

MISSION FIELD.

DO FOREIGN MISSIONS PAY?

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The same qualities which have led the missionaries to contribute so largely to geographical science have made their contributions to geology and meteorology of inestimable value. They have not been professional geologists, but they have gone to the remote corners of the world, and have gone there to live. The phenomena of earth and air and sea have been forced upon their attention. The treasures of the coral have been disclosed to them in their journeys from island to island, the volcano has exploded its magnificent fire-works for them alone so far as white man's eyes were concerned, and cloud and hurricane have yielded up unguessed secrets to their observing eyes, for there were none others to behold them.

In the realm of archaeology their contributions to the world's knowledge has been simply incalculable, and to give even a catalogue of the towns which they were first to explore and with whose location and ruins they have made the world familiar, would be of itself beyond the limits of this article.

Moreover, their contributions to the cabinets of the country, especially of our colleges, are exceedingly numerous and valuable. Their means, to be sure, have been small, but in diligence, painstaking care, and intelligence in selection they have during long lives spent in lands of peculiar interest to the archaeologist greatly enriched the world's collection of ancient treasure.

In the science of medicine, if medicine can be called a science, while some valuable remedies should be ascribed to missionaries, their great work has been in disabusing the minds of whole nations and prop on the power of charms and philters and superstitious knickknacks, and of displacing them with medicines of undoubted value.

The *materia medica* which many missionaries found in force in the country of their adoption was grotesque, almost beyond belief. In Arabia we are told the patella of a wolf hung from the neck is a cure for the mumps, and the written amulet is very efficacious, especially if eaten by the patient.

The great medical work of the Chinese, says Dr. Wells Williams, in "The Middle Kingdom," is called *Pun Tsau*, and this wise volume declares that the pure white horse is the best for medicine, and that to eat the flesh of a black horse without wine causes death. The heart of a white horse, hog, cow or hen, when dried and rasped into arrack, cures forgetfulness. The "night eyes" of a horse, that is the warts about the knees, enable him to see in the night, and also cure the toothache, while the ashes of a skull taken in water cure insomnia if the patient uses another skull for a pillow.

Here is a Chinese recipe for ulcer. Pulverized serpents, one ounce; wasps and their nests, half an ounce; centipedes, three ounces; scorpions, six, and toads, ten ounces; grind thoroughly, mix with honey, and make into pills. Even the pills are palatable compared with the cure for the itch, which, according to the Chinese, will be relieved by swallowing small toads alive.

It will be seen that the missionary with even a rudimentary idea of medicine has a very large field for the use of his limited knowledge, and many who do not profess to be medical missionaries, but have gone out to minister to the souls of men, have been the physicians of their bodies as well. When, however, we remember that one large branch of the missionary service is distinctly in the line of medicine and surgery, and that they seek admittance to the hearts and the homes of the people through the highest skill which our best medical schools can impart, we can see the vast contribution to the sum total of the world's health and well-being that missionaries have made.

I have been intensely interested and impressed by the medical missionary work that I have seen in many parts of the world. In Canton is a great hospital under the charge of the Presbyterian Missionary Society, in which are treated every year scores of thousands of the lame, the halt, and the blind, the sick, and the sore. Up the great Pearl River every year goes the medical missionary's houseboat, carrying health to thousands more.

In the famous heathen city of Madura, in Southern India, where perhaps, is the most extensive and wonderful Hindoo temple in the world, stands a new and beautiful hospital erected by the labors of Dr. Van Allen, one of the indefatigable missionaries of the American Board, and this fine hospital, with its light and airy and comfortably furnished wards, and its appliances for treating every case of medicine or surgery, was built, not by American money, but by contributions of the people to whom our missionaries have been sent. Every rupee of the more than forty thousand which it cost

was contributed by men whose religion the missionaries had gone to overthrow. Yet so great is their faith in the missionary, in his self-sacrificing devotion, and in his skill as a physician, that this large sum has been given outright and in perpetuity to the American Missionary Society that sent out this beloved physician.

I have very often been touched in many remote districts to see the skill and loving tenderness with which these medical missionaries care for the unspeakably filthy and wretched patients who throng around their doors. The rheumy, festering eyes of these wretched mortals, the filthy rags with which they are clothed, their matted, vermin infested hair, the running sores with which they are afflicted, all combine often to make them the most gruesome and repulsive of beings; and yet, with a gentleness and skill born of a genuine love for God and humanity, these medical missionaries in a foreign land, with no hope of gaining fortune or reputation, care for their poor diseased brothers in yellow or black as the case may be, as though they were all king's sons and daughters. Indeed, in their eyes these are the sons and daughters of the King of Kings, and this likeness which they have discovered and this sense of brotherhood which is theirs have sent them across the sea on this superlative mission of mercy. There is many a Doctor McClure on the mission field who deserves the eulogy of a pen no less skillful than that of Ian MacLaren himself.

Opposite the men's hospital in Madura, of which I have spoken, is another hospital for women, which, though on a somewhat smaller scale, is doing equally good work. In the heart of Turkey in Asia, in the heart of Talas, near the old city of Caesarea, is a hospital built by another American, Dr. Todd, which is doing a work no less valuable than that I have already described. Here amid the persecutions and massacres, amid the wars and rumors of wars, this brave missionary and his noble wife, together with all the other missionaries in this field, both medical and evangelistic, have stood at their posts, inadequately protected by a weak government, which sometimes in the past has seemed to be afraid to defend its own citizens. Here they have remained undaunted, refusing to be driven out by the force of the Turk or to be coaxed away by his wiles. If there are nobler instances of heroism in the world's modern history than have been exhibited by our American missionaries in Turkey I am unaware of their existence. To be sure, this heroism of the evangelistic missionary, and this tenderness and skill of his medical brother, cannot be counted among the material assets of missions, but they ought not to be left out of sight. When the books are made up and the accounts closed, I believe that they will be found to swell vastly the enormous total on the credit side of modern Protestant missions. I have been able to refer to only a few of the scores and scores of missionary hospitals and dispensaries which number their patients by millions.

In the field of philology, as is entirely natural, the missionary has very largely put the world in his debt. He could not do his work without some knowledge of the language of the people to whom it has been sent.

The beginnings of comparative philology, it is said, rose from a comparison of the translations of the Lord's prayer in the fifteenth century by Roman Catholic missionaries. In 1784 a polyglot vocabulary was published in one hundred and fifty languages and the Lord's prayer in more than three hundred. Indeed, it was the progress of missions in this century that so increased interest in the subject of philology, that Professor Lepsius of the Royal Academy at Berlin prepared his "Standard Alphabet for Reducing Unwritten Languages and Foreign Graphic Systems to a Uniform Orthography in European Letters." At a meeting of philologists called together by Chevalier Bunsen, at which a large number of missionaries were present, Professor Lepsius' alphabet was adopted, and since then has been applied to innumerable African and Asian languages.

The immense work that has been done for the study of language is shown by the fact that one of our American Missionary Associations alone does its work and prints its literature in forty-six languages. It is no empty boast to say that these missionaries are among the best masters of the Chinese language, the Tamil and Marathi, the modern Syriac and Kurdish, the Turkish, Armenian and Hungarian, also the Arabic and modern Greek, the Zulu, Kafir, Grebo, and Mpongwe, and other languages in South Africa. Besides these languages, the missionaries of this one Society, have been proficient in Hebrew, Spanish, Ancient Syriac, Gudejerati, Sanscrit, Hindustani, Portuguese, Persian, Telugu, Siamese, Malay, Dyak, Japanese, Merjucas, Minocresiah, Crete, Oage, Seneca, Abeniquia, Pawnee, and three languages of Oregon. More than twenty of these languages were reduced to writing by the missionaries of this Board.

When we remember that this is only one American Society, and that its total expenditures are but little over half a million dollars a year, and that other missionaries of other boards are doing an equally important work, it is evident that if philology must answer the question, "Do missions pay?" it would be with a very emphatic affirmative.

(Concluded next week.)