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The Great Missionary Failure.

SUCH is the title of an essay in *The Fortnightly Review*, for October last, by Rev Canon Taylor, minister of an important charge in Yorkshire, England. This article has called forth, as it could not fail to do, a good deal of comment and criticism. If Canon Taylor is correct in his figures and reasonings, many who have been advocating the cause of Foreign Missions are wrong. If it can be demonstrated with the certainty of a mathematical problem that Christianity is *never* to supplant paganism and infidelity, but, on the contrary, that those systems are ultimately to prevail, even to the downfall of Christianity, (for the Canon's logic is worth nothing if it does not lead to that conclusion) then, the sooner the hopeless enterprize is abandoned the better.

We are not setting up a man of straw for the purpose of knocking it down. In this essay, we are confronted with a mass of figures, carefully selected and skilfully arranged, and we have to face objections to missionary methods, in themselves weighty and worthy of consideration. Canon Taylor appears to be thoroughly conversant with the missionary operations of at least a section of his own church, and it is important to notice that his remarks apply almost

exclusively to the missions of that admirable institution—its *Church Missionary Society*, upon whom, it may be thought by some, that the sole responsibility rests of replying to his scathing animadversions. But Presbyterians also believe in “The Holy Ghost; The Holy Catholic Church; and the Communion of Saints.” Further, they believe that “whether one member of Christ's Body suffer, all the members suffer with it,” therefore they cannot be disinterested spectators in a controversy of this kind. It touches them on a very sensitive point.

Now what are Canon Taylor's premises? First, and chiefly,—that Heathenism is increasing at a much greater ratio than Christianity in missionary lands. He says:

“Dr. Maclear, the principal of a Training College for missionaries, who is perhaps the greatest living authority on the subject, estimates the annual increase of Christians due to missionary efforts at 60,000. If his estimate is approximately correct, it would take the societies,” (meaning all the missionary societies in the world), 183 years to overtake the increase of the non-Christian population in a single year. For every additional Christian we have every year 183 additional heathens or Moslems. In spite of all the efforts that are made, there are upwards of 10 millions more Heathens and Mohammedans in the world than there were a year ago.”

Going somewhat minutely into the official statistics of the Church Missionary Society, he says that it would take that