

Our Contributors.

The Statement Issued by Dr. J. Wilkie

That something was wrong in the mission in India we have been aware, but what, it was difficult to ascertain. The statement of Dr. Wilkie we welcome, notwithstanding the fact that it has caused him personal regret to issue it. In that statement ministers of the Presbyterian Church find something at least which they are entitled to know. It is Dr. Wilkie's side of the question, it is true. But assuredly Dr. Wilkie must have solid ground before he could undertake the issuance of such a statement to the whole ministry of the Church. Moreover, Dr. Wilkie is supported by influential friends which gives his cause a stronger claim to the consideration of every just thinker.

The strength of the statement does, in our opinion, not so much lie in what he gives as comment upon the situation, but in what it is possible for him to quote from existing records of Church courts, committees and councils. If the quotations of this kind are correct, (and we presume they are perfectly so) then we consider that a minister and missionary of our Church has been hounded, slandered, abused, persecuted and finally, overthrown by the most despicable piece of personal spite and jealousy and hood-winked ignorance on record.

That the Presbyterian Church should allow its ecclesiastical history to be made with such a foul injustice and plot upon its escutcheon is a thing to be deplored. Just investigation, apparently has been suppressed, when the reputation and character of a faithful missionary has been at stake. Investigations in a corner and by a few and sometimes prejudiced individuals, is unworthy of such a Church and is a gross violation of one of its fundamental principles—the parity of the ministry.

A close scrutiny of this statement seems to reveal the fact that the Foreign Mission Committee was prepared to uphold Dr. Wilkie in his difficult situation—difficult from the very time of his arrival on the mission field, because of previous unhappy conditions—until the slanderous tongue and pen of woman commenced to accentuate the so called grievances that some others, unfriendly to him, were inclined to harp upon.

This seems to have brought matters to a head at once, and the Committee would appear, though not all, to have fallen a prey to a few women missionaries who were apparently swayed by unhallowed suspicions, aroused by the influence of other members of the mission staff.

We are convinced that it had been much more to the point to have relieved the staff of some of its female missionaries, than to have cut adrift a missionary like Dr. Wilkie. And why some members of the Committee should have swooned under the statement of a prejudiced and to all appearance, unscrupulous woman, is hard to understand. It seems to be a tragic repetition of Edenic guilt—"and the woman deceived the man." A whimpering withdrawal of an unfounded and slanderous statement secured for the woman restored confidence, while the missionary

goes on to the cross. Surely a strange infatuation confronts us here. How men that prize a manly thing should allow themselves to be so badly nose-ringed is passing strange. Had Paul's injunction, "Let your women keep silence in the Church," been more strictly adhered to by the female missionary on the one hand, and remembered by the Committee on the other, a better state of affairs would have obtained to day, and Dr. Wilkie, in all likelihood, would be proceeding with his life's work. A MINISTER.

The Call To Christian Steadfastness.

Phil. IV—1.

AN EXPOSITION BY PROF. W.G. JORDAN D.D.

This exuberance of expression is not common with Paul, we do not find it, to the same extent, in any other epistle, and yet under the circumstances it seems to be quite in accord with what we know concerning a man who was rich in emotional endowment as in intellectual equipment. This "beloved" occurring twice in one verse, and the striking word "longed for" are not common courtesies or conventional forms of politeness, but the strong words of a strong man who meant all that he said, they breathe tender affection and intense desire. We are often compelled to admire in these writings the splendid combination of intellectual breath with deep feeling and practical wisdom.

His logic always leaps into life, his exhortation gains weight and force from the magnificent presentation of truth that lies behind it (cf. Rom. xii, 1; I Cor. xv, 5, 8). "Wherefore," "so that," connects the tender exhortation with the passionate polemic and lofty teaching that has gone before; this is logic but logic throbbing with the pulse of life and warmed by the fire of love. Here head and heart are not war; piety receives its true enlightenment and reason its real persuasive power. The call to steadfastness is not a new thing it is a constant need that will bear repeated appeal and varied illustration. The classic passage on this subject is a parable of real beauty and undying power, it has steadied many a wavering soldier and helped him to turn defeat into victory (Eph. vi, 13-17). Paul knew well enough the downward pull and the backward strain, he never for one moment suggests that the Christian life is an easy experience, all his illustrations speak of steady toil, severe conflict and unceasing movement. Hence "stand fast" does not simply maintain your present position it may express the thought of rest, stand so as not to fall, stand so as not to be driven back, but the position held must be made a stepping stone to something higher; when the severe strain slackens, we march forward towards the goal that is kept continually in view. We may regard this Christian steadfastness then as the disciple's constant and the teacher's supreme satisfaction.

The Disciple's Need.

Of these disciples of the new faith it

was true that they needed to listen devoutly and intelligently to this call to "Stand fast in the Lord," to remain close to Jesus, to continue in communion with Him. The healthy body breathing a pure air has great power of resistance, it is constantly throwing off the impurities and resisting insidious attacks. Thus the faithful disciple, moving in the atmosphere that Jesus creates around the soul, has power to resist the forces that make for the lower standard of life. 'Standing' then in this sense means living. The phrase "in the Lord," Paul's own peculiar form of speech, gives meaning and hope to the exhortation. Nothing but this living, personal influence could strengthen men to resist the force of old habits, the customs of an alien society, the sharp criticism, and fierce persecution of bitter opponents.

We are all inclined, at times, to cherish a longing for an easier way, to live with the tide, to yield to the subtle influence of the common atmosphere, to bow to the power of the past. The strenuous movement, the unresting energy of a man like Paul startles the ordinary man into almost hopeless admiration and surprise. With him "the expulsive power of a new affection" seems to be so real and vehement that the temptations to sensuous pleasure or religious routine seem to be left far behind. He was torn by an overmastering vision, a revolutionary revelation from the "beggared elements" that had enthralled but never satisfied his soul. But he knew all that the struggle of life meant for the disciples, and he yearned over them with a father's thoughtful, tender care. Hence he says, be true to your principles, loyal to your Lord, cultivate your peculiar, positive life.

The seductions of worldly pleasure were as real then as now, the false glitter and bewitching allurements seemed sometimes well suited to distract the jaded mind. "The earthly things" assumed a form behind which the coarseness and corruptness was hidden. To be peculiar, to despise things that won the applause and approval of the crowd, this called for clear conviction and strength of character. The heavenly citizenship, beautiful as an ideal, was a thing requiring delicate discrimination and resolute determination in daily life. It would be a poor thing to call upon weak, untrained men to play the heroic part unless they could be brought to see that "in the Lord" there was a rich power that could hold, inspire and satisfy them when once they made the venture of faith.

Outworn systems may have their day and cease to be, but they are not dethroned without a struggle. Great systems that have been deeply rooted and for which men have given their lives do not easily lose their place or pass away. The dogmas they have created and the institutions they have built possess great power by their very definiteness and visibility. The new, higher life seems sometimes so thin, hazy, and unreal. The ideas, which when once they were firmly held, show power to change society and to turn into the new channels the currents of the world's life, were at first far off visions of glory to men just rescued from the doomed religions and dying creeds. The first need was to continue steadfast in the Lord, to recognize in darkest days and testing times, that in Jesus all that was true and eternal in the