

infidel, unworthy to teach or even come to Lord's table, it is not a marvel if a discerning eye sees in the sky signs of a new protest.

III. The *assaults on missions* constitute another feature of the times.

There are at work two opposing tendencies equally hostile to all evangelical life and evangelistic effort. On the one hand, much that calls itself scholarly criticism is practically the lowering of the Word of God to a human level ; and, on the other hand, the various congresses of religions are lifting all religious systems to a Divine level ; and between the two the cause of missions is losing hold on the popular mind. For if the Bible be not divinely infallible, its unique authority is gone ; and if the Christian religion be not the one and only saving faith, its unique indispensableness is gone ; and the command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature not only remains no longer imperative, but becomes well-nigh impertinent. Let us boldly confront the dilemma which modern criticism and mis-called liberalism force upon us. The assaults on missions get countenance from this double tendency of our times. Once concede that the Bible is a fallible guide, and that the Christ it presents is not the solitary hope of a lost world, and we may as well recall our missionaries. Why should we send thousands of our best men and women to the ends of the earth, at a cost of millions of dollars annually and a dearer cost of priceless lives, if a Divine command does not both justify and sanctify implicit obedience ? And if all religions are stages in the evolution of a Divine faith and life, differing only in the degree of their development toward perfection, why intrude Christian ideas and dogmas upon people who have the same Divine upward tendency, and some of whom regard themselves at a higher level than ourselves ?

The disturbances in mission fields, especially China, have given occasion to a number of open or disguised attacks on missionary policy, and it has been boldly affirmed that the whole system of modern missions is a mistake. A prominent Scotchman some years since raised the question in Exeter Hall whether it were even proper to waste so many precious lives in evangelizing the Dark Continent : and more lately frequent newspaper articles appear, arguing more or less pointedly against the right or the expediency of sending Christian missionaries to other nations.

Some writers contend that it involves needless exposure to the hostile influences of climate and of foreign peoples ; others, that it is an invasion of the territory of another faith that has as much as any a right to be ; that it is an interference with what Carlyle called the " majesty of custom," a collision with prejudices and superstitions as impregnable as the hills, and calculated to provoke resistance and incite riot. While there is a loud call for protection to the persons of Christian missionaries peacefully teaching the Gospel, it is replied that such violate the right of asylum and forfeit the right of such protection by forcing their Christianity upon unwilling adherents of other faiths. Such plausible arguments are the more amazing when it is remembered that, had they prevailed eighteen