

MISSION FIELD

The Missionary Review of the World.

Dr. Pierson discusses the Church at home and finds here, amongst ourselves, the greatest hindrance to the world's conversion. In order that we may bless others we must be blessed ourselves. A Christianity, that is not in its very existence *self-propagating* is not of much account, and such is the character of the Church as he interprets her life. The first conspicuous weakness is *secularism* "the drift towards the world," "the control of the spirit of the age which always was and still is opposed to the Spirit of God." The New Testament definition of the early Christians is that "they worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," and in their activities they "continued steadfastly in the Apostles teaching and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers." Contrast with this, modern church worship with its elaborate ritual, stately ceremonial and artistic choral performances by costly professional musicians; with its proud confidence in members and wealth and in the patronage of the worldly, so that unconverted men sit on its boards of trustees, with its emphasis in good works and alms deeds and outward forms of organization." As such services do not impress nor attract the world, *sensationalism* is resorted to in order to get an audience. By sensationalism he means anything, whether aesthetic, or artistic, or spectacular, or humorous, or grotesque, that is intended to attract the outside world into the church. This he contends is not wrong simply in method but in principle—that the church is a body of believers, and that the first duty is to minister to them by unfolding truth, much of which the world cannot understand and will misinterpret. But the attempt to attract the world leads to other departures, first the *suppression of unpalatable doctrines*, and the *lowering of the standard of godliness*. That is inevitable. If the world is to be entertained and gratified there must be care not to urge too high a standard of spirituality, nor to dwell too frequently on certain doctrines that find little favor with the flesh. It need not be said that no one would be unwilling to have unbelievers present at all religious services, but that in order to win them the only attraction must be the beauty of holiness. That spirit of sensationalism appears in Mission work, in the appetite for thrilling stories, and the impatience for greater results, and the temptation placed before missionaries to create and sustain enthusiasm, by sensational reports. The result of all this is a *liberalism* that tolerates all creeds, and reduces Christianity to a mere cult rather than a religion of the heart, and of course, in taking this attitude, as we in a "Parliament of religions," there is little heart in the prosecution of Foreign Mission work. Why should we if Christianity is only one of many?

Rev. Jas. Douglas gives an interesting sketch of the proceedings at the celebration of the Young Men's Christian Association Jubilee in London in June last. The article is such a brief epitome of what was said and done, that an attempt further to skeletonize would be sepulchral. They were there from the United Kingdom and Ireland with their dependencies from America a continental nations, from China, Japan and West Africa, representing 5,138 affiliated associations and nearly 500,000 members scattered throughout the world.

The first Y.M.C.A. was organized on June 6th, 1844 by George Williams, and was confined to the employees of the drygoods firm of Hitchcock & Co., London, in which firm he was a junior assistant. The seed then sown has borne fruit abundantly, and naturally George Williams was the central figure on this occasion. The Queen honored him with Knighthood and the Mayor with the freedom of the city.

Have Missions been a failure in India? How often that question has been asked and answered. It is a question frequently pronounced upon by globe trotters, who spent a few days or weeks in the country and conversed with some accidental acquaintance and learned all about it. This time it is an article in the *Forum* by Mr. Ghandi, entitled "Why Christian Missions have failed in India?" Mr. Ghandi is one of those who were present at the Parliament of Religions, and whilst in the country sought to enlighten the world as to Missions, and the reason for their want of success. In a word, the reason he gives is that the Hindu religion is better, and that the superiority is so apparent that all accustomed to philosophic reasoning, concede it. They who have pondered this subject see the all sufficing nature of Hindu philosophy, how the

simplest mind can have its cravings satisfied, how the intellectual giant can accept their reasonings, and they do not wonder that Christianity with its narrow and intolerant dogmas make such little progress amongst the Hindus." He says that "Consequently not a single Argan has been converted these three or four hundred years and that when the missionaries found they had failed, most of them abandoned their efforts and betook themselves to a more laudable undertaking, the education of the masses."

Of course the Hindu religion is Pantheism which unites man and beast, every living creature down to the minutest animalcule in one brotherhood. Hence the offence of "beefstealing." To the Hindu, it is as offensive as cannibalism is to the European because it is the destruction of beings who are sharers in our common life. This article is answered by Dr. Wherry of Chicago, who appeals to the well known fact that many Aryans have been converted, some of whose names must be known to Mr. Ghandi, and he also points out that the collapse of Hindu philosophy and faith is imminent as is seen by the numerous religious reform movements, such as the Brahma Somaj, the Arya Somaj, and the Prarthana Somaj, all of which are monetheistic in character, and have been espoused by scores of thousands of Hindus. It is almost absurd to speak of Christianity as less humane than Hinduism when one thinks of the Suttee, and child marriage and infanticide, and Jagannathas Car and the treatment of widows, all of which Christian influence has either destroyed or in some degree mitigated, with ultimate prohibition in view. After all, they who best know, rejoice in saying that Missions are a glorious success.

Rev. Arthur Smith continues his excellent article in the August number on "Time as a factor in Christian Missions." He there showed by the analogy of creation and providence, that we should expect Missions to progress slowly, that they are thus in line with all the great developments of God. In this, he dwells upon hindrances that humanly speaking are insurmountable, and that account for the apparent want of encouragement. Chief amongst these is "Moral inertia." They have been for so many centuries without the knowledge of God that the moral faculty seems to be gone, it has been effaced like the inscription on an old coin, and it takes a long time to restore. Hence the futility of that style of evangelization which is to finish it up in this generation. To God nothing is impossible, but according to the analogies of life many ages will pass before the work is done.

Fr. G. D. Dowkott, in an earnest plea for Medical Missionaries gives a number of blood curdling illustrations of the treatment of disease by native doctors. The unspeakable cruelties to which so many are constantly subjected should break up indifference and arouse us to action. Jesus came not only to preach the Gospel, but to give sight to the blind. In this the church should follow His example.

The eighty Bible Societies in existence have circulated over two hundred and forty millions of Bibles during the last hundred years, and yet this is only one for every six now dwelling upon the face of the earth.

Ignace Missions.

The following interesting letter from Mr. W. B. Tote, missionary, will be read with interest.

DEAR MR. FOWLER You must excuse me neglecting to give you the information you desired. My time is so fully occupied I overlooked it. This mission is 300 miles in extent, lies along the railway between Fort William and Rat Portage. The country is not opened up being all rock, muskeg and water, and except for its timber and the minerals with which it is said to abound can never be of any value. The land is useless for farming and even where some try to raise garden vegetables the early frost is almost sure to destroy most everything. We had frost here on the 10th of Aug this year. Hence one can understand the only people in the country with the exception of the railroad men are the Indians who fish and pick berries—blue berries and raspas which are to be found wild in great abundance in the summer and hunt in winter. This mission is for the benefit of the railroad population therefore. There are about twenty two stations visited by the missionary. At Ignace, the centre of the field and the most important station of the lot being the turning point for train crews between Fort William and Rat Portage, Sabbath school and divine service are held every Sunday. There are about fourteen or fifteen families in