

Meantime—another aspect of the times—here is a tremendous agitation of the world under the impact of the new and mighty forces thrown into its life, and the disintegration of old forms, and the aroused, conscious antagonism of principles that have been sleeping for ages, side by side, unconscious of each other. The agitation hastens crystallization. Chaos must soon come to order. What stamp and form shall it bear?

The valley of dry bones seen by the Hebrew seer is before us, bone gathered to its fellow bone, articulated, organized, clothed with tendon and tissue, waiting only the breath of God to start them to life, an exceeding great army. That breath it is ours to invoke, night and day. Nor are we without tokens of its presence. The Spirit of God, if the Church is ready to receive it, seems ready to inaugurate the especial spiritual era prophesied for the Church in the latter days. Never since the day of Pentecost have there been more abundant indications of the readiness of the Divine Spirit to clothe the Word with power than in these times. Signals of urgency to faithful prayer and faithful work effectuating it thicken over this aspect of the hour.

CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE GOSPEL IN THE FIJI ISLANDS.

FROM MISS GORDON CUMMING'S "AT HOME IN FIJI."

Strange indeed is the change that has come over these isles since first Messrs. Cragill and Cross, Wesleyan missionaries, landed here in the year 1835, resolved at the hazard of their lives to bring the light of Christianity to these ferocious cannibals. Imagine the faith and courage of the two white men, without any visible protection, landing in the midst of these bloodthirsty hordes, whose unknown language they had in the first instance to master, and day after day witnessing such scenes as chill one's blood even to hear about. Many such have been described to me by eye-witnesses.

Slow and disheartening was their labour for many years, yet so well has that little heaven worked that, with the exception of the Kai Tholos, the wild highlanders, who still hold out in their mountain fastnesses, the eighty inhabited isles have all abjured cannibalism and other frightful customs, and have *lutued* (i. e. embraced Christianity) in such good earnest as may well put to shame many more civilized nations.

I often wish that some of the cavillers who are for ever sneering at Christian missions could see something of their results in these isles. But first they would have to recall the Fiji of ten years ago, when every man's hand was against his neighbour, and the land had no rest from barbarous inter-tribal wars, in which the foe, without respect of age or sex, were

looked upon only in the light of so much beef; the prisoners deliberately fattened for the slaughter; dead bodies dug up that had been buried ten or twelve days, and could only be cooked in the form of puddings; limbs cut off from living men and women, and cooked and eaten in presence of the victim, who had previously been compelled to dig the oven and cut the firewood for the purpose; and this is not only in time of war, when such atrocity might be deemed less inexcusable, but in time of peace, to gratify the caprice of appetite of the moment.

Think of the sick buried alive; the array of widows who were deliberately strangled on the death of any great man; the living victims who were buried beside every post of a chief's new house, and must needs stand clasping it while the earth was gradually heaped over their devoted heads; or those who were bound hand and foot, and laid on the ground to act as rollers, when a chief launched a new canoe, and thus doomed to a death of excruciating agony; a time when there was not the slightest security for life or property, and no man knew how quickly his own hour of doom might come; when whole villages were depopulated simply to supply their neighbours with fresh meat!

Just think of all this, and of the change that has been wrought, and then just imagine white men who can sneer at missionary work in the way they do. Now you may pass from isle to isle, certain everywhere to find the same cordial reception by kindly men and women. Every village in the eighty inhabited isles has built for itself a tidy church, and a good house for its teacher or native minister, for whom the village also provides food and clothing. *Can you realize that there are nine hundred Wesleyan churches in Fiji*, at every one of which the frequent services are crowded by devout congregations; that the schools are well attended, and that the first sound which greets your ear at dawn, and the last at night, is that of hymn-singing and most fervent worship, rising from each dwelling at the hour of family prayer?

What these people may become after much contact with the common run of white men we cannot, of course, tell, though we may unhappily guess. At present they are a body of simple and devout Christians, full of deepest reverence for their teachers and the message they bring, and only anxious to yield all obedience.

Of course there are a number of white men here, as in other countries, who (themselves not caring one straw about any religion) declare that Christianity in these isles is merely nominal, adopted as a matter of expediency, and that half the people are still heathen at heart. Even were this true (and all outward signs go to disprove it), I wonder what such cavillers expect. I wonder if they know by what gradual steps our own British ancestors yielded to the Light, and for how