

Wesleyan Missions.

Anniversary of the Parent Society.

DR. BUNTING—The next resolution will be moved by James Heald, Esq., M. P. (Loud applause.)

JAMES HEALD, Esq., M. P.—Mr. Chairman and my Christian friends—I had hoped to have been allowed, on this occasion, the pleasure of remaining a delighted listener to the various addresses which have been and which still are to be made to the meeting. I have been delighted in listening to Dr. Duff, whilst he was directing our attention, once and again, to the first principles,—showing us those foundations, so deep and so wide, on which our Christian efforts were first based, and on which our superstructure has continued to rise; and I feel, in these days, it is of paramount importance that we should regard those foundations as stable and binding, that they impose upon us, and involve us in an amount of responsibility which, if I had the power of language to describe; I would now place it under contribution. (Applause.) While your report was being read this morning—which I listened to with great attention—it excited in my breast an amount of satisfaction and confidence which I now take the opportunity of stating, as a layman, was never produced in my mind by any previous report. (Applause.) Some of the great principles which we have from the first recognised and embodied in the course of our proceedings, have in that report been set forth again for our consideration. I felt the force of them. I felt a searching of heart before the presence of Almighty God, how far my own conduct had corresponded to, and was in consonance with my profession; and I trust that Dr. Duff's memorable address has produced a similar effect on all our minds. I think we are in danger, at this peculiar crisis in the history of our country and of the world, if we do not prepare ourselves to do more, to stand forth more unambiguously and avowedly as the servants of God—to seek our highest honour, not in the plaudits of men, but in that which cometh from God; and to keep steadfastly in view that line of conduct which will justify the expectation that at last we may have the happiness and joy of hearing the King say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." (Loud applause.) I am jealous over myself, sir, as I believe you are, "with a godly jealousy." There is danger in connection with missionary efforts, as a specimen of all other efforts, of having our high standard lowered, and our high resolves brought down, and of satisfying our consciences with a less amount of duty performed, of property contributed, of efforts put forth, and of that continuity of effort which is essential to all real and permanent success, than our duty requires. (Applause.) I think the address of our reverend friend this morning will be found instructing and improving to us as a Wesleyan Missionary Society. For the last two or three years my heart has yearned and mourned over the dissensions of our Connexion, and especially over those which have directed themselves, in unjustifiable and ungodly assaults, against this Society. (Cheers, again and again repeated.) It has been the especial object of assault and attack; and I feel, as a member of this society, and as having the honour to hold office in the parent committee, as if the blow had been struck at myself. (Hear, hear.) As Sir Edward Sugden said, in his memorable speech at the county meeting held in Epsom, with reference to the aggressive act of the Pope,—"I felt," said he, "as if the blow had been struck at myself, because the honour, and independence, and sovereignty of this country have been attacked." It will become us all to-day to settle this point. Is this society our own? (Loud applause.) Have we seen, in the review of the principles which the report has brought before us, and which have been so admirably portrayed by Dr. Duff, that we have been mistaken in the choice of the ground we have laid, and have not formed a right estimate of the great object set before us and all kindred societies? Sir, I repudiate, from the settled conviction of my judgment,—from my best conscientious feelings as a Christian,—all

such imputations. (Loud applause.) I feel the ground is not of man's laying, I am delighted at the tribute, paid by the distinguished man who has just spoken, to the sage-like experience with which the affairs of the society have been conducted; (hear, hear;) and, whether it be duly estimated, and has been properly acknowledged by the members of this society or not, it calls forth the confidence, as it has commanded the respect, and the support, of all sections of the Christian church. (Applause.) With respect to this, if I am not much mistaken, the judgment and the feeling of this meeting are in unison with my own. (Loud applause.) I came here, as I have done for the last two years, with an earnest desire to satisfy myself, whether the Wesleyan Missionary Society, under the conduct of those to whom the Conference and yourselves have so often committed its direction and management, is to be now brought to an end; (loud cries of "No, no;") or whether, having the opportunity once more to investigate its principles, to submit our judgment to its sacred claims, and to look, as we are bound to do, as prudent men and as Christian men, to all those responsibilities which these considerations involve,—whether we are prepared to-day to renew our allegiance to Christ in this department of his service, and say, "Here Lord are we—send by whom thou wilt send." (Applause.) Then, sir, we want something more than that. When I was a young man, I recollect the late William Dawson calling at Parr's wood, one morning, when I had the honour to entertain, as a guest, for a few days, the never-to-be-forgotten, ever-to-be-lamented, as Christians are justified in lamenting—the late Rev. Richard Watson. (Hear, hear.) After breakfast, we had been conversing for some time about the prominent features of a meeting which he had attended the night before, when Mr. Dawson said—"Now, Mr. Watson, you must not forget we Methodists want 'present salvation.' Now how is this applicable to our present case? Dr. Duff has solved the problem. He has demonstrated that good principles, if alone, will not do the work—as faith, if alone, cannot save us; but that if we will do our part, God will perform his. Dr. Duff, if I mistake not, has touched a string that will vibrate through the Wesleyan Connexion. We want our attention withdrawing from ourselves to our work; I have never yet met with a member of the Wesleyan Connexion, in any part of the Queen's dominions, who could answer me this question:—"I trow," said I, that "if it pleased God, just at this moment to grant unto us such a visitation of the Spirit as we never yet have seen, do you not think it would put everything right?" (Applause.) I believe it would, sir. But then, I ask the second question—"Is the indulgence of this kind of disposition and action the way to obtain the great good?" No. The Holy Spirit, (and this is the serious state of the case) shuns associations for strife and division; and I say, whoever, in my church, prevents me from receiving such a measure of that grace as I should individually receive if the shower was universal and general, and at all answering to that rich effusion of the Spirit which Dr. Candlish pointed out on Friday morning,—which according to the promise shall be poured out like water on a thirsty desert, and like floods upon the dry ground—any man that in my church connection throws an hindrance in the way of such a promise being fulfilled, injures me as he injures the church. The solemn consideration for us all is this,—we have no Scripture right to expect the church of Christ to be better than we ourselves individually contribute to make it. If all the members are holy, then will the body be holy. (Cheers.) Now, sir, here is an object sufficiently grand, important, interesting, convincing, delightful to engage the united attention and prayers, and the efforts of our universal Connexion at home and abroad. It requires the assistance of every man, woman, and child. And would to God that we might enter upon it anew to-day! (Applause.) We are in an extraordinary position with respect to our Missionary work. I confess I have sometimes looked, with a degree of anxiety and apprehension, at the extent to which it has proceeded, and the amount of responsibility incurred,—a re-

sponsibility which devolves upon us at every step taken in advance; and sometimes in my spirit I have sighed, and said—"What are we, Lord, as a people, to have been called out and conducted into this very important work." And occasionally, as my friend Mr. Plumptre said, and as all Christians must sometimes feel in their history, I am driven from every other consideration to the mightiness of our Saviour. I listened to the report under the influence of those feelings, and was glad to see it nakedly and broadly stated, that this great society has mainly to depend for its support upon the command and promise of Christ, while it has sent its agencies into every part of the world. As Dr. Candlish said, we seem to have taken possession of every soil, to have sounded the note among every tribe, to have proclaimed the gospel as a witness to every people. But how are we to sustain this mighty work? My spirit often cries out, in the way frequently described in the prophecies of Jeremiah—"the burden of the Lord!" How are we to sustain this mighty burden? It will not be a burden, sir, if we regard it as the Lord's burden—as a work which the Lord has given us to do;—and we must, at all times and hazards, regard it as such. We must to-day look to the Lord for such a baptism of his Spirit upon us here, and upon our societies everywhere, as shall make us glory in the cross of Christ whatever sacrifice it involves. We ought to use all the influence we can exert, and to make the cause of Christ our own. (Applause.) Sir, we have awakened sympathy, not only in Great Britain and Ireland, but all over the world. If we were to be guilty of the folly, as well as the sin and danger of withdrawing our hands from the work, think you the work would cease? Think you not, that this honour would be transferred from the parent to the children? Think you not that, in our various colonial possessions, you have awakened a feeling and diffused a spirit which is as deathless as the Christianity which brings us together. (Loud applause.) We may, with a cowardice for which no infamy would be too great,—we may, and we can, to some extent, and for a time, shelter and relieve ourselves from the responsibility. But, will any man amongst us wish that to be the case, when he comes to give up his account? Should we do this in reference to eternity, to our own souls, and the souls of others? I trow not; and I feel rejoiced to day, and my confidence in the progress and growing success of this cause is greatly increased, because I feel persuaded that such is the mind of this great meeting. (Applause.) I almost regret that our esteemed friend, Dr. Duff, has left the meeting. Who does not honour such a man? Who does not honour the section of the church which has such a representative? (Cheers.) Why, sir, I felt it in my heart to have given him £50, as a very feeble expression of my admiration of his character, of my veneration for the man, and of my estimate of the honour which God has put upon the Free Church of Scotland in having Dr. Duff,—now in England, but in India when he is at home,—to conduct such a portion of its missions, as he so ably presides over, and, as the result of his sage-like experience, to administer to us the advice which he has given us this morning. (Applause.) I feel persuaded that that advice will not be lost. Although Dr. Duff is not now here, if Mr. Cowan will give me credit, the society shall not be the worse for his absence. (Loud applause.) I have great pleasure in now submitting to the consideration of the meeting the following resolution:—

"That this meeting devoutly recognizes the importance and necessity of more fervent and importunate prayer to the Great Head of the Church, that he will vouchsafe the guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit to the Committees and Directors of the several Missionary Societies; and that all the difficulties and opposition with which his servants in the Mission-field have to contend, may be overruled for the advancement of his own glory, and the rapid extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom in the world."

Christian Missions are designed to extend the blessings of religion throughout the world.

Family Circle.

Responsibility of Parents.

I am a parent. Three girls under ten years old call me mother. Oh the responsibility resting on me as such! Here are three children, whose souls will exist for eternal ages, committed to my training.—My precepts and examples will probably tell on their eternal well-being; and though the care of their welfare here is of importance, it is as a drop to the ocean when compared to the training of the immortal mind; and O, how much I need that wisdom which cometh from God to enable me to train them up in the way they should go, that when they are old they will not depart from it. Mother, with that smiling infant in your arms, reflect; for that infant Jesus died. Can you comprehend eternity? O no. Neither can you tell the worth of the soul. You cannot; but yet the soul of your infant is immortal—it will never die. O begin with the first dawn of its reason to instruct that child. In language suited to the understanding of childhood, tell it of the evil nature it inherits from Adam; of its utter inability to do anything of itself pleasing in the sight of God; tell it of a Saviour crucified; of the babe in Bethlehem; of the child Jesus subject to his parents; of the Man of sorrows; of the crucified, risen Saviour; of Him who is willing and able to save to the uttermost all that come unto the Father by him. Often remind it that the Lord sees it continually; that to him it must give an account for the deeds done in the body; that it has a soul which can never, never die, that it will exist in heaven—a state of blessedness and joy, or in hell—a state of everything dreadful, and that forever and ever; and point it to Jesus, the only way to heaven. Father, mother, have you sons or daughters, or both? Have you ever plainly, faithfully told them the necessity of being reconciled to God; of the humiliating condition of all mankind, as the Scriptures declare that "from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no soundness in them; nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores;" that all have sinned, and all are by nature totally unfit for heaven; and that, unless they repent, and trust in Jesus for salvation, they will be lost for ever? Do you ever pray with and for your children? Could you, should you, or all of your children be suddenly called away by death, say, with a clear conscience, you have discharged your duty to the souls of your children? Are you clear of their blood? Have you, by precept and example, not once, but continually, warned them to flee from the wrath which is to come on the finally impenitent, and pointed them to Jesus the Saviour, and the only hope, the only way to heaven? Do you morning and evening, call your children and family all together, and read in their presence from the word of God, and with them confess your sins, and implore forgiveness, acknowledge your mercies with thankful hearts; own your weakness, your proneness to wander from the path which leads to life, and ask for wisdom and strength from above; for the Holy Spirit to enlighten your minds, to instruct you in wisdom's ways; for grace to help in time of need; and that you may be cleansed from all sin in the Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness; and that you and your children, and all for whom you should pray, may be saved, may become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ? Do you and all of your family, that can possibly assemble yourselves in the house of God for worship on the Lord's day, and by precept and example teach them to keep holy the Sabbath day?

Do you instruct them by precept and example to speak the truth, saying just what they mean, all their meaning, and no more, in words that do not convey more than the truth, avoiding all extravagant expressions, and everything that has the appearance of falsehood in any way? Do you make a practice of speaking evil of your neighbour either in the presence of your children or when alone? "Speak not evil of one another, brethren; the Judge standeth at the door!"