

THE

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I.—LITERATURE OF MISSIONS.

THE APPARENT WASTE OF MISSIONS.

[EDITORIAL.—A. T. P.]

Few things have been more disheartening to friends of missions than the seeming fruitless sacrifice of most precious lives, in connection with both home and foreign fields; and to those of faint heart and of feeble faith this has been a crushing blow. Hundreds of consecrated laborers have died in the very process of acclimation, scarcely having arrived on the foreign field; many have succumbed to disease, through privation, exposure, exhaustion; again, some have fallen a prey to cruelty and violence, like Bishops Patteson and Hannington.

It is not well for us to take counsel of appearances, in the work of the Lord. We have our marching orders, and it must be quite enough for us to obey them. The inscription over the graves of the brave Spartans, at Thermopylæ, by Simonides, was, "Go, stranger, and tell the Lacedæmonians that we died in obedience to their laws." Our Lord's precious assurance covers this ground: "There shall not an hair of your head perish." And in nothing does He show his approval of this work more than in preventing or compensating waste of precious talents and lives. What to us at the time appears waste, He may see to be the best expenditure and most economical in the end, like the seeming waste of precious seed, which, falling on the earth, and dying, nevertheless brings forth fruit, thirty, sixty, even an hundred fold.

Let us look at a few examples of this so-called waste. On February 6, 1812, the Old Tabernacle Church, Salem, Mass., might have been seen crowded, students from Andover Seminary and Phillips Academy walking 16 miles to be there. What was the attraction? Five famous ministers—Woods, Spring, Griffin, Morse, Worcester—were ordaining five men—Judson, Newell, Nott, Hall, Rice—for the foreign field. Even Dr. Dwight had told Nott it was "rash;" but not so did that