

REV. MARMADUKE OSBORN ON WESLEYAN MISSIONS IN THE WEST INDIES.

I am only permitted to speak at all on this occasion because I have recently been to visit our friends in the West Indies. I suppose I must tell you what I saw in connection with that visit. When I was first appointed, Sir, to the honorable office which I am now permitted to occupy my first thought was—"That means foreign travel."

Barbadoes we held a missionary meeting in James-street Chapel and long before the time appointed the chapel was crowded to excess, and, unfortunately, we were necessarily guilty of "cruelty to animals," for we could not go on without our chairman, and he was late, because being a medical man he had his engagements to attend to. The people are willing to learn, but trustful, dependent, and unwilling to help themselves. The same thing obtains in the West Indies, as that to which reference has been made by Sir A. Gordon in regard to the Pacific.

in the West India District the grant is according to what they raise in the district for mission purposes. They have their missionary meetings and collections, and what they raise for missionary purposes is the amount of our grant. In British Guiana, in class and ticket money, these poor people last year raised £1,500; in Barbadoes, £1,200; St. Vincent, £2,000; Antigua, £2,500; in Jamaica, £2,620; for trust purposes, and for all purposes an aggregate of £16,282. Many of the people are, in giving their money, subjected to the same sort of influences as people at home.

House of Commons long ago, has been almost wiped out by subsequent events. Therefore, I beg to apologise to you if you find me hesitate and falter in what I say here, or if I make frequent references to the formidable bundle of notes which I hold in my hand. (A laugh, and "hear, hear.") My testimony to the work which I have seen going on in the Pacific is not perhaps really of much importance. Still, it is the evidence of a man who is not a member of the Wesleyan body, and who in the course of a varied life has had opportunities of observation which if he has not wholly thrown them away, must enable him, more or less, to form some judgment on what is put before him.

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It was a sermon preached under very peculiar circumstances, which themselves show what a hold Christianity has now got upon Fiji. [Applause.] About three years ago the last remains of cannibalism and heathenism in that country joined in a sanguinary outbreak, in the course of which they murdered and ate many Christian villagers. That was the last outbreak of cannibalism and heathenism. It had, of course, to be suppressed, which it was very expeditiously and briefly. It is a fact worthy of remark that the Fijian forces employed in the suppression of that outbreak were Christian people. What a contrast their behaviour afforded to all that one had ever heard of before of the behaviour of Fijians in war-time. With hardly any white supervision, and with an amount of supervision totally inadequate to restrain them, had they been minded to indulge in their former evil practices, the conduct of those men was, I must say, a lesson which soldiers of more civilized Powers would do well to learn. 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Standing in that town, which is about 2000ft. above the level of the sea, we saw below us a splendid range of hills, behind us high mountains; and on that village square were drawn these eight hundred Fijian troops who were about to be addressed by their native chaplain. I dare say you can conceive there was something very striking indeed in bearing—there in the village which had been until then a cannibal resort, where men belonging to our forces had been eaten not a fortnight before those 800 voices sung, out in the open air, in praise of Na Vakalua Ko Jisu—the Saviour Jesus. I have never felt a more thrilling sensation than I did when I heard that hymn begun in a cannibal town. When the hymn had been sung the chaplain came forward to preach the sermon. What I have already said about Joeli Buli shows the spiritual element there was among these Fijians. I wish now to show you the readiness with which they make the application of their discourses. The sermon I heard amused me very much. The way in which the subject was applied to his hearers was exactly like the turn which a popular preacher in this country gives to a truth, when he desires to bring it home to us. He took his text from the 13th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and he preached for some ten minutes, just as a preacher here at home would do, upon the text, and upon the direct application of it, what St. Paul meant, the witness, and so on. Then he gave it a practical turn. He looked around, and said, "But what need have we to go to those ancient examples for witnesses to the truth? What is this place in which we are assembled? Is not this the place in which men have testified by their deaths the faith which was in them? Is not this the place in which men not long ago have been eaten? Have not those empty ovens been filled with their bodies? Are not these trees full of their bones? What need have we here further to speak of witnesses to the truth? 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FAMIL... Come and commit Helpless and desolate Guileless—deceiv... Free from all sin... By mortals adored... The world I gaze... Kings, I tremble... Wise men, astrolog... Mine is unknown... If I had either, I'd... Alive at my birth... Hunted by malice... I did not inherit... A spot on the earth... Mused among pal... A spouse I had, I... She gave me the... To her heart was... But one look of h... she cast on me, I... Not a word in my... I heard from her... Compressed by da... Nothing could ha... By heaven and st... Naught could da... I saved, I distroy... Kept a crown fro... But had none of... Filled the place... But never sat on... Rescued a warrior... Was what I seem... Devoted to slaug... A juce on my be... A king's lovely d... Watched by my... Though, gently y... Fainting with fe... She never caross... Or wiped off to... Never moistened... Though parching... No wonder a bla... Should pursue th... Was Royalty in... Wretched and po... Lived not, I die... But tell you I m... That ages have p... Since I first tur... This paradox wh... This squalor and... Say, was I a king... Fathom the myst... Was I a man? An... A demon infernal... Solve it who can?

EXTRACT from an address delivered in Exeter Hall, London, by the Hon. SIR A. GORDON, Governor of Fiji, and Ex-Governor of New Brunswick, on WESLEYAN MISSIONS IN FIJI.

The Hon Sir A. Gordon, G.C.M.G., Governor of Fiji, on rising to address the meeting was received with loud and prolonged applause. His Excellency said: "Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,—I find myself placed in a somewhat embarrassing position. My honourable friend in the chair has called upon me to support a resolution which he has put to the meeting. Now, in the first place, that resolution was so ably proposed, and so ably seconded, that I am sure no support to it was required, but, had such support been necessary, I fear that mine would have come too late, for the meeting has already adopted the resolution. Therefore, properly speaking, I ought simply to bow to the chairman and resume my seat. ("No, no," and laughter.) But still, I believe that I was asked to support the resolution chiefly because it was desired that I should give such testimony as I can afford to the work—the greatest and most satisfactory work performed by the Wesleyan missions in that remote part of the world with which I am at present connected. (Applause.) That testimony it affords me the highest pleasure and gratification to give—(hear, hear)—but, before giving it, I must make one brief apology to you, and it is this: we laymen feel that we have some disadvantage in addressing such an audience as this in the presence of many of our clerical brethren. They are accustomed at least once, and probably more than once a week to speak in public. (Laughter.) We have no such experience, and any little experience which I may have had in that line in the

House of Commons long ago, has been almost wiped out by subsequent events. Therefore, I beg to apologise to you if you find me hesitate and falter in what I say here, or if I make frequent references to the formidable bundle of notes which I hold in my hand. (A laugh, and "hear, hear.") My testimony to the work which I have seen going on in the Pacific is not perhaps really of much importance. Still, it is the evidence of a man who is not a member of the Wesleyan body, and who in the course of a varied life has had opportunities of observation which if he has not wholly thrown them away, must enable him, more or less, to form some judgment on what is put before him. It is the testimony of one whose official position ensures his being made acquainted with all that can be said against the missions, and with every kind of accusation that can be brought against them. In that capacity, I say, my evidence may not perhaps be considered as utterly valueless. (Applause.) I therefore give it: and I say that in my opinion it is impossible to use exaggerated language, or to speak in too strong terms of the wonderful services and the wonderful results, both religious and social, which have attended the Wesleyan missions in the Pacific. (Loud applause.) All those who are acquainted in the slightest degree with the history of Wesleyan missions must be more or less acquainted with the history and origin of their mission to Fiji. You all know, therefore, what was the state of the country when that mission was undertaken. You all know what, within the memory of living men, that condition was—(hear)—perpetual tribal wars, cannibalism, infanticide, murder of widows, every kind of evil and wickedness perpetrated universally. Those were the characteristics of the people of the Fiji Islands. What is their condition now? (Applause.) Their condition now is different from what it was then as can possibly be conceived. (Applause.) Out of a population of something like 120,000 more than 102,000 are regular attendants at Wesleyan churches—(loud applause)—and the remaining 18,000 are not heathens, but for the most part members of other Christian Churches. (Renewed applause.) Those who have not made open profession of Christianity, are but few old men here and there, who are not to be considered or thought of when speaking of the Fijians as a people. The people of Fiji are now a Christian people. (Loud applause.) Not to mention smaller and inferior places of worship, about 800 churches have been built. (Hear, hear.) Of course there are some persons who will say that this conversion to Christianity is often but external and unreal. Those statements I certainly am prepared emphatically to deny. (Applause.) No doubt in some cases, where you come to a population of these numbers, the profession of Christianity will be but slight and external. No doubt also, in many cases, their ideas of theology may be different from our own. I dare say that many Fijians habitually use words and expressions which we use, attaching to them very different meanings and ideas from those which are associated with them in our minds; but still on the whole I am quite sure that the lives and hearts of thousands among them are really swayed and guided by Christian principles, and that Christian doctrine does exercise a real and true influence over their lives and actions. (Hear, hear.) Out of sixty-two ordained ministers now employed in those islands, over fifty are natives, and nearly all the lesser teachers, such, for instance, as school teachers, number over 3,000, and these are natives also. (Applause.) I, for my own part, never lose an opportunity of going into a native church, and hearing a native minister preach. (Applause.) I have often asked these ministers, when they have concluded their sermons, to give me the notes from which they had preached. Most of them preach from written notes; though they do not write the whole of their sermons. In that way I have got quite a library of Fijian theology—(a laugh)—and I can assure you that, for the most part, it is very good theology too. (Hear, hear.) I have listened with great admiration to sermons preached by native ministers—admiration not only of their intellectual power as showing that they had grasped and understood the doctrines they were preaching, but also as evidencing that they themselves felt that which they desired to teach to others. (Applause.) There are many of them to whom I have listened with pleasure, and, I trust, not wholly without profit. One among them I must especially mention. His name occurred to me while you, Sir, were reading that list of worthies who had departed this life during the last year. He was not in immediate connection with this Society, and, therefore, his name would not come before you. I refer to a native minister, the late Joeli Bulu. [Applause.] Before his death, which occurred last year, a sort of autobiography of him was published some time ago by this Society,

and is to be had at your Mission-house in the city. Well, Sir, I do not know that I have ever, or hardly ever, heard from any preacher, English, or native, or foreign, sermons that came more from the heart, or went more direct to the heart, than the sermons of that man. [Applause.] I have heard him to speak, for a long time, to large audiences, who were wrapt in the stillest silence. It was impossible to hear Joeli Buli preach without feeling that he was a man whose heart was in his work, who was thoroughly in earnest in doing his Master's business, and who himself had attained that "peace in believing," to a knowledge of which he desired to bring his hearers. [Applause.] He was one of those men of whom we emphatically feel that he has seen God's face, which he now sees for ever. (Hear, hear.) I hope I am not wearying you. ["No, go on."] If I do not weary you there is one other sermon I have heard that I should like to mention before I go on. 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THE DISPUTE... with compassion preached a sermon. On the next day agreed that one go to him, and if a discussion. I began the conversation there is a sad and me, and I told this morning and said the good man he replied, "you finally impetite do not think it he answered, "you and me." xxv: 26, you and I advise you settle it with his