

Wesleyan Missions.

(From the London Watchman, May 1th.)

The Annual Meeting of the Parent Society. (Continued.)

The Report then noticed, in succession, the various Missions in AUSTRALASIA and POLYNESIA, in SOUTH AFRICA, in WESTERN AFRICA, in the WEST INDIES, and in BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.—We make a selection of the following passages:—

In Australasia and Polynesia an increase of upwards of five hundred members has been realized; and in general, gratifying success has been afforded in every portion of the work.

The Rev. Walter Lawry has supplied the following condensed report of the Missions in New Zealand:—Scriptural Christianity has taken deep root in the native mind, and is generally received throughout the length and breadth of the land. Very few remain in heathenism; Popery makes no perceptible progress among the natives, as, by God's mercy, the Holy Scriptures were in the hands of the people before the Romish Priests arrived. Almost all the aboriginal families throughout New Zealand read the Scriptures and pray together both morning and evening. As a population they have a high sense of justice, and, generally, they adhere to the truth; this is the more remarkable, as the very opposite was their character before the Missionaries arrived among them. Colonisation has had its influence in New Zealand, secularising the natives in some localities, but happily the evil has not been so great as might have been feared. Among the rising generation there is a great thirst for knowledge—especially religious knowledge—which we are endeavouring to furnish as fast as our means will permit, but the supply is not equal to the demand, although the Governor-in-Chief, Sir George Grey, is most anxious to afford us all the assistance in his power both from his private purse and the Government funds. Our efforts at the Three Kings Institution, where there are about 150 New Zealanders under instruction, have been, so far, most cheering in their results.

From Tonga the Missionaries write: "Our present position is in all respects one of hopefulness." The congregations throughout the Circuit are large, in some instances the Chapels are crowded to excess. Tungi, the principle chief of the heathen at Mus, who was formerly a great obstacle to the progress of religion amongst his countrymen, has recently made a public profession of Christianity accompanied by upwards of a hundred of his people; and the Missionaries add, "with God's blessing heathenism will soon be banished from Tonga." The Native Training Institution has been in full and successful operation. The Schools for adults and children, under the superintendence of Mr. Amon, have greatly increased in efficiency. . . . To education in the district generally, especial attention has been directed; and it is a gratifying fact that the efforts of Missionaries in this department have tended in no small degree to arrest the progress of Popery in this group of Islands. "Popery" writes Mr. Amon from Tonga, "has spent its strength upon us, but its every effort has failed with the natives." "Our School operations," he continues, "seem to have excited the greatest apprehensions of the priests, and they are attempting something in the way of schools themselves."

The state of the Fejee Mission is highly encouraging. The King of Lakemba, has publicly renounced heathenism, and embraced Christianity—an example which has already been followed by several influential chiefs. This event has tended greatly to encourage the brethren in this district, who have been labouring amid many difficulties. The statistics show a net increase of nearly three hundred church members. The religious state of the Societies, is reported as being highly gratifying. . . . In the Lakemba Circuit, Popery has been the chief obstacle to the progress of the Gospel. "The Romish Priests," writes the Missionary, "busy, indefatigable, and bitter enemies of the true Gospel, have caused us much anxiety and trouble; but the Lord

has confounded them, and brought them lower in the estimation of the people than ever."

The Mission at the Cape of Good Hope has sustained a severe loss in the removal by death of the Rev. Thomas L. Hodgson, the General Superintendent of the District.

The Rev. William Moister has been appointed to succeed Mr. Hodgson, and has arrived in his sphere of labour, accompanied by Mr. Thomas, whom the Committee have sent out to reinforce the Damara Missions. The Society at Cape Town says the Official Report, "is in a healthful and cheering condition." Before the breaking out of the Kaffir war a very encouraging state of things prevailed in the Albany and Kaffraria District. Intelligence received up to February 22nd communicates the gratifying information that, though the Kaffir war had extended along the boundaries of the colony, our Missionaries and their families, the people of their charge, and the stations on which they are severally labouring had hitherto remained uninjured. One only of the Stations, Fort Beaufort, had been the actual scene of war; and here, the Missionary had nobly remained at the post of duty; while of the rest, each had furnished a band of Kaffirs and Fingoes, for the defence of the colony, "whose conduct had called forth the public commendation of the Governor, Sir Harry Smith." While cherishing gratitude to Almighty God for the display of his special and protecting goodness extended towards his servants, the Committee earnestly commend these men and their faithful men and their flocks thus exposed to peril; to the prayers and sympathies of all the friends of Christian Missions. It is right to add that while such causes of thankfulness exist in reference to British Kaffraria and other stations on the borders of the colony where the war has actually prevailed, all our important stations beyond the Great Kei River, in "Kaffraria Proper" are wholly uninfluenced by the war.

In the D'Urban Circuit the number of church members has been more than doubled.

There has been a net increase during the year of 450 church members at Sierra Leone, with a similar number now remaining on list for membership. On the 12th of February last, the foundation-stone of a large and handsome place of worship, to be called "Buxton Chapel," was laid, at New Town West, by the Chief Justice of the Colony, the Hon. John Carr. The occasion was one of deep interest, which was evinced by the unusually liberal character of the contributions, exceeding in amount any sum ever collected on a similar occasion in Sierra Leone. The Native Training Institution at King Tom's Point, continues to answer very satisfactorily, the end for which it was established.

In the British West Indies the Missions of the Society still continue to suffer from the influence of commercial depression and other causes. The promised blessing of the Great Head of the Church, accompanies the faithful preaching of the Gospel, and many are brought to a saving knowledge of the truth; but, the Committee add with deep regret, the aggregate number of accredited church members continues to decline. Jamaica has this year experienced the dreadful ravages of the Asiatic Cholera. The Committee are thankful to be able to state that our beloved Missionaries with their families have been preserved in safety during the afflictive visitation, although, in consequence of their faithful and unwearied pastoral attentions to the sick and dying, they were peculiarly exposed to danger; but the Committee have to report with mournful feelings that at least 1,800 of our people have been cut off by the fearful disease. It is matter of great thankfulness that the sanctified effects of this awful visitation are already beginning to appear. A gracious influence rests very extensively upon the minds of the people; and no fewer than 3,000 persons have been received as candidates for membership at our several stations in the island. The Committee affectionately commend the Jamaica Missions to the especial sympathy and prayers of the friends of the Society.

The state of the Missions in the various districts of British North America is of a very gratifying character. The field of labour is extensive. The number of Missionaries and Assistant Missionaries amounts to 113. With these Pastors and Teachers of the Word, there are associated 42 Catechists and salaried Instructors, exclusive of 1,878 unpaid agents. The success with which these efforts for the benefit of the Indians and Colonists have been crowned may be read in the cheering facts that 21,427 persons are united in religious fellowship—that the aggregate number of regular hearers of the Word is not less than 105,000, many of whom reside in remote settlements, visited by no other preachers of the Word of Life than the Missionaries of this Society,—and that the Day and Sunday-schools are attended by no fewer than thirteen thousand children of both sexes, who are instructed in these seminaries in the way of truth and righteousness. The most interesting department of this service is that in which are included the aboriginal tribes belonging to Canada West and the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company, because there is to be found that class of our fellow creatures which has the strongest claims upon our Christian sympathies, as well as our Christian exertions; and who present, in the new and happy condition into which the Gospel has instrumentally introduced them, clear and resistless evidence of the fitness, power, and utility of the Missionary enterprise in purifying and elevating individual character, in promoting the civilisation of entire communities, and in raising up well qualified native agents for its wider diffusion amongst that too long neglected and injured race, one of whom is now on this platform.

The Report, in conclusion, adverted to three aspects in which the Missions might be viewed,—namely, in regard to Heathenism, in regard to Popery, and in regard to the Church at home. As to Popery, it was observed—

"When the Missions are viewed in regard to Popery it appears evident that there remains a great spiritual interference to be looked for. When Moses and Aaron had produced before Pharaoh the divinely appointed testimony to their mission, 'then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; now the magicians of Egypt they did in like manner with their enchantments.' It is thus that Popery confronts the Missions of this Society, and of other kindred Protestant Societies, in almost every quarter of the globe. The Romish Missionaries have laboured for more than two hundred years on all the continents and many of the islands of the world. China and Japan, India, Tartary, and North and South America, have witnessed their gigantic efforts—their self-denying labours. And in what respect have these several countries been benefited by them? Has the cause of truth, or the salvation of souls, been in any degree advanced by the teachings of Rome, accompanied, as they have been, by idolatrous practices, cruel dominion, and a rejection of the Word of God? Not daunted by past failures, the Church of Rome is meeting us on every part of the Mission field;—not only in the well known regions of Asia and Asia and America, but also in the remoter islands of the Pacific. In all these 'utmost parts of the earth' which are as a battle-field, not yet wholly won to Christ, the Missionaries may say, 'Moreover we saw the children of Anak there;—the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.' The only sufficient antagonist to popery is the word of God, accompanied by the living power of the Holy Spirit. In these days, and on the Mission field itself, is 'that wicked revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.' The preaching of the Word of God, and the accompanying power of the Holy Ghost, are the means by which the world is to be saved, and present the only effectual resistance to the empire of the Man of Sin.

Mr. J. P. PLUMPTRE, M. P., said—Mr. Farmer and Christian friends, I can assure you it is with great satisfaction that I have the opportunity of being with you on the

present occasion; and though I am sorry to say I shall be obliged very shortly to leave the meeting, yet I am happy to have, through the kindness of the Committee, the privilege of taking an early part in the business of the day. I have listened to the details of your report with very great satisfaction. While it was being read I was most forcibly struck with this fact—that you seem, in your missionary labours, to be honouring the great and gracious Master whom you desire to serve, (hear, hear,) for you say that you are in the habit of expending £100,000 a year, not knowing from whence that sum was to be made up. You trust in the grace and the faithfulness of the Lord your Saviour, (hear, hear,) and he has never been found wanting to those who trust in him. (Hear, hear.) You may depend on this, my Christian friends,—that while your object is to obey his command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," you have full reason to trust in his promise, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world." We, as far as we may be acquainted with Christian experience in our own walk, and life, and conversation, may be sometimes brought into conversation, may be sometimes brought to a stand on different points; we may be driven—I know we are driven—again and again; to walk by faith, and not by sight; we are driven again and again to say, in the language of an old and beautiful hymn—

"I know not what may soon betide,
Or how my wants may be supplied,
But Jesus knows, and will provide."

(Hear, hear.) It is, I think, in such a spirit as this that you seem to be carrying on your missionary operations, depending upon the grace and faithfulness of your Lord and Master to be with you in your labours, to supply your wants, to give grace to the word spoken by your missionaries, and so to give us the opportunity of hearing—as we have heard with the highest pleasure this day—that the labour of your agents is not in vain in the Lord. (Hear, hear.) There was another point in the report which afforded me much gratification. It was the statement that, in New Zealand, I think, you found Popery was making little or no progress. If we ask the reason why, you furnish that reason, for you say it is because the Scriptures are in the hands of the people. ("Hear," and cheer.) Yes, my Christian friends, that is the way—the only effectual way—the only sure way, in which to meet Popery. (Hear, hear.) You desire to exalt the only Saviour. That is the weapon with which to meet Popery. (Hear, hear.) Exalt the Saviour; let Jesus be known in his glorious person as perfect God and perfect man; let Jesus be preached in his finished and accepted work, in his ever enduring and ever availing intercession; let Jesus be preached in his holy, lowly, meek, and bright example; let, I say, the Saviour be exalted, and then what need have we of transubstantiation, (hear, hear,) of penances, of purgatory, of masses for the dead, or of the invocation of saints and angels? (Hear, hear.) No, my Christian friends, we have in our exalted Lord and Master, our common Saviour Jesus Christ, all that the sinner wants for his soul's health, and peace and salvation; (hear, hear,) and while we are preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, and bringing the Word of God to bear upon Popery among the heathen, oh that we may do the same more and more, in those days of rebuke and blasphemy, among ourselves! (General cries of "hear, hear," and applause.) This is the way most effectually to meet Popery, which is now making so bold an aggression among us; and I trust that all of us, my dear Christian friends, who have learned Christ, and who value the great and blessed salvation that is by him—though we may not perhaps just see eye to eye in some small matters as to church views and church discipline—by cleaving to this one common Saviour may give, as we ought to do, a contradiction to the errors of Popery. (Hear, hear.) I trust, my dear friends, that the spirit, and language, and conduct we shall exhibit among ourselves and towards all around us, will be marked by the spirit of "peace on earth, and good will towards men;" "grace and peace to all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;" "good will towards men," towards all men; yea,

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