

"People often ask in a light way—what is the good of Foreign Missions? To the careless observer and to the carping spirit there may seem very little result, but without doubt every uneducated heathen child taken and educated in the Christian faith, if he be not entirely of a worthless character, has been raised many steps above his heathen neighbour. He may not be all you hoped of him, nor all that he ought to be, yet he has been lifted up higher. We generally expect too much from our converts, forgetting what fallen human nature is; but the seed sown in faith and earnestness will, in some way or another, spring up and show itself. As I go up and down these northern rivers I come across some old pupil or a convert of former missionaries; one feels that he or she is a spark of light in the darkness. This experience, more than anything else, nerves one to the work, and to go on sowing the seed through so much disappointment and trouble.

Now let us hear the opinion of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, late Lieut. Governor of Bengal, a province containing over 75,000,000 inhabitants:—

"I should like to say a word in passing in favour of the native Christian—not as he presents himself in the shape of a drunken Madras servant to the young military officer, but as *I have known him in the ranks of the Administration and among his own community*. His simple faith and devoted life might put to shame many of our professing Christians at times. The Mutiny proved their staunchness, and to know them well is to love them much."

Finally, here is the testimony of Mr. F. T. Bullen, the author of the famous book "The Cruise of the 'Cachalot.'":

"In consequence of the labours of the missionaries, the whole vile character of the populations of the Pacific has been changed, and where wickedness runs riot to-day, it is due largely to the hindrances placed in the way of the noble efforts of the missionaries by the unmitigated scoundrels who vilify them. The task of spreading Christianity would not, after all, be so difficult, were it not for the efforts of those apostles of the devil to keep the islands as they would like them to be—places where lust runs riot day and night, murder may be done with impunity, slavery flourishes, and all evil may be indulged in free from law, order, or restraint. It speaks volumes for the inherent might of the Gospel that, in spite of the object-lessons continually provided for the natives by white men, of the negation of all good, it has stricken its roots so deeply into the soil of the Pacific islands."

A Secret of Success.

The Bishop of Winchester lately closed a speech on behalf of S.P.G. missions as follows: The secret of our success, not next year only, but all the years, is to in-

terest those who do not at present care, and to deepen the interest of us who do know and care about the matter already. In a prosaic way we ask, "How is that going to be done?" There is no good disguising the fact that missionary reports, as reading, are, to most people, very dull. It is not the fault of the reports or of their compilers. It is simply the fault of ourselves for going to work in the wrong way. There are, I doubt not, in this hall to-night a good many people who are accustomed to teach history to boys and girls. Would they ever expect to interest them in that study if they confined themselves to, or even if they rested much at all on, bare summaries and statistics and figures and the like? What we are bound to do, and what every teacher worthy of the name does, is to set the interest of those whom he teaches aglow around some particular spot and then expand and build on that. In no department of our life is it more possible to do that than in what concerns our mission work beyond the seas. But we must get at it in the right way, and it seems to me that, for most people, we ought to be getting at it through the lives of individual men. Which of us knew or cared very much about India and its life until we had read the life of some great Indian statesman—Lord Lawrence, for example—or the like, and were brought face to face by that means with the actual problems that have got to be solved, and with the means and ways of solving them? I believe, for myself, that it was not till one had got at it in that sort of way that one began to care at all for the cause which grows in interest the more we look into it. That help for our work in the mission-field is at hand in a way that it is hardly to hand in any other department of our national life. Leaving India alone for the moment, for the lives about that are well known to most of us, and could be numbered by scores, suppose a man to want to care or to want to get somebody else to care about our Melanesian work, what but the life of Bishop Patteson would set his heart aglow—a book, especially when the bishop himself speaks, as sparkling with humour as it is inspiring to the soul? Or let the man who desires to care or to get others to care about East Africa turn to either of two books—perhaps there are very many—each of which seem to me to speak in a way that we could not throw aside even if we would. One is the life of Bishop Steere, which shows the perseverance, the resource, and the ingenuity which make missionary life and mission stories have a separate and new meaning for us all. On the other side there is the book which shows the buoyant enthusiasm of so different a man as Bishop Hannington. Let us take books like those and build round them, or rather round what we have learned to think out from them, and we shall cease to find a report about the regions dealt with in those books dull. Or take one other example—that strange problem

in the world's life, unknown, I suppose, to Christendom before—the picture of what we may call a grown-up nation in full intellectual power looking for a creed—the empire of Japan. During the last few weeks the life of Bishop Edward Bickersteth, telling first of India and then of Japan, has been given to the world, and I will undertake to say that it will introduce a whole score of interesting problems, interesting not merely from the religious standpoint, but as part of the world's history, and as problems that are not yet solved, and in the solving of which we are to help. It brings those things home in the sort of way that makes it worth while for anybody who cares about the thing to turn to it. It is in that sort of way, when we are trying to advise those who have not begun to care about the matter at all, that we can make enthusiasm begin to sprout and bud till it blossoms and bears fruit in the action which in the long run is to tell. These stories, the lives of these men, will bring home to us, in a way that we cannot forget, how the Gospel of the living Christ, which has made our country and our homes what they are, can be made to tell, and is being made to tell, on men and things so different from us. That sort of reading will send us back, with new thoughts, to our resolves and, above all, to our prayers. It will nerve us to make the hope come true that long before another century has darkened to its close the radiant banner of the Cross shall be a centre for strength and courage to the thousands, nay the millions, who are in darkness now.

Lord Stanmore, at Exeter Hall, said he knew something of the American backwoods. The case was worse in Australia, for there the people went into the backwoods and settled, and, perhaps, they never again saw a clergyman of any sort. The first generation of these settlers would mourn this state of things; but there would come a second generation, whose only knowledge of religious subjects would be a faint and fading recollection of what their mothers had taught them; and the children of the third generation were too often, he feared, brought up to be absolute heathens.

The Bishop of Pretoria and the Boers.

An occasional correspondent of the *Times*, writing of the exodus from Pretoria before the Boer declaration of war, describes amongst other scenes the compulsory flight of Bishop Bousfield from the Boer capital:

"One case, perhaps, may be worth special notice, having more than a private interest attaching to it, as an illustration of the tactics adopted. The Bishop of Pretoria had lived there these twenty years, an old man, his life spent in his work, taking no part in politics, never publicly disparaging them if strong in