

THE ONLY SUCCESSFUL MISSIONARY METHOD.*

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I NEVER have believed in "slow and steady" progress—and, blessed be God, I do not believe in it now! I am miserable when I think that at this moment two-thirds of the human race do not even nominally acknowledge Christ. I quite admit that during the past century Christian missions have made far greater progress than during many preceding centuries; that we have everything to encourage us; that there is not the slightest occasion for despair anywhere. But at the same time, how any human being can be satisfied with the state of things at home or abroad, I am utterly unable to conceive,

To me it is the most melancholy and humiliating of all facts, that to-day in this little island, where the Gospel has been preached for a thousand years, the majority of my fellow-countrymen belong to no section of the Church of God. No doubt the revival and extension of the work of God abroad must follow that revival and extension of the work of God at home of which, blessed be God, we have many signs. But oh! let us be profoundly dissatisfied with the existing rate of progress. I think, brethren, that even in the history of your own great society another Madagascar is overdue. We cannot live forever upon the historic exploits of our fathers. And I may say with respect to my own communion, I am anxiously waiting for another Fiji.

Now, what do we want in order that we may see the work of God revived—revived as in apostolic days, and as in this country a century ago? We want the baptism of the day of Pentecost. I may express my whole thesis in this one sentence: We can neither coerce nor argue human society into Christianity. We cannot make any real progress without the Spirit of God.

Words of profoundest philosophy are often unconsciously spoken by such unlettered men as St. Peter. I remember a similarly unlettered man addressing an audience in Exeter Hall a few years ago, and uttering one of the profoundest Christian truths I ever heard. Several of us spoke on that occasion, but nobody spoke so well as he; and no sentiment that he uttered was so enthusiastically applauded as the one I am about to quote. It was a very remarkable audience. Exeter Hall was crammed to the ceiling with a meeting of workmen and their wives—the very *élite* of the working classes—railway men, porters, engine-drivers, stokers, and so forth. It was the annual meeting of the Christian Railway Men's Association; and the large building was crammed to the ceiling with some of the finest and sturdiest representatives of the English working classes. A man who from his general appearance and size I should imagine was an engine-driver, came to the front and delivered himself of the following sentiment, which was cheered again and again with boundless enthusiasm by those workmen and their wives. He said; "Mr. Chairman, there are some people who say to us in the present day, Legislate, Legislate, Legislate! So say we workmen. Parliament can do great deal for us, and the sooner it does it the better. There are others that say, Educate, Educate, Educate! So say we workmen; and we are very thankful for what has been done of late for the education of the working classes. But while we are ready to say Legislate, Legislate, Legislate! we say above everything else, Regenerate, Regenerate, Regenerate."

That sentiment was applauded to the echo. That sentiment was the profoundest Christian philosophy. There is no man who

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