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CHRISTIAN MISSIONS, THE PECULIAR ENTERPRISE OF GOD.

BY THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

Every scheme bears the impress of its origin, its originator, and is often known historically by its connection with its founder, taking its name from him. The enterprises of man have been innumerable ; their name is Legion. Some of them have been as transient and evanescent as the path of a comet across the sky ; others have lived for a few years, and then lost their hold upon human sympathy and support, while a few yet live and thrive and command cooperation. But of all human plans and schemes, the one fatal defect is, they are *human* ; they have no authority beyond their inherent worth, no recommendation beyond their expediency, and no vindication but their success. Their right of continuance is found in their obvious results. The one question with regard to each is utility : does this pay ? And, being human, they are subject, like all else that is earth-born, to modification, if not abolition. It is a question of evolution toward perfection and survival of the fittest, and men do not hesitate to alter and amend, to reform and remodel, whatever man has projected and originated. What man has invented man may improve.

There is just one enterprise that originated solely with God. From beginning to end it is His scheme. It was formed in His own purpose, and is to be carried on in His own way, under His instructions, and for His glory. No man knew the mind of the Lord, or being His counsellor taught him, or even had part in His original councils on this matter. God perfected the plan and then simply revealed it, and invited or enjoined believing disciples to take part in it as a Divine enterprise. Hence its authority is unique, the authority of an imperial command ; its recommendation is found, not in its obvious expediency but in its majestic authorship and leadership ; and its vindication is not dependent simply upon its apparent success. It is not a question of utility, measured by man's standards ; and to ask, ' Does this pay ? ' is irreverent and impertinent. This one Divine enterprise is *missions*—bearing the Gospel to a lost race.