

that the suggestion is a sound one, I hope you will elaborate it, and press it on the consideration of the whole church.

We want not *centralization*, but *diffusion*, in the working out of the science of missions.

Yours faithfully,

J. V. WHITE MILLAR.

United States.

WHAT IS IT TO EVANGELIZE A PEOPLE?

Minneapolis, Feb. 22, 1890.

DEAR EDITORS—Allow me to call attention to what seems to be a misconception in Rev. J. Hudson Taylor's article, "To Every Creature," which appeared in the February number of the *Missionary Review*. Mr. Taylor shows how one thousand evangelists, preaching to an average of fifty families a day, could in three years' time reach every creature in China. But to any one who is at all acquainted with the practical work of preaching the gospel in a heathen land, the question at once occurs: "What is meant by 'reaching every creature'?" Is it to tell over to them, one group after another, the gospel story, regardless of whether they understand it and take it into their minds or not; and when you have finished with one group, pass on to the next, and say that the work is done? This method has been tried in some cases, and if this is all that is meant, it might, perhaps, be admitted that Mr. Taylor's proposition is not quite beyond the bounds of possibility. But is this what our Saviour meant when he commanded us to preach the gospel to every creature? Or did he not rather mean that we should give to men a sufficiently intelligible idea of the way of salvation through Him, to enable them to believe on Him as their Saviour? If this latter be true, as I think no one who reflects for a moment will hesitate to admit, then Mr. Taylor's plan would hardly do.

We must remember that we are preaching to heathen audiences. Most of them have, to

put it mildly, a dislike for foreigners. Perhaps not one in a hundred of them, through the interior, has ever seen a foreigner. If our prejudices allow them to listen at all to our message, it is, at the best, with a divided attention. A missionary may be congratulating himself on the close attention of his audience, only to find before he gets through, from some remark or other, that the attention was given to some peculiarity of his personal appearance or of his speech, rather than to the truth that he was uttering. Again, these people have never heard one word of this gospel. In how many cases could you expect, in one hour's time, a longer average than Mr. Taylor's plan would allow—to get them to grasp enough of the truth to become believers in Christ? Is not the history of all mission work, especially in its earlier stages, a sufficient answer to this question?

A clearer conception, as I think, of what it is to evangelize a people, is presented in the enclosed article from the *Standard of January 23* (published in Chicago), an article written by one who has been a missionary to the Chinese for nearly forty years.*

I have felt the more impelled to write, because, as I most gladly acknowledge, Mr. Taylor has been honored of God in accomplishing much in the work of the gospel in China. What he writes is widely read and carries great weight. The more reason then to guard against misconception in a matter of so great importance.

In closing, let me say that I greatly enjoy the *Missionary Review*, which is doing such good service in extending and deepening the interest in the supremely important work of world-wide evangelization.

Sincerely yours,

Wm. Aspinwall, Jr.

* This article is too long to quote here. It treats the subject with firmness and discrimination. Possibly we may find space for it in a future number.—Eds.

IV.—INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

CONDUCTED BY REV. J. T. GRACEY, D.D.

Missionary Comity.*

BY BISHOP J. M. THOBURN, D.D., BOMBAY, INDIA.

That it is desirable to maintain friendly and fraternal relations among missionaries of all churches and societies, will be conceded by every one. That unfortunate differences sometimes arise in the mission field, will

also have to be conceded, and if anything can be done to lessen these differences, and to promote fraternal good feeling, and as far as possible, fraternal co-operation, by all means let it be tried. But we must not forget, what most persons who discuss this subject do seem to forget, that the questions involved are by no means new, and that a general line of policy has been followed in all the great mission fields of the world, without, however, securing the era of fraternal harmony which many think possible, if not absolutely necessary to success. At rare intervals a new proposal may have been made, but in the main the discussion is car-

* This article was prepared by request of the Calcutta Missionary Conference, but was not read owing to a postponement of the time appointed. In the meantime, the manuscript had been promised for publication, and mention of the fact having been widely made in the papers and many inquiries having been made about it, the writer has not felt at liberty to withhold it longer from the public. J. M. T.