

THE MISSION FIELD A MISSIONARY BISHOP'S FAREWELL PLEA FOR INDIA.

The Bishop of Lahore has printed in one cover five sermons preached by him during his late visit to England, in which, with his wonted power, he calls upon all Church people to make full proof of the ministry and priesthood with which they are endowed. He has yet to wait to see his own Cathedral Church at Lahore finished, for the timber promised for the roofing by the Maharajah of Cashmeer is not suitable for the purpose, and he needs £1,000 to replace it. His testimony is strong as to the value of stately houses in which to worship God. In a sermon preached at St. Jude's, South Kensington, he says:—

"Surrounded as we are in England with houses of prayer, attractive and imposing, welcoming and enfolding in their bosom, and cementing more than ever in bonds of faith and love all classes of the community, from the highest to the lowest; surrounded, as we are by such, we can scarcely appreciate the effect of a noble and massive church fabric, with wide open doors, none forbidding entrance; with holy texts blazoned on scrolls on porch without and walls within; holy words of love and truth and hope spoken; prayers offered, holy mysteries celebrated, the sick and suffering prayed for, the centre of ever-multiplying charities and philanthropies, where men and women and little children go up to pray and praise; to fortify themselves for life's duties, trials, battles, the home of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, wherein the horn of David sprouts ever fresh and green that 'Branch of the Lord, beautiful and glorious, and the lamp of light and life is rekindled; and on whose portals may be graven the comfortable promise, 'I will abundantly bless her provisions and satisfy her poor with bread.' Very forcibly did Hodson (of Hodson's Horse) write on the effect of holy fabrics which, by their striking solemnity, arrest, or by their winsome beauty allure souls. 'Even the outward signs and tokens of our Christian profession, our Cathedrals, Churches, Colleges, tombs, hospitals, almshouses have (I am now more than ever convinced) an influence on men's minds, principles and actions, which none but those who have been removed from their influence for years, can feel or appreciate thoroughly. Our Gothic buildings, our religious looking Churches, have (I am sure) a more restraining and pacifying influence than are generally supposed by those who are habituated to them, and who have never felt the want of them. A few Cathedrals and venerable looking religious edifices would do wonders in our colonies. Here (in India) we have nothing physical to remind us of any creed but Islamism and Hin-

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duism. Christ alone is trust of sight. A barrack room, a ball room, a dining room, perhaps, a court of justice (in Lahore, I might add two Mahomedan tombs), serve the purpose for which the wisdom and piety of our ancestors constructed such noble and stately temples."

It is encouraging to know that, in spite of what Bishop French has called the "crowning sorrow of his advancing years," the scanty supply of workers to fill the posts he has to offer and longs to see occupied, he, nevertheless, speaks hopefully of an awakening in the Church to her Missionary duty. He is speaking of the heavenly forces at work on men's spirits, and continues: "We having the same Spirit"; the same Holy Ghost working in us, which wrought in the Old Testament Saints. He speaks here, not in his own individual person, but on behalf of the Church, especially the Missionary Church of the future. He puts the words into our lips, and would have them breathed from our hearts to-day. . . . It is impossible for me to doubt that, even as compared with seven years back, the Church has had the Ephatha spoken, its tongue string loosed to speak out, to tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King. Its witness is more outspoken and outspread; it proceeds from all classes in the community: old and young, learned and unlearned. I have had occasion to observe this outspokenness in our Universities, Cathedrals, public schools; our towns and villages alike. And the effect may have been preceded by the cause—I believed and therefore have I spoken. If there be clear, bold, ready speech, there must have been growing and deepening of faith in the heart. There is much here to silence or mitigate the gravest apprehensions and misgivings: to clothe us with the garments of praise, instead of the spirit of heaviness."

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