

our own hearts and in our own little town or county! These are the burning, living questions that will meet us at the judgment. Better never had "the faith" than to have it and not use it to the salvation of the world. To be "sound in the faith" is of no avail unless we are sound with it.

The Apostle Paul at the close of his life said, "He had kept the faith." His whole Christian life will teach us how he kept it. He did not keep it in his home at Tarsus, but we find him keeping it by letting it shine out in his faithful labors at Jerusalem, and Antioch, and Ephesus, and also in his missionary journey in Asia Minor, and in his introduction of the gospel into Europe. This shows us plainly what Paul meant by keeping the faith. We see after he introduced "the faith," or the gospel, to the Thessalonians, they followed the same line of work, and also "kept the faith." He taught his brethren the same kind of faith. "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad." 1 Thess. i. 8.

Here was a true church, a sound primitive Apostolic Church, one that increased and improved what God committed to them by using it to the advancement of His cause in every place. The demand of the church, the demand of human hearts and the imperative command of God are all calling loudly for the reproduction of just such primitive faith and apostolic Christianity. Will the Disciples of Christ, whose plea is the acceptance of the faith and practice of primitive days, prove their faith by their works, or will they rest satisfied in keeping "the faith" hid within their own locality. Any faith that will not seek to establish its claims, as far as possible, in other hearts and other places, is not the faith of the gospel. The faith once delivered to the saints is a faith that leads its subjects to sound out the word of the Lord in the highways and hedges of life. This faith cannot be kept within us without our ruin. The new wine of truth is diffusive in its nature, and cannot be kept within old bottles without utter destruction to the bottles. He who possesses the truth and does not advance it, will meet the same end as the one talent servant. "Take the talent from him and cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." To suppose a church can be sound in "the faith" or primitive in its practice, whose work of faith and labor of love is not felt, or known outside of its own country, is to transcend the bounds of all reason.

Another noticeable feature of the one talent servant, was his attempt to mitigate his own failure by the faults of another. He knew his Lord was a hard Master. How natural this is for the guilty heart to find fault with somebody else. You will notice when a person is not giving his money to help advance the cause of God he is finding fault with others because their way of giving is wrong or unscriptural. You will find, as a rule, that the fault-finders and heresy hunters are those who are the most deficient in the acting duties of church life. If a brother is not active in the Sunday-school work, you will notice that he has objections to the way the Sunday-school is conducted. If a good sister is not active in the prayer-meeting, she will find that it is unscriptural for women to speak in church. When a brother does not work in the mission cause he will have objections to the mission work, the unscriptural way it is carried on, or some objections of like nature. This is why the objector has so little influence with his objections; because his objections are not to show the better way, but to cover his own mistakes. The Master made it very plain, that the servant's objections were too thin to cover his failures. We are not to give an account how the other servant improved his talents, but what we have done with our talent. If we don't use it we lose it, and also lose our own life.

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### MISSION TOPICS.

BY M. B. RYAN.

NO. 1.

The nineteenth century has frequently, and justly, been called a century of missions. The rapidly multiplying agencies for the conversion of heathen nations to the religion of Christ, date their inception from near the beginning of this century. It has passed into a standing expression in missionary circles, that less than a century ago England sent a cobbler to convert the world. That cobbler was William Carey, who led the way in the formation of the Pioneer Baptist Society, one of the oldest missionary societies in Great Britain. In 1810, Adoniram Judson and three other students at Andover, petitioned the General Association of the Congregational Church in Massachusetts, to give them counsel in their desire to undertake a mission to the heathen world. Their petition resulted in the formation of the American Board of Commissioners for foreign missions, the first society formed in America for the conversion of the heathen in foreign lands. Mr. Judson was sent by this society as a missionary to Burmah. On his way thither, he was led to investigate the subject of baptism, and decided to be immersed and unite with the Baptist denomination. He wrote home to America of the change in his views, resigned his position as the representative of the Congregational Church, and said, "Should there be formed a Baptist society for the support of missions in these parts, I should be ready to consider myself their missionary." This announcement led to the formation of the first Baptist Missionary Society in America. From those beginnings, about three-quarters of a century ago, have grown up the various agencies by which nearly every religious body in America is represented in gospel work on heathen soil. In this "century of missions," great things have been accomplished by the combined forces at work. 3,000 ordained missionaries, 730 laymen, and 2,500 women have been sent out by the Protestant Churches of Britain, America, and the continent of Europe, into all parts of the heathen and Mohammedan world. Nearly 3,000,000 souls converted from heathenism, now rejoice in hope of eternal life. 2,500 of these converts have been ordained as ministers of the gospel and placed in charge of Christian congregations; 27,000 are employed as evangelists to their heathen fellow-countrymen; and the children of all these, and of many who are yet in heathenism, have been gathered into schools and given both secular and religious instruction. The Bible has been translated into more than 200 languages; and religious tracts and books have also been printed in these languages. These are some of the things accomplished. Perhaps the greatest work is one which cannot be represented by figures. The creation of a missionary spirit among Christians; the development of Christ-like heroism in missionaries; to be left as a priceless heritage to the church. "The influence of the teaching and life of Christian missionaries on heathen populations; the establishment of peaceful government among savage and cannibal tribes, whose lives were misery and whose work was war; the spread of commerce; the promotion of industry; the creation of written languages; the abolition of cruel rites and religious crimes amongst those who still remain heathen, and the diffusion of new aspirations and hopes amongst thousands who are still strangers to the higher blessings of the spiritual life;" these are some of the unrecorded results of the careers of modern missions.

There is very much that is extremely encouraging in this foreign mission work. When compared with Christian work in what are termed Christian lands, we are almost startled by the significant fact that the comparative success of the work is far greater among the heathen abroad than among the

"heathen at home." It is stated that the rate of increase in the membership of Christian churches is nearly, or quite, ten times as great among the heathen as it is in Christian lands; while the average expense of converting men is wonderfully less. The average expenditure per convert in heathen lands is \$80; in our own country it is \$630. Then, the converts from heathenism are more devoted Christians, as a rule, than those in Christian lands. They are willing to sacrifice more for the Lord's work. They pay more on an average, and far more according to their ability, than Christians at home do. "Six native Christian living on the banks of the Euphrates, whose property averaged perhaps \$800, gave towards their chapel and school-room three hundred and eighty dollars, an average of more than fifty dollars each." The missionary tells us that this contribution meant, for one of those poor men, more than one thousand days work. Twelve hundred church members in Egypt, most of them poor, gave an average of more than \$17 per year for churches and schools. In the ten years from 1870 to 1880, the members of the Evangelical Protestant churches in the United States, gave an average of fifty-five cents each for missions, home and foreign.

But there are hardships and obstacles in connection with this work. We have never felt them, because we have never been missionaries to the heathen. It is only by the close study of the experiences of those who go to the front against darkness and sin that we can realize them, even faintly. The work of a missionary to the heathen demands that he leave home and friends and go to a strange land, and among a strange people. How hard this is, only those whose hearts have bled from severed ties can tell. Then, the influence of a deadly climate must often be recounted, undermining the health, laying the foundation of fatal maladies, and frequently inducing sudden and untimely death. It is heartrending to think of the consequences which this one cause alone entails on missionaries. Who can read the life of Adoniram Judson without being moved with mighty emotion as he thinks of the havoc made in his domestic circle by the ravages of an Indian climate. One loved form after another, dearer to him, if possible, by his separation from all others of his own race, torn away from him, leaving great heart wounds to be endured alone. Then, there are other separations made necessary on this account which are as painful as the ravages of death. Missionaries to India, whose lonely lives are cheered by the advent of sweet babes to their homes, can only look forward to a speedy separation from them, even if spared by the destroyer—death. When five or six years of age they must be sent to Europe or America, as the only alternative to having them fall victims to the climate of India. Let fathers and mothers think of this! Could you give up your sweet prattling babes which bring so much joy to your hearts and so much sunshine to your homes, to be taken away and grow up among strangers; to gradually forget the very faces of papa and mamma, and transfer to others the affections which you now count your richest heritage; or perhaps to die where your ear could not catch the last childish whisper, or your hands to close their sightless eyes? Yet this is one of the hardships of missionary life, which missionaries frequently endure for Jesus' sake.

Then, obstacles meet the workers at every step. They are confronted at the threshold by a language often tedious and difficult to acquire, but which must be mastered if the message of divine love would be given to those who speak it. Often a priesthood, as jealous of their dominion over the people, and of the honor of their system, as were the Ephesians of the honor of Diana, stands in pronounced antagonism to every approach to the ears of the people. Customs almost as hoary with age as the mountains which witness them, and as