"—the finished mystery of the cross—the consummated glories of redemption—a world without a rebel—the grand, solemn, waiting hush of the universe—the coronation of the triumphant Son—the cession of the Sonship in the Godhead—an eternal Sabbatic noon—God all in all.

SPEAK FOR JESUS EVERYWHERE.

A young lady entered a cheerless room in one of the lanes of our city, with a few articles of comfort for the poor sufferer, who had fallen from a building a few days previous, and with a broken limb, was stretched upon the bed of suffering. Daily this young lady visited this home of poverty, with supplies for the sick one and family. She was a follower of Jesus, yet fearing the subject would not interest the sufferer, and hesitating how to approach him with the message of God's love, she waited losing opportunities to speak for her Master.

One bright morning as she was placing her delicacies so temptingly beside the sick one, and the more substantial gifts were given to his family, surprise and grief filled his heart, as with tearful eyes the sufferer exclaimed, "Dear lady, I do think you must love the good Lord, to be so kind; may I make so bold as to ask if you do? I did not like to ask," he added, seeing her hesitancy, "but, Oh, He is a blessed Master to serve, and I hope you have found it out." These words reminded her that she had failed to own her Lord; she had not acknowledged that she was working for Him, had not spoken boldly for Jesus, leaving results with Him. As she confessed her love for Jesus, and saw the brightened eyes and smiling face of the sick one, she resolved never again to fail in the duty and pleasure of speaking for the blessed Master. If we are wholly the Lord's, and our hearts are filled with love to Him, how can we fail to speak of this love? Too often, like this young lady, we forget to leave all results with the Lord. We wait for more strength, or more light, to speak aright forgetting that the dear Saviour can bless our weakest endeavors, and make them rebound to His glory, if we but ask for His strength to be made perfect in our weakness.—*Zion's Herald.*

WHERE IS HOME?

Home is were affection binds
Gentle hearts in unison;
Where the voices all are kind,
Holding sweet communion!

Home is where the heart can rest
Safe from darkening sorrow;
Where the friends we love the best
Brighten every morrow!

Home is where the friends that love
To our hearts are given;
Where the blessing from above
Make it seem a heaven!

Home is where the sun will shine
In skies above us;
Peeping brightly through the vine
Trained by those who love us!

Yet, 'tis home where smiles of cheer
Wreath the brows that greet us;
And the one of all most dear
Ever comes to meet us!

UNSEEN COMFORT.

The calico-printer, we are told, knows nothing of his pattern until the die comes. He may be working steadily away, but he sees no results from his labor, until, suddenly, on the application of the colors, the whole picture starts out. So it is with the work of those intrusted with the care of souls. For long days for years they may have been toiling in vain. Suddenly, however, as it seems, God's Spirit descends, and on the dark canvas many Christians leap into light. But the appearance of the Spirit was not in fact sudden. While the minister was preaching, apparently fruitless, the Spirit was accompanying what he said.

"All unseen the Master walketh
By the toiling servant's side;
Comfortable words he speaketh,
While his hands uphold and guide.

Holy strivings nerve and strengthen;
When the evening shadows lengthen
Thou shalt lay the burden down."

Yet, before the evening will come the noon! The Lord will descend and walk with thee, oh, toiling servant! in the cool of evening, as he did in the morning dawn. But there will be a noon of the Spirit's glorious influences. Cheer up, then, though the present be dark, for working in faith and prayer, know that thou art working with the Lord.

RAIN FROM HEAVEN.

Once a little girl, who loved her Saviour very much for having so loved her, came to her clergyman with eighteen shillings for a Missionary Society.

"How did you collect so much? Is it all your own?" the clergyman asked.

"Yes, sir; I earned it."

"But how Mary; you are so poor."

"Please, sir, when I thought how Jesus had died for me I wanted to do something for him; and I heard how money was wanting to send good news out to the heathen, and as I had no money of my own, I earned this by collecting rain-water and selling it to washerwoman for a penny a bucket. That is how I got the money, sir."

"My dear child," said the clergyman, "I am very thankful that your love to your Saviour has led you to work so long and patiently for him; now I shall gladly put down your name as a missionary subscriber."

"O no, sir, please; not my name."

"Why not Mary?"

"Please, sir, I would rather no one knew but Him; I should like it to be put down as 'Rain from heaven.'"

(From London Watchman.)

MISSIONARY GLEANINGS.

The missionary anniversaries of different denominations recently celebrated in the great metropolis, and so amply reported in the columns of the *Watchman*, suggest many topics for reflection, and can scarcely fail to afford encouragement and hope to the genuine friends of the glorious enterprise. It is not our intention in our present "Gleanings" to go minutely over the entire mission field, which has been so well traversed by the secretaries, chairmen, and speakers who took a part in the recent meetings; but rather to call the attention of our readers to a few points of more than ordinary interest, and to look at them in the light of the addresses delivered at the gatherings alluded to, as well as in that shed upon them from other sources of information. And in the first place we would express our sincere gratitude to the God of missions for the general character, tone, and results of the May meetings. With scarcely an exception the attendance was good, the reports encouraging, the speeches animating, the spirit buoyant, and in some instances enthusiastic, and the collections in advance of those of former years. Nor was any part of the world forgotten in the pleadings of those who so nobly advocated the cause of Christ in heathen lands. There was, of course, great diversity, on different occasions, as to the prominence given to the respective portions of the mission-field, each speaker pleading most earnestly, as he ought to do, for the mission in connection which he had personally laboured, or in which he felt the greatest interest. The leading missionary societies have a common interest in almost every part of the globe, and the spirit of harmony and good feeling with which they generally carry on their respective operations is admirable. All circumstances considered, our wonder is not that there should be occasional instances of collision, but that they should be so few and so far between. We now pass on to remark, as space may permit, on the present aspect of mission work in some of the most prominent and important fields of labour.

EUROPE.

In consequence of the prevalence of Romish error on the one hand, and infidelity on the other, in many parts of Europe, they may still be regarded as important fields of missionary labour, which have a strong claim upon the sympathy and efforts of genuine Protestant Christians. All the speakers at the recent meetings who alluded to the subject, as well as the most of the writers in the magazines and papers of the current month, seem of one mind as to the fact that there never was a time when the way was more open, or the prospect brighter for the diffusion of the light of the pure Gospel of Christ throughout the length and breadth of the land. The continental Governments continue unsettled, it is true, and there is much to deplore in the social and political as well as the moral condition of France, Spain, and Portugal; but it is worthy of remark that under every phase and form of government, which, alas! so rapidly succeed each other, there is an evident tendency to religious liberty, and that the hindrances thrown in the way of evangelical work come not generally from Government authorities as formerly, but from the minions of a despotic priesthood whose power and influence is on the wane at the heart of the system, whatever it may be at the extremities. Adverting to the changes which are taking place in France, a missionary periodical for the present month says:—

Private letters come in laden with glorious news, to which we have been too long unaccustomed. In one place every Sunday, and almost every meeting for prayer or for worship, is marked by distinct cases of conversion, sometimes of single individuals, and sometimes of whole families. The change is so clear from darkness to light, from evil to good, that even the adversaries have ceased to persecute. In other places children are being gathered as lamps by the Good Shepherd into his fold, by the renovation of their minds. Prayer-meetings cease not. "Never," says one, "has France been open to the Gospel as now." The British and Foreign Bible Society is, moreover, greatly encouraged by the number of Scriptures sold to Roman Catholics Its new plan of advertising its books in the daily papers tells well. Even a priest came to the office recently to express his joy to see the Bible, and to purchase it. All speak not thus, but there is nevertheless hope for France.

TURKEY.

A great and glorious work is going on in various parts of the Turkish Empire which seems to attract little notice in England, but which is, nevertheless, real and important in its connection with the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. The honoured agents in its accomplishment are chiefly American and Scottish missionaries of the Presbyterian school, who are well adapted for the work by their education, intelligence, and undoubted missionary zeal. This mission work in Turkey is carried on not so much among Mohammedan population as among nominal Christians professedly belonging to the degenerate and decayed Greek Church, many of whom are almost as ignorant and as spiritually destitute as the most benighted pagan people in the world. By the faithful preaching of the Gospel, the establishment of Christian schools, both common and higher class, and systematic evangelistic effort in Constantinople, Smyrna, Beirut, Damascus, Jerusalem, and other places, thousands of these people have been enlightened and gathered into the fold of the Redeemer. At the eighteenth anniversary meeting of the "Turkish Missions Aid Society," recently held, the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury presiding, interesting details were given of the progress of the work in all its departments. And J. C. M'Coan, Esq., of the Reform Club, lately bore the following testimony to its importance and genuineness:—

As an old resident in and an extensive traveller through Turkey, I have had unusual opportunities of observing the course and results of missionary work in that country, and I can testify that of all the foreign agents thus employed those of the American Board of Missions have been in every way the most successful. I have visited their great stations at Oorroomiah, in Persia, where they have done so much to educate and evangelise the Nestorians; and again at Mosul, Mardin, Diarbekir, Erzeroum, Kharpoot, Beirut, and elsewhere, in the Asiatic provinces. I can bear witness that they have done more to civilise and morally elevate the nominally Christians populations of those districts than all the other influences that have been at work during the past fifty years. And so, too, in the capital. In and around Constantinople that they have laboured with a zeal and success which cannot be too highly praised.

MADAGASCAR.

The wonderful work of God in Madagascar still goes on, and continues to be the chief glory of the London Missionary Society, as its principal instrument. In his luminous and comprehensive statement made at the recent anniversary in Exeter Hall, in the place of a written report, Dr. Mullins remarked in reference to this part of the wide field:—

Six new missionaries have proceeded to Madagascar during the year; three others will follow in a few weeks; and it was desirable that three or four others should join them early in the next civil year. With the Church Missionary Society and the members of the Friends' missions, fellowship and co-operation had been uninterrupted. The stations of the Propagation Society they had always respected; and it was not till last year, when the latter Society sent the Rev. A. Chiswell to the capital and placed him in the midst of their converts, that any collision actually took place. Against this aggression the directors had remonstrated in vain.

At the same meeting two of the speakers made humorous and pointed allusion to the efforts which were being made to get an English bishop consecrated for Madagascar, where the missionaries of the London Society have been the principal means of evangelising many of the people, and where they are still prosecuting the work with such praiseworthy zeal. Regarding this movement as grossly unjust and dishonouring in its character, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon compared it to the practice of the cuckoo in pushing other birds of their nests, and the Rev. E. H. Evans, from Carnarvon, said:—

Ought not the Christianity of England to protest against the attempt to divide and interfere with the most successful mission of modern times while there were whole tribes on the same island without a single missionary teacher, and whole fields in other places unoccupied. There was a law strictly kept among the inhabitants of the country where he spent his boyhood, that no person was to keep an empty beehive on his premises, lest it should tempt a swarm of bees belonging to his neighbor to make it its home. If he had bees he deserved a hive, but if he had no bees he had no right to have a hive in his garden. These poor bee-keepers of Pembrokshire were far more neighborly, not to say Christian, than the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, who were now erecting their empty hives in Madagascar.

POLYNESIA.

Two missionaries represented and nobly pleaded for the missions in the South Sea Islands at the London Society's anniversary. After describing the wonderful change which had had been effected by the introduction of the Gospel into Niue, or Savage Island, where he had spent twelve years, and adverting to New Guinea, in which he is about to labour, the Rev. W. G. Lawes remarked:—

What he had said about Niue was true of all the islands, with a variation here and there, according to the peculiarities of the people; true of the 200 enlightened Christian islands which they now had in the South Pacific. There were, he believed, in connection with all societies in those islands 250,000 adherents, some 50,000 church members, and a band of native preachers some 1,000 strong. The greatest hindrance which had ever existed, and which bade fair to be greater and greater, to the development and progress of the Christianised communities of the South Seas, was the Polynesian coolie traffic, the baneful influence of which might God in his good providence mercifully avert.

INDIA.

Continental India and Ceylon were well represented and eloquently pleaded for at some of the recent missionary anniversaries. Dr. Mullens, one of the highest authorities on the Societies meeting:—

For all parts of India the directors were endeavoring to encourage native agency. Nearly thirty of the principal societies of Europe and America had stations and labourers in India, and the census recently taken showed that in India, Burmah, and Ceylon the number of these missionaries amounted to over 500.

From another source of information we gather that there are now in those countries 325,000 native Christians, showing an increase of 85,430 during the past ten years. We have long felt deeply concerned that the Wesleyan Missionary Society, one of the noblest institutions of the kind in the present age, should have such a small share in this great and glorious work. We seriously suspect that the Methodist people of this country are not aware of the real facts of the case, or they would not continue to be so. From a carefully prepared "Tabular View of the Statistics of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and certain other Societies in India and Ceylon," compiled by a respected returned missionary of undoubted intelligence and ability, a copy of which he has kindly forwarded to us we learn with shame and regret the comparative weakness of our own Society in the distant and populous East. Without troubling our readers with a long array of figures in these "Gleanings," the following extracts from the notes appended to the excellent tables before us will show what we mean, and in fact brings the whole question into "a nutshell."

The Baptist Missionary Society devotes *three-fifths* of its home income to mission work in India and Ceylon; the Church Missionary Society, more than *one-half*; the Propagation Society, *one-third*; the London Missionary Society, *one-fouth*; and the Wesleyan Missionary Society scarcely more than *one seventh*. Again, the B.M.S. expends from its home funds £1,300 more in India than the W.M.S.; the L.M.S. £6,400 more than the W.M.S.; the S.P.G. nearly *twice* as much; and the C.M.S. nearly *five times* as much—whilst the American Board of Foreign Missions, with an income of 420,266 dols. for the year 1872, expended in India and Ceylon 100,464 dols., or nearly *one-fouth* of its income.

In reply to our complaint that such a small portion of the annual income of the Wesleyan Missionary Society is devoted to India in common with that of others, the authorities at the Mission House would, no doubt, be prepared to remind us of the magnitude and claims of our other missions in the West Indies, Africa, Polynesia, and other places, where some of the societies named have had to expend comparatively little, and also that the limited funds at their command shut them up to the necessity of their present small expenditure in India. This necessity we frankly admit, but as the Society is now free from debt, and the Methodist Churches and congregations at home were never more prosperous or better able to give than at present, we do sincerely hope and pray that a spirit of Christian liberality may be evoked on behalf of the Missionary enterprise such as has never been witnessed before, and that funds may soon be placed at the disposal of the Committee which will enable them to enlarge their work in India, as well as to commence new stations in Africa, as earnestly urged in former "Gleanings."

May the Churches of Britain be baptized afresh with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and at the same time be imbued with a spirit of enlarged benevolence and sympathy for the poor heathen, and may the coming ecclesiastical year, for blessing and prosperity, not only be as the past, but much more abundant