

THE MISSIONARY REVIEW OF THE WORLD.

VOL. XVII. No. 5.—*Old Series.*——MAY.——VOL. VII. No. 5.—*New Series.*

THE TRUE CHARM AND POWER OF MISSIONS.

BY THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

That which constitutes the value and virtue of incense is an invisible, impalpable, and subtle principle, called perfume or odor. A similar charm, supposed to invest acceptable offerings, gave them the name of "sweet savor offerings," and caused such expressions as the "savor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God," to be applied to unselfish service.

Comparison of many passages of Scripture will show that the essence of this acceptable savor is found in *unselfishness, self-oblivion, or self-loss*. The savor of selfishness is offensive to God; and just as certain pungent, aromatic odors were supposed to overcome or annul the offensive smell of burning victims, the odor of a spirit that renounces all self-gain in an absorbing passion for His glory is represented as neutralizing what is distasteful to God, and so becomes the secret of all acceptable, sweet savor offerings.

Here lies, perhaps, the grandest of all arguments for missions—that they both demand and develop the highest self-oblivion. It is a peculiar mark of the incapacity of a worldly mind to appreciate spiritual truth and motive, that the very *objections* raised to missions, that commercially and selfishly they "do not pay," are in God's eyes the *reasons* for them. They make no appeal to the carnal, and hence evoke the nobler and more god-like principles within us.

The hope which inspires missionary effort is not the hope of seeing adequate results, such as in the material harvest of human enterprise justifies the sowing; God sometimes grants abundant returns, but not always, nor to the actual individual who has put forth the greatest measure of effort. The supreme hope of the true missionary is that he may witness for Christ to the unsaved so faithfully and fully that his Master at His coming may approve him with His own "Well done."

The hope thus set before us is so much above the sphere of time and