

Better, infinitely better fall the victim of heathen rage, than that our missionaries should be connoisseurs in the science of taking life!

But the Bishop of Labuan, though the most notorious has not been the only transgressor. It will be remembered that two or three years ago the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge led the van in forming a powerful society for missionary operations in Africa. Dr Livingstone gave the movement his full and earnest co-operation. A complete staff of Bishops, archdeacons, priests, deacons, was sent out wholesale. All was to be done on the soundest "muscular" principles. The sad sequel is that this mission, undertaken under auspices so distinguished, and supported with unbounded liberality, has come utterly to nought. The story of the fall of this Mission is one of the saddest and most instructive on record. Everything was planned on the principles of human wisdom. Extraordinary success was expected. Contempt (not tacit merely) was thrown on the old fashioned modes of extending Christianity and a new and startling chapter was to be added to the history of the church. It appears, however, that the event proves the force of the apostolic statement: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Bishops and clergymen have here again used their rifles; and have fallen victims to the malarious swamps of the Zambesi—the region where a nation was to be converted and whence cotton, sugar and indigo raised by the converts were to be exported. Dr Livingstone too, has involved himself in most serious difficulties, imperilling the world wide reputation already attained. The Mission, which was inaugurated with so much pomp and of which so much was expected, has not as yet a "local habitation" on the face of earth. The tens of thousands of pounds expended upon it have secured nothing but disappointment and disgrace.

The lesson of the whole proceeding is that in the work of God we must use the means he has ordained. The world is to be converted by the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and not by any wild and Quixotic

attempts at introducing a perfect civilization in advance of the Gospel. "Muscular" christianity has proved its own weakness in the face of the world. What it has failed to do in Africa it must also fail to do in England. We must be content after all with the plain old Gospel in its sublime simplicity: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." And this message whether addressed to savages or to civilized men is the power of God unto salvation.

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### SUFFERING FOR CHRIST

Not in heathen lands alone are men called upon to venture all, to risk life itself for Christ. In nominally Christian countries the cross must still be borne, fiery persecution must be endured. At a recent meeting of the Scottish Reformation Society, Edinburgh, a resolution of sympathy with Spanish sufferers was adopted and Dr Wylie said:—

About three months ago, two citizens of Spain appeared before the tribunal of Granada, charged with a certain offence. Their names were Matamoros and Alhama; and the offence of which they were accused being found proven, indeed, being confessed by them, they were sentenced—the former to eight years' and the latter to nine years' imprisonment. In Spain this sentence is equivalent well nigh to death, for it will not be endured within the walls of a prison, but in the galleys. Only the more robust, and let me add, those equally callous to moral as to physical suffering, could survive nine years' penal servitude in Spain. Their daily task must be performed under a burning sun. To the rigor of the sun is to be added the weight of their chains. To their chains is to be added their enforced companionship with the refuse of the most sunken population of the most sunken country in Europe,—with murderers, robbers, and desperadoes of every class, who will regard themselves as less vile than the heretics Alhama and Matamoros. What crime, we may well ask, has brought down on these men so awful a doom in a country like Spain,—a country in which laws are enacted but no one obeys them,—in which proclamations are issued but no one heeds them,—in which crimes are done, but no one is punished for them;—a country in which a little gold will buy pardon for the greatest crime, and escape from the deepest dungeon? What unheard of crime has brought