

The Missionary Enterprise.

BY W. B. BOGGS, D. D.

III.

TESTIMONIES.

The Missionary enterprise has been opposed and spoken against, not only by unbelieving unsympathetic worldlings, but at times even by professed Christians. It has been adversely criticised, and depreciated, and ridiculed, and treated with cold indifference. A cause so perfectly in accord with the mind of the Master, and so actuated by His Spirit, was sure to be treated in this world as he himself was treated.

All sorts of groundless objections against missions, and unworthy excuses for neglecting the work, have been urged; all of them betraying narrowness, selfishness, a lack of the spirit of Christ, and very much of the mind of Cain, when he asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

A common objection finds expression in these words, "We have heathen enough at home." Now, let us look at this saying squarely in the face and see what there is in it.

Yes, there are heathen enough at home, and some of them even more wicked than the heathen abroad. But all the heathen in these home lands are heathen from choice. Every one of them has a chance to know the truth and be saved. All, or almost all, of them can have access to the word of God if he wishes to; the proclamation of the gospel is all around them; church bells are sounding in their ears; Sunday School doors are open to them; Christian workers are trying to persuade them to turn and be saved. Oh, yes, there are heathen at home, but, I repeat it, they are heathen from choice.

Yes, there are heathen at home, but whose fault is it? Many of them are so simply because of our neglect, and then we have the face to urge our own sinful neglect as a reason for not obeying the command of Christ to evangelize the nations. Of this wretched excuse Phillips Brooks said: "That plea we all know, and I think it sounds more cheap and shameful every year. What can be more shameful than to make the imperfection of our Christianity at home an excuse for our not doing work abroad. It is as shameful as it is shameful. It pleads for indulgence and exemption on the ground of its own neglect and sin. It is like the murderer of his father asking the judge to have pity on his orphanhood."

Another common excuse is this, "Does not the Word say, 'beginning at Jerusalem'?" does not that teach us that the place for our efforts is at home? Well, in the first place it is beginning at Jerusalem, not continuing or ending there; but beginning there. And, in the second place, a more correct rendering is, "beginning from Jerusalem"; that is, Jerusalem was to be the starting point, the place from which to set out, on a world wide enterprise. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

Then objections against the missionary enterprise have sometimes come from another quarter. Ship-captains and others who have gone to eastern lands, and have seen about as much of mission work there as a native of Asia might see of American Christianity about the docks in New York, have come back and spoken against missions, saying, "I have been in Calcutta and Rangoon. I have seen the work of missions, I have seen your native Christians, and some of them are shams and scoundrels." To such prejudiced judges it would be quite sufficient to ask in reply, "Did you ever see native Christians of America who were unworthy of the name? Did you ever see native Christians in our own highly favored Maritime Provinces who were convicted of fraud or adultery or drunkenness? One is remembered of a conversation which took place on board a steamer coming here from India. Among the passengers was one of that class of Englishmen, now happily becoming fewer, who delighted to speak against missions, especially if there was a missionary present to be the object of his ridicule, and whom he could attack in argument. On this occasion there was a missionary present. During the course of conversation at the dining saloon table, the English officer endeavored to belittle the work of missions, and addressing the missionary said, "Why, what are you accomplishing? I have been in India ten years, and I scarcely ever saw a native Christian." The missionary having met opponents of this sort before, knew where to take him. He replied, "And have you ever seen a tiger?" "Yes, dozens of them," said the officer. "I have shot a good many myself, but what has that to do with the question?" "Just this," said the missionary, "I have been in India thirty years, and I have never seen a tiger, that is, in the jungle, but I have seen tens of thousands of native Christians, and good ones too. You saw what you were looking for, and I saw what I was looking for; each of us saw what we had eyes to see." And then the applause that went round the table did not take exactly the direction which the officer thought it would when he began the conversation.

Most intelligent Christians have now given up urging objections against missions. They see that to be anti-mission is equivalent to being anti-Christian. But it has taken some a long time to see this.

Now let us hear the testimony of some eminent men, whose position and character gives them a right to be heard, and who cannot be accused of partiality or an endeavor to gain

the favors of missionaries. They are great broad minded Englishmen in high position, who speak from the standpoint of statesmen who know the Indian Empire well.

Lord Lawrence, India's greatest Viceroy:—"I believe notwithstanding all that the English people have done to benefit that country (India), the missionaries have done more than all other agencies combined."

Sir Herbert Edwards:—"Every other faith in India is decaying; Christianity alone is beginning to run its course. It has taken long to plant, but it has now taken root, and by God's grace will never be uprooted. The Christian converts were tested by persecution and martyrdom in 1857, and they stood the test without apostasy. And I believe that if the English were driven out of India to-morrow Christianity would remain and triumph."

Sir Donald McLeod, Lieut. Governor of the Punjab:—"In many places an impression prevails that the missions have not produced results adequate to the efforts which have been made; but I trust enough has been said to prove that there is no real foundation for this impression, and that those who hold such opinions know but little of the reality."

Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of Bombay:—"I speak simply as to matters of experience and observation, and not of opinion just as a Roman Perfect might have reported to Yrajan, or the Antonines; and I assure you that, whatever you may be told to the contrary, the teaching of Christianity among the many millions of Hindus and Mohammedans in India is affecting changes, a moral and social and political, which for extent and rapidity of effect are far more extraordinary than anything you or your fathers have witnessed in Modern Europe."

Lord Napier, Governor of Madras in 1871:—"I have broken the missionary's bread, I have been present at his ministrations, I have witnessed his teaching, I have seen the beauties of his life. The benefits of missionary enterprise are felt in three directions—in converting, civilizing and teaching the Indian people. 1. Conversion.—the progress of Christianity is slow, but it is undeniable. Every year sees the area and the number slightly increase. 2. Education.—In the matter of education the co-operation of the religious societies is of course inestimable to the government and the people. Missionary agency is, in my judgment, the only agency that can at present bring the benefits of teaching home to the humblest orders of the population. 3. Civilization.—It is not easy to over-rate the value in this vast empire of a class of Englishmen of pious lives and disinterested labor, living and moving in the most forsaken places, walking between the government and the people, with devotion to both, the friends of right, the adversaries of wrong, impartial spectators of good and evil."

Sir William Muir, Lieut. Governor of the North West Provinces:—"Thank God, a marvellous change has taken place within the last half century, and while to this happy result various agencies have contributed a powerful influence—one might be bold to say the most powerful of all the influences at work—has been the missionary attitude of the church in asserting for our holy faith its legitimate supremacy as the regenerator of mankind. Thousands have been brought over, and in an ever increasing ratio converts are being brought to Christianity. And they are not shams nor paper converts, but good and honest Christians, and many of them of a high standard."

Sir Richard Temple, Governor of Bombay:—"I have been acquainted with the missionary station throughout the length and breadth of the country. I believe that a more talented, zealous, and able body of men than the missionaries of India does not exist."

As to missionary expenditure he says:—"As an old Finance Minister of India, I ought to know, if anybody does, when the money's worth is got by any operation, and having administered Provinces which contain, first and last, no less than 105,000,000 of British subjects, i. e., nearly half of British India, I say that of all the departments I have ever administered I never saw one more efficient than the missionary department, and of all the hundreds of thousands of officers I have had under my command I have never seen a better body of men than the Protestant missionaries. I say this also, that of all the departments I have administered I have never known one in which a more complete result was got from the expenditure than in that great, that grand department which is represented by the Protestant missions."

Of native Christians he says:—"I do not claim for them any unusual display of Christian graces, but they behave as well, on the average, as Christians in any land. If you appeal to the magistrates in India they will give the native Christians everywhere a good character."

Sir W. Mackworth Young, late Lieut. Governor of the Punjab:—"No!—there have been many of the spirits who have served India under Government; but I take off my hat to the humblest missionary who walks a bazaar in India, and that not because he belongs to a race in which are found the most conspicuous instances of heroism and self-sacrifice, not merely because he is called of God and has a spiritual work to do, but because he is leading a higher life, and is doing a grander work than any other class of persons who are working in India. The strength of our position in India depends more largely upon the good will of the people than upon the strength and number of our garrisons,

and for that good will we are largely indebted to the kindly self-sacrificing efforts of the Christian Missionary in his dealings with the people. As a business man speaking to business men I am prepared to say that the work which has been done by missionary agency in India exceeds in importance all that has been done (and much has been done) by the British Government in India since its commencement."

Sir Augustus Rivers Thompson, Lieut. Governor of Bengal:—"In my judgment Christian missionaries have done more real and lasting good to the people of India than all other agencies combined. They have been the salt of the country, and the true Saviours of the Empire."

Hon. Charles Denby, late United States Minister to China, in an official report to the Department of State at Washington, declares that the Chinese are enormously benefited by the labors of missionaries, and that the schools and colleges all over China taught by missionaries "do nothing but good." He says also,—"As far as my knowledge extends, I can and do say that the missionaries in China are self-sacrificing, that their lives are pure; that they are devoted to their work; that their influence is beneficial to the natives; that the arts and sciences and civilization are greatly spread by their efforts."

Testimonies such as these might be continued if space permitted, for there are many more to the same effect. Such testimony conclusively answers a thousand cavils of small minds against this great enterprise.

Wolfvill, N. S.

Letter From Burma.

An association in this country differs widely from such a gathering in the home land, enough, probably, to make a few notes concerning ours here have a little interest to some of the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. The Korean association in our field comprises the two districts of Tavoy and Mergue, or an area more than three hundred miles from north to south. This year the meetings were held at a village about midway between the north and south limits of our field. The only means of travel is on foot or by boat. A very few have elephants but only elderly people use them.

Of course the missionaries had to go by boat. The association begins Thursday morning, but this year a meeting of the Blue Ribbon Society was to be held on Wednesday and if our leaving home was deferred till Monday we might not arrive in time for the meetings of our temperance society. We therefore left home on Friday afternoon, Jan. 22nd, to spend Sabbath in an island almost opposite the place of meeting and to cross over on Monday. The next morning we were out to sea with a fresh breeze and quite a roll of a sea, and as always happens Mrs. M. seasick. But this time she suffered extremely. Only once had she been so sick in all her voyages, and that was crossing the Straits of Dover in a storm. The sea and the sickness continued all day till a little after dark we ran into a beautiful little harbor and all was quiet. Here is a Christian village of twenty-four houses. I blew a little whistle I carried and the chapel-gong sounded in response. Soon the shore was lined with Karens who sang hymns as we approached. This is one of the few places in Burma where, one sees no signs of idolatry. There are only Christian families, and the church numbers seventy-five. The pastor and his wife, like all of our pastors and wives, were once our pupils.

I had once been to the village where the meetings were to be held by boat but did not know the mouth of the river. This I told the pastor and asked him to send a pilot with us. This he promised to do but supposed the small fleet of boats going over with us would keep near ours and show us the way, so when we were ready to leave all going over had already started. Their small light boats bounded away leaving ours, large and deeply laden, far behind. As we neared the land at dark not a boat was in sight. We came to anchor and waited for the morning. At daylight we went on knowing the general direction and trusting the Lord to show us the way. We had not gone far when a small boat containing two Burmans pushed out from the shore just across our track. We asked them if they knew the river we were in search of and were told they did and were going there. I offered one half a rupee or sixteen cents, a whole day's wages for such a man, if he would pilot us in. He came on board and in true pilot-fashion took charge of our boat and our anxiety was relieved. To the credit of the Karens I may say a small boat was waiting for us at the mouth of the river.

Directing us to keep the left branch of the river our pilot left us, but another came awaited us. Being the time of neap-tides our large boat would not go up near the chapel where there is a level bank for boats to rest on when the tide is out, and we must find some place with no rocks or fallen trees to injure her. And the man was there when needed. On the bank sat Tho Po who was a pupil with us many years ago. Speaking his name usually causes a smile with all who hear for it means Little Lamb and he is an unusually large man for a Karen. Of course he knew a good place and was soon in the boat. A little talk I had with him will show a Karen peculiarity that is annoying