

So much for the Bible itself when it is confronted with modern criticism. It will not be difficult to show that the teachings which Protestants allege are based upon the Bible are equally defective as a guide, and that they are so indefinite in their nature, and so varied in their influence, that it seems almost impossible for the numerous Christian sects to discover that there is any harmonious meaning attached to them. This is so evident that the Rev. G. F. Terry says: "The great problem which confronts the religious world of to-day may be briefly stated thus; How shall the Church preserve her own past, and yet, at the same time, meet the wants of the present? How can she hold the faith delivered to the saints of bygone ages, and, at the same time, find room for the faith delivered to the saints of to-day? We feel that the two contrary elements of fixity and change must be harmonized in order to fit the religion of Jesus for future needs. How this is to be done is not yet apparent. Of one thing only can we be certain—that history and not authority, fact and not fiction, will determine the form of Christianity in the future" (*Church Gazette*, November 25). No, it is not "yet apparent" how the changes produced by scientific investigation can be brought into harmony with a faith which is said to be the same "yesterday, to-day, and forever." And herein lies the folly of trying to regulate human affairs at the present time by rules claimed to have been fixed two thousand years ago. As Dr. Magee once said, "It is impossible to run a State on the principle of the Sermon on the Mount."

The oft-repeated boast of professed Christians, that, notwithstanding their differences upon doctrines, etc., they have an authority to which all can appeal, is entirely fallacious. And, so far as Protestants are concerned, Mr. Mallock proves this up to the hilt. We have already seen that the Bible does not furnish such an authority. Where, then, is it to be found? Not in the Articles of the Church of England, for Nonconformists will not accept them as being of any authoritative value. Not in Councils, for Protestants, as a rule, will not admit that they are infallible. Not in what the Dean of Canterbury terms "the verifying faculty of the Christian consciousness," for, as the Dean admits, "the most grotesquely opposite conclusions" are drawn from individual study. In the absence of any definite authority it is not surprising to find, as Professor Harnack grants, that scientific criticism has destroyed the "belief in three things—the miraculous birth of Christ, his resurrection, and his ascension." Well might Mr. Mallock exclaim: "What shall we say, then, of the claim that any living authority is present with the Protestant Church which preserves Christian doctrine intact amid the critical storm, when the very men who are most eager to put this authority forward are found to be contradicting each other with regard to the very rudiments of the faith which this authority imposes upon them, and cannot agree that it imposes on them even a belief in the resurrection of their Lord?"

The view taken by Mr. Mallock, that, admitting the credibility of the Christian religion, the position of the Roman Catholic Church is the consistent one, is, we think, sound. As Mr. Edward Clodd states: "By those who accept it [Revelation], the fact should not be blinked that there is no logical standpoint short of entering her communion." But as we do not grant the credibility claimed, we are opposed to the assumptions of both Catholic and Protestant, and look upon each as attempts to pander to human credulity, and to perpetuate theological errors at the sacrifice of reason and common sense.

"Vengeance Is Mine, I Will Repay, Saith the Lord."

THE *Church Standard* of Philadelphia makes this wise comment on the complaints of outrages on Christian missionaries in "heathen" countries, which come daily and numerous to the State Department from the missionaries themselves and from the secretaries of the societies sending them out:

"It would seem that comparatively few such letters ought to be written and that many indignities should be silently borne. Indeed, we may go further and admit that there is much force in the contention of the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission that in the long run appeals to home governments work nothing but harm. His testimony was that he had known of many riots that had never been reported and of much suffering endured by missionaries in silence, which had 'fallen out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel.' 'If we leave God to vindicate our cause,' he said, 'the issue is sure to prove marvellous in spirituality.'"

Christian missionaries who go to countries of other religions long established, with a view to upsetting them as false and delusive, in favor of Christianity as the only true and really Divine religion, must expect to encounter hardships. Of course, they are regarded as interlopers, as "carpet-baggers." They are intruders, according to the notions of the countries they would proselyte, and are regarded with aversion always and everywhere, and no less in Christendom than in "heathendom." When, for instance, during the height of the anti-slavery agitation in this country Englishmen came over here to denounce our slavery they were roughly treated as pestilent interlopers even by people who had no love for the "peculiar institution," as it was then called euphemistically. Reformers from abroad have usually met with that fate. They are told in language not polite that they had better stay at home and mind their own business. How we treat foreigners to whom we object was illustrated recently in the outrages against Chinamen and their eventual exclusion from this country. A great political party, the Know-Nothing party, was gathered here about fifty years ago out of pure opposition to foreigners and more specifically those of the Roman Catholic Church.

Thus, we see, our own skirts are not at all clear in this matter; and even now a systematic attempt to proselyte this country by foreign Mohammedans or Buddhists, for instance, would be resisted by ridicule, if not violence; and especially would there be uproar if the Governments of which the missionaries were citizens or subjects should undertake to protect them by hostile demonstrations.

The most unfortunate and inconsistent incident of the Christian missionary enterprise is such appeal to Government protection. It has associated Christianity with violent foreign aggression in the minds of the peoples of countries to which the missionaries have gone. Instead of leaving "God to vindicate our cause," as the missionary above quoted consistently advises, appeals for vindication are made to the "civil arm," and the result, instead of proving "marvellous in spirituality," has been to stir up bad blood and bring disgrace to Christianity.

Christian missionaries do not go forth on the theory that people of other religions are to be forced violently into Christianity, but that they are to be won, persuaded, convinced to adopt it as the true and merciful faith. They occupy a position in which, naturally, they are exposed to indignities produced by misconceptions of their purposes, but they must bear them as inevitably