

through their moral habits they were better able to resist toil and fatigue than the other soldiers. The character of these men was known to the other soldiers. A man is no less Japanese, but a better one, by becoming a Christian."

#### "TO THE GREEKS, FOOLISHNESS."

The murder of missionaries in China has led the secular press in England and elsewhere to pour its cold and unsympathetic criticism, in many instances, upon the efforts made to evangelize the heathen. "Let them alone" is the burden of the cry of these papers, and of those who write in them. "They are better off as they are, or, at all events, just as well off as we are." Were there anything new in this cry it might attract attention, but it is as old as Christianity itself. Were it not that, thank God, there have always been men who have risen superior to this unchristian sentiment, the holy religion of Jesus would never have been made known to the world. The easiest cry in the world is "Let things alone," and there are always people who are ready to apply that to religion. Men may lose their lives in the interest of science or commerce, in repeated attempts to discover the north pole or dig into the recesses of the earth for hidden treasure, and they are applauded as heroes. There are those who can understand things of that kind to whom the violent death of a man or woman whose life had been devoted to religion is incomprehensible. There is only one word that can explain it to such minds, and it is the word "folly." But this is nothing new. One of the original propagators of the Christian faith felt that it was incumbent upon him to preach Christ, even though to the Greeks it was foolishness. History repeats itself. The true Christian will not be deterred from trying to fulfil his marching orders because some have fallen in the battle. It will act as a stimulus. No cold criticism can deter them. When Bishop Hannington was murdered in Africa, immediate offers were made by men and women everywhere to go out as missionaries to the very place where the martyr had fallen. And now that the deeply deplored deaths have taken place in China, has the stream of missionaries flowing thither been checked? No, on the contrary, there are many now anxious to go forth to help evangelize the darkened people who performed the tragic deed. And this certain sections of the secular press, and of people in our own midst, cannot understand. It is "*qui.votic*," it is folly.

This very spirit had to be faced and dealt with by the apostles themselves. Their work at first was not with unlettered savages, but

with a civilized and highly cultured people. If the Greeks, with their philosophy, were not well enough off as regards religion, where are we to look for people properly so situated? Yet the apostles were convinced that the Greeks needed the Gospel, even though it was foolishness to them. It is the same now. Confucius has done something for the Chinese, yet not everything that Christ can do for them, and whether all people can understand this or not Christ must be preached to them. It might be interesting to know how far Christianity is a true, vital force in the minds of those who cannot see the importance of imparting it to others.

But some papers and writers take a different line of reasoning in order to arrive at the same conclusion. It may be right enough to let Christianity be known to others, but no attempt should be made to do so till misery and sin are eradicated from those who live where it is best known.

*Life* (London), for instance, says,

"When all Great Britain and Ireland is thoroughly and perfectly Christianized, it will surely be time to begin the good work in foreign climes, and until that desirable time comes it is surely fair and just to ask the devoted men who are moved so acutely by the proselytizing spirit to spend their energy in the task of removing the mote (and it is a big mote) from our own eye before beginning an ophthalmic operation on the beam in the hopeless case of the Chinese myopic."

To say nothing of the cynical tone of this paragraph, it were well to point out its weakness. Missionaries do not profess to convert. It is their duty to proclaim that through which men may be saved, if they will avail themselves its power. More than that they cannot do. Men must give themselves to God. The very fact that so many people in a thoroughly Christian country are so far from the true ways of God is a proof to them that they can never make any community perfect. Yet no man can be a Christian till he knows what Christianity is. Therefore it must be taught. It must be propagated.

But no man is to be told of the saving words of Christ "until Great Britain and Ireland is thoroughly and perfectly Christianized"! It is estimated that there is a Christian minister for every nine hundred people in Great Britain. Surely, then, there is enough home force to take care of the home people. With all its faults, Great Britain and Ireland is Christianized, and has been a Christianized nation for hundreds of years. All too long it remained shamefully unconscious of its duty to try to Christianize others, and during that time its own Christianity was weak. But now it is stronger, even though men have left its confines to go to distant lands to carry the words of salvation. The fact is, we have too many