

by *this* kind of practical instruction alone, that those in a certain state of ignorance and barbarism are to be gained over to the truth ; and, till a similar course is followed, our Missionary and our Bible societies may expend thousands and tens of thousands, to no purpose, but to manifest the goodness of their intentions, and their total ignorance of the means which ought to have been pursued.”\* On the other hand, it is contended, that, in all our efforts to meliorate the condition of idolatrous and savage nations, we should make it our *first* and *great* object to christianize them ; carrying with us, indeed, and recommending by example and instruction, the arts and comforts of civilized life, but making their improvement in these respects only a secondary thing,—viewing it as a result that will be easily attained, and will follow, almost of course, when they are brought to receive in their hearts the softening and elevating truths of religion.

Which of these directly opposite views is correct ?

The readiest and most satisfactory way to decide the question is to appeal to facts. We might, indeed, argue from the nature of the case ; and shew, we think conclusively, that true civilization can be effected only by changing the dispositions of barbarians ; and that the most direct, and in fact the only efficient method of accomplishing this, is to bring the powerful motives of the Gospel to bear directly on their hearts. But we are not particularly fond of *a priori* reasoning, and have no disposition to resort to it, however easily and successfully it might be done, when we can appeal to facts. And on this subject there are facts in abundance, furnished by an experience of eighteen hundred years. To facts, therefore, we appeal.

1. And the first fact to which I would direct your attention is, the striking and very instructive one, that, *in the*

\* Edinburgh Review, Vol. 21—page 66. See also the Discourse preached before this Society, in 1823, by the Rev. Thaddeus Mason Harris, D. D. pp. 8, 9.