

missions; the heathen are happy enough as they are, and as they will be judged by the light they have, you only increase their responsibility by taking the Gospel to them." Here we have a string of excuses, but they are closely related, and may be answered together. The man who does not believe in missions to the heathen should ask himself why. Paul believed in them, so did Paul's Master, and so should you. If you were not a Christian, one could understand it, but to call yourself a follower of the Saviour, and yet refuse point blank to do as he bids you, is strange, indeed. May it not be that the mistake is with you, and not with the Master? If you loved Him you would obey Him, and it will be a terrible thing at the last to find that your religious profession has been a delusion or a sham. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," said the Master, and there is no command plainer than that which bids you preach the Gospel to every creature. When He comes again it will be a sad thing to be found among those "who don't believe in missions to the heathen."

And if you are of those who think the heathen are happy enough as they are, and that we would only increase their responsibility by sending them the Gospel, suppose you put the matter in a clearer light by considering how you would like to exchange places with a heathen, especially with one belonging to some barbarous tribe. How would you like to live where there is neither law nor order, where human life has no sacredness, and property no rights; where might makes right, and the weakest must ever go to the wall; where womanhood is utterly degraded and dishonored, and childhood has no protection; where education is unknown and the mind becomes corrupt like a stagnant pool, in which slimy reptiles crawl and breed; where vice is fostered, and virtue is unknown; where religion, if the term may be used in such a connection, is only a degrading superstition, without guidance for this world or hope for the next? In a word, how would it suit you to have your lot where life's ills must be endured without comfort, and where death is but a leap into outer darkness? Until you have settled this question, never say again that the heathen are happy enough as they are.

Then, how about increasing the responsibility of the heathen by sending them the Gospel? Is that a fair way of putting the question? Doesn't it seem to imply that you know better what ought to be done than the Master did, or that you are more merciful than he? It is all very well to say that the heathen who follow the light they have will be saved, and if you mean that "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him," I have no objection to offer; but the number in any heathen nation who either fear God or work righteousness is so infinitesimally small that it does not touch the question concerning the great mass. Then, how about those who have no light, which is true of most, if not all of the heathen? Must they continue to sit in darkness and the shadow of death because, forsooth, you "don't believe in missions to the heathen?" Or if it be assumed (which is more than

the truth) that all the heathen have some degree of light, is that a sufficient reason why they should not have more? If a man is stumbling about in a gloomy cave, where a bottomless pit yawns at his feet, with only a glimmering rush-light to guide him, can one do better than lead him out into the glorious sunlight?

Nor is this the only thing to be considered. It is not alone the question, Can the heathen be saved without the Gospel? but can we ourselves be saved if we do not send it to them? Let men dispute as they will, there is, after all, but one way from earth to heaven.

"Is there no guide to point the path?

The Bible—he alone who hath

The Bible need not stray;

But he who hath and will not give

That light of life to all who live,

Himself shall lose the way."

A Useful Convention.

THE third annual Conference of secretaries and other representatives of the various Mission Boards was held in New York on the 14th ult., and was in all respects a pleasant and profitable gathering. Some fifteen or sixteen of the principal Boards were represented, and the proceedings throughout were most harmonious. The first day's session was held in the Protestant Episcopal Mission Rooms, under the presidency of the Rev. A. C. Thompson, of the Presbyterian Church. Papers were read, with discussions following, on: "(1) The Japan-China War: Its Strategic Significance to Missions," opened by Rev. Judson Smith, D.D., of the American Board. (2) "The Proposed National Church in India: What Should be the Attitude of our Mission Boards Toward It," opened by Hamilton Cassels, Esq., of the Canada Presbyterian Board. (3) "Motive in Foreign Missions: Where Should Emphasis be Placed in our Present-day Advocacy?" In the absence of Rev. Dr. Bell, of the United Brethren in Christ, the last topic took a conversational form, opened by the Secretary of the Canada Methodist Board. On the second day a private session was held in the Mission Rooms of the Presbyterian Board on Fifth Avenue, when an interesting discussion took place in regard to recent criticisms of missionary methods and the best way of meeting them. There was also a report from a committee appointed a year ago, on the subject of "Self-support on the Foreign Field," from which it would appear that many of the societies have yet much to learn in regard to this important matter. When the printed report of the late Conference is ready, we will refer at greater length to some of the topics discussed.

DR. W. R. LAMBUTH tells of a missionary in Japan who was led to give up the use of tobacco. His young native servant, months before, picked up a discarded cigar stub that the missionary had thrown down, and then commenced to pray daily that the missionary might abandon the habit. The young convert wrapped a new piece of paper about the old stub once every day to signify a new prayer, and when the missionary had stopped his smoking the convert brought to him the wrappings and the stub.