

Fifteen years since, the word Presbyterian had by tens of thousands in Connaught never been heard; even among the educated, names familiar as household words even on the other side of the globe, were wholly unknown. The famine brought us into notice by the largeness of our benevolent agency, our industrial scriptural schools for females taught many a poor girl, and many a poor girl's parents who the kind people were that filled their hands with work, their houses with plenty, and their hearts with love for the Bible and the Bible's God. Since then our missionary work has gradually enlarged; our missionaries and colporteurs have taken a wider range; our schoolmaster has been abroad, the landlord has found his rents better paid, the police have found less, and the priests more to do; trained pupils from our schools, and converts from our churches, becoming prosperous honoured members of Protestant churches in distant lands, have become heralds of our fame; and thus marching on with steady step, we have possessed the whole land, so that we have our churches, schools, and agencies in every county of the province. We have the humblest and the highest on our stipend rolls; and in this present month of July, one of our most distinguished elders will have, like the worthy Presbyterian Mayor of Belfast, the honour of laying the foundation stones of two Presbyterian Churches in one day, these churches in the capital towns of two principal counties in Ireland's most interesting, yet most intensely Popish province.

PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN CHINA.

The British Plenipotentiary in China, Sir F. Bruce, has lately written a remarkable letter to Earl Russell, in which he sets forth certain principles as to the best way of conducting missions in China, and asserts that "experience has clearly proved the failure of Protestant missionary enterprise as at present conducted," and that "the testimony of missionaries is unanimous that the Chinese are not prepared to make sacrifices for their religious convictions, though the descendants of Christians do adhere with considerable pertinacity to a hereditary faith." This letter, the views set forth in which we are sorry to observe have been approved by Earl Russell on the part of the Government, has called forth several rejoinders from missionaries, and others familiar with missionary progress in China. Mr. D. Matheson, in a communication which appears in the *English Presbyterian Messenger* effectually exposes the erroneous views of Sir F. Bruce, and proves that the results of Christian missions show anything but failure. He says:—

Let me mention a few facts. In 1837, not thirty years ago, China had not emerged from its old state of seclusion, and two or three native Christians were all that could be counted. In the following year commenced the breaking up of Chinese exclusiveness, which has been going forward ever since. Foreign wars and internal revolution have shaken the empire to its foundation, but along with the storm, and earthquake, and fire of political disturbance, has come the still small voice of the Gospel. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and in China it seemed to have remained unnoticed by those in authority; but, nevertheless, the native Protestant Christians now number, I believe, not less than 1,500, and these not in one locality, but forming centres of light along the coast of that great empire. But can these Christians hold their ground independently of Saxon character? Will they make any sacrifices for the Gospel's sake? Yes, as certainly as the Gospel is not of Saxon, but of Divine origin. In Hong Kong where the scum of Chinese society used to reside, the Bishop of Victoria can testify to a goodly number of converts. I observe that twenty-one Chinese were baptised there during nine months of 1861-62, Dr. Legge of the London Missionary Society, has a native church superintended by himself and one or more native pastors, and the Basle Missionary Society have sixty-four members there.