

Missionary Work



MR ROBERT HART, presiding at a meeting of the Belfast branch of the Hibernian Bible Society, said it was a great privilege to be present that evening and on such an occasion. It was with great pleasure he had responded to the invitation to take the chair. Christian England had not lagged behind; it had led the van in every kind of philanthropic enterprise, and at the root of all had been the Bible, woven into the noblest and best doings of their country's life, and it was to translate that Bible into more languages that they met that evening, thus providing a basis for constructive benevolence and the motive power to foster its growth. During the century of its existence that magnificent body known by its world-wide designation "The British and Foreign Bible Society," had seen to the translation and publication of the Holy Scriptures in more than four hundred languages, amongst them being costly versions for the blind. Over thirty languages had been dealt with, and over fifteen millions of pounds sterling had been expended, and from first to last more than two hundred million copies had been distributed. Over and above all that the Society was the friend of every missionary, supplying them with all they required at simply nominal prices. The bread thus cast upon the waters must have been the very bread of life for millions and millions of men along the road to eternity. To every subject of that great empire it must be a matter of pride and gratitude to know that the word British connected with the words Bible Society meant so much to the nations which were touched and dealt with. Work on so extensive a scale and covering an expanse so vast, work so continuous in point of time and so exacting, was splendidly planned and nobly executed. That evening they met to hear what could be said for and about the Belfast Auxiliary. Chosen speakers would give them full details and acquaint them with what it had accomplished and what it wanted. The Society, besides contributing last year over £1,000 to the British Bible Society, issued some 40,000 copies of its own Scriptures in twenty-four languages, together with a Braille type version for the blind, and since its first foundation had distributed some six million copies—a very creditable performance indeed and a grand demonstration of well-organized and well-directed benevolence. (Applause.) The work of the Bible Society was allied closely with missionary enterprise, than which nothing could contribute more powerfully to the advance and spread of real civilization and the enjoyment of all the blessings which could be conferred on mankind. It aimed at peace, it preached goodwill, but it also left it to men to do men's work in man's best way. Unhappily the world's best wisdom had not yet got beyond the adage that to ensure peace they must be ready for war, and the evangel of these later days—days when the international barometer changed from moment to moment—pointed to national service as the only security for national ability to perform national duty, and the national duty was to make health and home safe against any and every foe, and so fit the nation for and protect it in the exercise of such philanthropic work at home and abroad as brought them together under that roof that evening. It was that last idea which made him allude to such a topic, and he could picture Cromwell in their midst, and could hear him saying—"Put your trust in Providence, but keep your powder dry." (Applause.) Allied with mission work, the Bible Society's auxiliary would that night see amongst its orators one or two laborers in the mission field in China, one distinguished, among other things, for the leading part he had taken in the preparation of an improved version of the Scriptures in the language of that great empire—a version which, it was hoped, would find its way to the quiet homes of a population that numbered some 400 millions of people, intelligent, industrious, orderly, and law-abiding. (Applause.) In another speaker they would make acquaintance with one of the delegates Christian England had specially sent to China to report on its condition and wants, and who would probably tell them something about the advance education was making and the wonderful conference he found sitting last year in Shanghai, where were gathered together the representatives of every society to study questions affecting all, and more especially to secure closer connection and such a union as would relegate to the background differences which obstructed work and bring to the front such a union as would strengthen them all and be a force in itself. (Applause.) This motive power throughout was again the Bible—that "key to the mysteries of life which opened the gates of consolation," of which an old writer had well said that "he who hath once tasted its excellence will desire to taste it yet again, and he who tastes it oftenest will relish it most"—(hear, hear)—and it was to continue its publication and extend its distribution that the Society existed, and that they were there that evening. An unnumbered host of readers would always vouch for its inspiration, were it for no other reason except because it inspired them as no other book could, for its life was life indeed, and the glory of its inspiring quality was that it was felt by men of every color, of every sort, of every condition, learned and unlearned,

and in every calling, by the occupants of cottages, of castles, and of palaces. (Applause.) Years ago he was talking with one of the most intelligent and most powerful of the Chinese officials it had been his good fortune to meet during a somewhat lengthy spell of work in that great country. (Applause.) That gentleman had much to say about foreign intercourse in all its phases, but what he had to say about missionaries was—"Your missionaries aim at making men's lives better. Why, then, should I oppose or object to them? On the contrary, every man that is made a better man is a gain to us, and we can only be thankful for it. Only let them keep to their own business." Such a frame of mind, if not spelling welcome, at least offered an open door, and if those who entered would keep to their own business and proceed with wisdom, there would be nothing to regret. (Applause.) The present was a highly important time in the world's history, and in the East in particular. Among the native Christians in India, China and Japan the feeling was said to be everywhere growing that they must have their own Church, and must themselves evangelize their own and neighboring lands. Such a feeling, even if premature, was to be welcomed, in that, not only did it show the vitality of their faith, but it would free Christianity from the obloquy and hindrance of being a foreign cult, and by making it mankind's inheritance, secure for it a warmer welcome and a heartier acceptance. (Applause.) With such a condition to face, the call for a wider distribution of properly translated versions of the Scriptures became more imperative, and thus the great Society which led the world in providing Bibles for all men in all lands was seen to be more and more worthy of all the sympathy hearts could give, all the support Christian purses could accord. (Applause.) In China more especially the opportunity should not be lost. (Hear, hear.) The country was opening up, and not only opening its markets to commerce and its provinces to new ideas, but, building on the stored up wisdom of the past, and at the same time freeing itself from the shackles of restriction, it was opening its doors to education in all departments, and missionary work had itself done much to prepare the way for both accentuating and supplying the want now felt, and a felt want was the parent of all progress. (Hear, hear.) Large numbers of schools had been opened by missionary enterprise, and in addition to what that limited enterprise had been able to accomplish, non-Christian, or rather secular, schools and colleges, the outcome of a national movement, had been opened up in all directions. Thus one city—Shanghai—had itself opened as many as 200 educational establishments, and other cities had done likewise. Let them wait a little longer until the Board of Education

had completed its programme, and when that day came—and it was close at hand—government students would be counted by tens of millions. Give them the Bible. (Applause.) If for centuries that had run into thousands of years their ancestors had learnt by heart and committed to memory those splendid words of ancient wisdom, the Confucian classics, and had developed and lived the Confucian ethical life to the advantage of themselves and all classes of society, what might not be hoped for their descendants with their newly-developed energy and their wonderful inherited memory, if they studied the Scriptures similarly, and then went on to live the Christian life? He repeated, and he did so with conviction and confidence, give them the Bible. (Applause.)

HUNTING THE POLAR BEAR IN A STEAMBOAT

Few people realize, probably, that we can find nowadays splendid facilities for hunting, with excellent chance of success, too, the bears and the other animals of the polar regions. Such an enterprise is easily undertaken, not only in a relatively short space of time, but under conditions of security as well. In Germany this sort of sport has been developed for some time, and actually every year one of the great amateurs, M. de Gisbert, of Hamburg, organizes jointly several Arctic expeditions which have no other object but that of the chase. Of one of these expeditions Georges Zafiripoulo gives an account in L'Illustration. The party left Drontheim on the morning of July 2 on board the Lofoten, a heavy Norwegian steamboat, about fifty-two metres long and pretty well manned. There were ten hunters, each of whom had his own cabin. The numerous company which travelled with them contained even the curers of skins, so that all trophies might be safely preserved. A doctor went with the expedition.

On July 8 they reached the polar seas, where they ploughed about till they arrived at, on the 24th, the Isle of Bears.

A bear chase is not very dangerous if one has coolness of mind and a good gun. Taking everything into account, it is easier properly to wound a bear than to catch a rabbit between hedges, because, in spite of his ferocity, the bear knows very little about defending himself against man, armed as man is nowadays. Besides, the Arctic bear does not recognize man as such, and takes him, for the most part, for a seal. The pilot among the hunters, perched in his crow's nest on the mast of the vessel, and provided with a huge telescope, can distinguish, in clear weather, a bear five kilometers off, or further. So the hunter has time to watch his prey, and to prepare his plan of attack. One can have splendid hunts on the icebergs as well.

Sometimes the bear takes to the water to escape. In this case he is lost, for he cannot swim as quickly as a boat can follow, and the hunter can kill him almost without running any risks. It is a fact worthy of remark that one ball will do if it is well placed—that is to say, placed in the head. Many bears, after being shot in the heart have swum one hundred or two hundred metres.

The British Navy



THE First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. McKenna, M.P., addressed a meeting of his constituents at Pontypool recently.

Mr. McKenna said that, short as his experience had been at the Admiralty, he had found himself fortunate in one respect. To a great extent all naval matters were removed from the arena of partisan controversy. There were, indeed, naval critics who felt it their duty to keep the Admiralty up to the mark, but he did not complain of them; on the contrary, he welcomed the constant interest which they displayed in all naval subjects. In the House of Commons there was a manifest desire to co-operate in securing the efficiency of our fleets. The navy came first (cheers), considerations of party advantage were only of secondary account. It was indeed a very different experience from what he had had at the Board of Education. It had always seemed to him that in discussing educational proposals the minds of his critics had been so influenced by religious party rancor that they viewed every act with a suspicion which distorted their judgment. In discussing naval matters, on the other hand, he had observed that on every occasion there was great willingness to receive with a fair and open mind any explanations of policy which the Government had to make.

The task imposed on the Board of Admiralty was the most responsible which any body of men could have to perform. It was a truism to say that the safety of the United Kingdom and the integrity of the British Empire depended on the Navy. (Cheers.) He would go further and say that the supremacy of the British Navy was the surest guarantee of European peace. (Cheers.) If ever a weak and inferior navy gave rival Powers the prospect of a break up of the British Empire—we should fail to read and understand aright the most obvious lessons of history if we did not recognize that—the hopes and ambitions of other Powers would inevitably be stimulated to a degree which would be most unfortunate for the peace of the world. (Hear, hear.) The task which the Admiralty had to perform was to secure the supremacy of the British fleet amongst the fleets of the world. (Cheers.) There were those, however, who in their enthusiasm for a powerful navy ran to extremes and were for ever calling upon the Government of the day, quite regardless of party, for an expenditure out of proportion to the country's real needs. Those people seemed to forget that the maintenance of a predominant British navy was not an interest of merely this year of the next, but one which must be co-existent with the existence of the British Empire. (Cheers.) They recognized with perfect truth that it would be the worst possible policy for this country to allow its naval preparations to fall into arrear, but they did not recognize that the next worst policy would be to maintain a greater standard of strength

than the circumstances of the day required. All unnecessary expenditure reduced the margin upon which they could call on emergency. In the Navy it was especially true that no more ships should be built or should be earlier laid down than international conditions demanded. Ships had a bad habit of becoming obsolete. Not a year, he might almost say not a month, went by but some new improvement was devised which increased fighting power. Over-abundant predominance was the inevitable precursor of over-abundance of scrapping; but the nation which by an unnecessary development of power at one period had been lulled into easy neglect of its responsibility would wake up to find that through the obsolescence of its ships its naval supremacy was seriously endangered. What was required in the interests alike of economy and the proper organization of the Fleet was a steady programme of construction sufficient to meet the actual construction which was being undertaken by other Powers, and resolute avoidance on the one side and on the other of programmes which sprang from panic or false security. (Cheers.)

There was one aspect of the naval programme for the year at this moment, when unemployment was unhappily so prevalent in the shipbuilding and engineering trades, which might be of special interest to them. In ordinary circumstances it would be impossible to anticipate the date for laying down new ships, as the Estimates voted by Parliament for the year would not permit of that being done. It so happened, however, that in the current year the anticipated expenditure up to date had not been made owing to a strike in the engineering trade; and he had an opportunity, therefore, with the funds which were thus liberated, to hasten the programme for the current year. (Cheers.) He hoped that within a very short time of the present moment all the orders for new construction which the programme for the year permitted him to give to private shipbuilding firms would be out, and thus, so far as it was in the power of the Board of Admiralty to alleviate the present unhappy condition of affairs, everything possible was being done. (Cheers.) He therefore hoped to give the private yards the whole of the outstanding orders for protected cruisers and destroyers which the programme of the year enabled him to give to private contractors. (Cheers.)

Discussing old-age pensions, he said no one would suggest that the age of 70 was the final limit to the age for pensions (cheers); that limit was certain to be reduced as soon as the experience in administration and the means at the disposal of the Treasury permitted of its reduction. (Cheers.) When charges were brought against the Government of having failed to meet the conditions of unemployment he would ask them to remember what the Government had done in the way of helping to eke out the humble means of the poor. For every class and industry something had been done to relieve the burdens or to break the bonds which shackled our trade. If, through other circumstances over which neither this Government nor any other Government could have control, if through failure of the harvest in remote corners of the world or through an American crisis or depression in Germany, which was far more serious than existed in this country, if through all these foreign causes, largely depending on the state of the weather, combining together, we suffered unemployment, it was not fair to blame the Government of the day, which could have no responsibility for those causes. He appealed to the good sense of this country, and asked them to judge the Government by its finance, and upon that judgment he was sure the verdict would be for the present Government. (Cheers.)

The Naval Programme of 1908-9, to which the First Lord of the Admiralty refers above, comprises, in addition to one battleship, one armored cruiser, and one protected cruiser to be built in the public yards, five protected cruisers, 16 destroyers, and a number of submarines, which Lord Locher of Gowrie (then Mr. E. Robertson) stated in the House of Commons on March 2 would be built by contract.

THE POPE AS A STUDENT

An Italian newspaper gives prominence to an old school report of Giuseppe Sarto, now his Holiness Pope Pius X. He was at a secondary school at Castelfranco, under a priest named Amadio, in 1849, and this is the pedagogue's account of his comparative attainments in various subjects: Literature, excellent; Italian language, first of his class; mathematics, very good; Latin, moderately good. "Good Conduct" is not mentioned, but it may be presumed that the Pontiff that was to be was proficient in that branch of the curriculum also.

Earlston, the heart of Berwickshire, chosen by the Prime Minister as the scene of his speech on the unemployed, might (says the Daily Chronicle) more easily leap to memory under its old name of Erclidoune. For it is here that Thomas the Rhymer flourished, here his people lie buried. Undeniable testimony is borne by the remains of the tower of Thomas the Rhymer, dating from 1299, and by the stone bearing the inscription "Old Rhymer's race lies in this place." The old stone once stood in the parish churchyard, but now may be seen embedded in the wall of the church.

The Influential House of Barnato



MUCH discussion was aroused in the city yesterday by the announcement made by the Financial News that the present heads of the firm of Barnato Brothers, "influenced by reasons which will be readily appreciated," have decided gradually to withdraw from active participation in the affairs of the great South African house, writes a financial correspondent of the London Leader. "It need hardly be added," our contemporary continued, "that the present heads of the Barnato firm will take large fortunes with them into their retirement—which is, of course, only a business retirement."

It was hardly to be expected that such an announcement would meet with official confirmation right away, but the street was practically unanimous in believing that there was "something in it." It has been rumored for some time past that Mr. Jack Joel, whose name has been so prominently before the public during the current racing season, was about to transfer his establishment to the Continent. His removal from Austin Friars, where the firm of Barnato Brothers is domiciled, would naturally throw an enormous amount of added responsibility upon his brother Solly, and although this many-sided financier is as little likely to throw up "business" as a fish voluntarily to leave the water, the transfer to some other management of the various mining companies of which he has hitherto taken a close personal control is quite within the range of possibility. The third partner in the firm, his uncle, Mr. Harry Barnato, has never been regarded in the city as a serious factor in finance.

The name of Barnato Brothers first became known to the newspaper-reading public at the time of the outburst of speculation in Transvaal gold mining shares in the late eighties. Among the first shares to be made the medium of a gamble were those of the New Primrose, a company founded by the since famous "Barney" Barnato and registered in 1887. In 1889 the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company was brought into existence, and from that time onwards the name of Barnato was prominently associated with what is known as the Kaffir Circus. Columns were written of the romantic career of the little

Petticoat-lane adventurer Barney Isaacs, who had gone out to the Cape with 27s. in his pocket and earned a precarious livelihood as a conjuror and booth-actor, with Barnato as his nom de guerre, until diamonds were discovered in Cape Colony. "Barney" made his real start as a "kopye-walloper," otherwise a dealer in diamonds, whose entire plant and office equipment were comprised in a little leather bag. In three years he had made five thousand pounds, and in 1876 he was strong enough to buy the first claim in the Kimberley mine. He kept on digging until 1881, when he turned over the four claims he then owned to a company, which paid him about twenty-five thousand pounds. A few more years passed, and then came the mighty struggle between De Beers and the Kimberley Central, which resulted in the diamond mine consolidation, and the partnership of "Barney" with Cecil Rhodes and Alfred Beit.

In the earlier days of the South African gold share speculation the personality of "Barney" Barnato was exploited by the picturesque writer on such occasions as Kommerz Botel night, when the great little man was wont to receive the homage of his poorer co-religionists in the Lane, but all this time he was working quietly, amassing claims and rooms-full of mining scrip at knock-out prices. Then came the historic Kaffir boom of 1895. In July of that year was formed the Barnato Consolidated Mines, Limited, a trust company which took over at the inflated prices of the moment the contents of the Barnato strong boxes. Flushed with the success which attended this flotation, on Monday, Sept. 2, 1895, Barney threw into the market the two and a half million shares of the Barnato Bank Mining and Estate Company, a fresh dumping ground for the paper assets of the firm. Before eleven o'clock that morning the £1 shares were rushed up to £4 5-8, and in the neighborhood of this absurd figure the capital of this pig-in-a-poke concern found thousands of new owners among the gullible British public. When the special settlement took place on Oct. 18, bargains were made up at 2 7-8. A month later the famous slump which preceded the Jameson Raid was in full swing, and before the new year was in the air was full of rumors of coming amalgamations and absorptions. It was not, however,

until September, 1896, that meetings were held in Johannesburg which had the effect of wiping the Barnato Bank out of existence before ever his shareholders had received a balance sheet, and leaving them the owners of five Johannesburg Consolidated shares in exchange for every eight Barnato Bank shares, for which many of them had paid between £4 and £5 apiece.

The records tell how "Barney" committed suicide by jumping overboard on his way home from the Cape in June, 1897, and how his nephew, Woolf Joel, who had stepped into his shoes as virtual head of the firm, was murdered at Johannesburg by Veltheim in March, 1898. At that time Mr. Solly Joel had become South African manager, while his brother Jack was filling a position of some responsibility in the London office. Jack had for many years been outside the fold, for in May, 1891, he had been adjudicated a bankrupt in connection with the promotion of the Automatic Photographic Company, and the annulment of this bankruptcy was not gazetted until April 13, 1897.

In November, 1905, the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company absorbed the Barnato Consolidated Mines, and acquired all its assets. From that time up to last week, when a shilling dividend was declared, the company had never distributed a single penny, and only a few weeks ago the shares were selling at about 15s. apiece. The present issued capital is just under £4,000,000 sterling, and taking the shares at their present price of 26s., we have a grand total of perhaps five millions sterling to represent not only the original assets, but the ten millions poured in to the Barnato Bank by the public in 1895, and the further five millions represented by the Barnato Consolidated capital at the time of the fusion three years ago.

Space does not permit of our recapitulating the losses of the public in such ventures as Buffelsdorn, Langlaagte Royal, or Coronation Syndicate, the traffic in which has gone to the making of the Barnato-Joel millions. The investing public has proverbially a short memory for the unpleasant, but its experiences with the House of Barnato leave it little else to look back upon.