

Is Foreign Mission Work Worth While ?

TESTIMONIES FROM HERE AND THERE

THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY.

The Christian Missionary is a human phenomenon without a parallel in history. A certain measure of half-pitying contempt commonly gathers about him. He carries the scantiest equipment; he carries no arms; he is clad with no civil authority; he has very little money; he is usually alone. He has only a message and a motive. The message is the story of Christ, and the motive is the love of Christ. And, somehow, he succeeds everywhere! He works a miracle which all the resources of science, and literature, and civilization without him could not do. A pagan race, it is true, can learn the mechanical arts and borrow the dreadful weapons of civilization. Japan has done this, and has shifted the very centre of political gravity for the whole world as a result. But to create a new moral character in people foul with the vices of heathenism, this is a miracle beyond the wit of man to accomplish. But the missionary does it! He lands on some lonely and savage isle, and, under black skins, in dull brains, in human souls made fierce with whole centuries of savage ancestry and habits, he yet creates a new character. By some strange magic he reproduces, on such strange soil, the best morality civilized lands know. In races that yesterday were heathen and savage, he somehow develops many of the qualities of saints, and, not seldom, something of the temper of martyrs. What may be called the secondary results of the missionary's work are, in their kind, marvelous. He civilizes, though civilisation is not his immediate aim. For a barbarous race with a rude and scanty vocabulary, he creates a written language. He gives them a literature and the faculty for enjoying it. He raises womanhood; he creates homes; he draws a whole race

to higher levels of life. He does this under all skies and on all shores. Now, on any reading of the story, this is a social miracle.—W. H. Fitchett in *The Missionary*.

A PRESENT DAY TRAGEDY.

(By the Rev. A. C. Clayton, of Karur, South India)

God made her beautiful and meant her to be good. Her tribe marred the fairness of her soul and trafficked in the beauty of her body.

She was a pupil in one of my far-away schools; one of the most winsome, one of the brightest. Her attendance was most regular. Her lessons were always well learned. In other houses all sorts of things happened to keep girls away from school—there were babies to nurse, or little errands to be done, or duties in the cooking-room; and if small maidens felt that school was not attractive no one cared to send them. But Tangel, our 'Little sister,' could always come. She must learn to read, and to read cleverly. She must master arithmetic. She must recite long stanzas of Tamil verse, beautiful poems in praise of virtue. The more she knew the higher the price to be paid for her.

Last month—for this is a present-day tragedy; going on now) — she came to school less often. She might come to the Scripture lessons if she liked. They would do her no harm, and the missionary might give her a prize, said her people; but they made her spend most of her time learning songs of the sweetest from the lips of a cunning-tongued song-maker, sung to quaint, plaintive, beautiful tunes; songs that are not soon forgotten, and tunes that stay in the memory.

Pleasant lessons these! Pleasant? The most wicked words and thoughts of