

cution. the Christians increased in number from 1,000 to 7,000, and the actual communicants from 200 to 1,000. During these years the Christians had been destitute of all human guidance and all human aid. No European teacher or preacher had gone in and out among them. God had been their helper, and the Holy Spirit, who, as the Christians said, was the best teacher, had been with them, and these were the marvellous results.

IV. It may be admitted that there is some diversity of opinion among missionary workers as to the value of the printed book unaccompanied by explanations and comments. Such divergence of views is to be expected.

Let us remember, however, that it is not a question between the Bible alone and preaching alone which we are called to decide as a practical matter. No one thinks of relying upon the Scriptures without explanation for the full enlightenment of the world. Missionaries as well as books, evangelists as well as Bibles, must be sent to all lands where Christianity is unknown. But the missionary without the Bible is like David going forth to meet the champion of the Philistines without any stones for his sling.

The testimony concerning the power of the printed Bible from those who have tested it in foreign lands, is varied and conclusive. "The paramount importance of the services of Bible societies on heathen ground has been forcibly set forth by an eminent churchman when he declared that, if the choice were to lie between the Bible without the teacher and the teacher without the Bible, he would unhesitatingly elect the former."

Said Dr. Wm. Goodell: "The Bible is our only standard, and the Bible is our final appeal. And it is even more necessary for us than it was for the reformers in England, because we are foreigners. Without it, we could say one thing and the priests another; but where would be the umpire? It would be nowhere, and all our efforts would be like beating the air."

Speaking of the importance of the press, Myron Winslow says: "In no way can the missionary reach by the living voice effectually the millions scattered over this widely-extended land. Truth on the printed page can go where he cannot find an entrance, as into the temple, into the women's apartments of the house. It can be carried forth, as winged seeds are carried by the wind, in various ways, and scattered broadcast. Nor is it in vain; seed thus scattered sometimes falls in a fruitful place.

The Rev. Alexander Williams has said: "I have no doubt that the manifest change of feeling and demeanor which is now so evident in many parts of China is due, not only to our journeys and preaching, but greatly to the silent but telling influence of the printed page."

Our most recent reports from China tell of the wonderful power of the stories contained in the Bible; there is nothing like them for kindling an interest, quickening mental activity, encouraging the dull and stupid to learn. Says the Rev. H. D. Porter: "China is a vastly overpreached country, wherever the missionary and his helpers have gone; talked dull and blind, perhaps, by a fatal facility of illustration; while many of the people and of the church members are *undertought* in the Bible."

V. But the importance of the printed book is further demonstrated by cases constantly occurring in every part of the world, where, in advance of all oral instruction, the Bible is proving itself a power for enlightenment and salvation. The individual and special cases are so numerous and striking that one hesitates which of them and how many to cite.

I might tell of an Armenian Evangelical Church at Perchenj, near Harpoot, of which the missionaries knew nothing till a colporteur one day reported that he found seventy men assembled in a stable, listening to one of their number reading to them from a Bible which he had bought in a neighbouring town.

I might refer to the laying of the corner-stone of an *adobe* church in an Indian village in Mexico, which I witnessed in 1879, built to shelter a little company whom an Indian had gathered around him, without any conference