

## Missionary World.

### TRAINING FOR FOREIGN MISSION WORK.

The subject of systematic training for missionaries who are going to the Foreign field is one that is now attracting attention from the boards of nearly all the different churches. An experience of more than twenty years on the Foreign field has convinced me that much time is lost by new missionaries because of the lack of that preparation which might have been received before leaving the home land. For instance, some who are not habitual students lose time and find great difficulty in acquiring the language because they do not know how to apply themselves in a systematic way. Others again, get the language without much trouble, but do not know how to enter upon active work. In cases where the beginner is willing to be a learner and put himself under the tuition of one older in the work, content to fill the place of assistant until he can "go alone," there is not apt to be much loss of time in getting into work, though very much depends even here on his fitness for the various kinds of work into which he is initiated. But if he is without this paternal care on beginning his work, and either from inclination or misfortune has to start out on his own resources, he is constantly making mistakes from lack of knowledge, from doing things the wrong way or from trying different kinds of work. Much of this might be avoided by a special course of training before going to the field.

Having settled the importance of this duty, the next point that comes up, is the kind of training needed. There is use for so many and varied kinds of knowledge on the Foreign field, that one can not have too great a "diversity of gifts" to satisfy all demands. There are some things, however, which may be emphasized as almost essential for successful work. Spiritual qualifications are taken for granted in the case of one who feels the call to the Foreign field, and stand high over all others of practical knowledge. First of all in importance is a thorough acquaintance with the Word of God, and the ability to explain its ordinary meaning. This is emphatically our "Book of Authority" in all things which we teach, and a great part of the Foreign missionary's work is to guide and instruct the native Christians in their investigations into the written Word. How can this be done in any satisfactory way unless the teacher has been himself carefully and thoroughly instructed?

Another important branch of knowledge is connected with medicine and the treatment of simple diseases, as well as experience in nursing the sick. It often happens that one is far away from a regular physician and has to depend on himself in case of sickness occurring in his own household, to say nothing of the endless amount of good to be accomplished among the natives by a limited supply of simple remedies with the knowledge to use them judiciously. It often falls to the lot of a missionary to nurse those associated with him in the work through cases of severe and protracted illness, and a little experience or training in this line will save valuable lives to the work.

Of course to those who expect to engage in teaching, a reasonable amount of experience is almost a necessity, and it hardly seems fair to take precious time on the field to get the experience which should be gained before leaving home.

In addition to what has been mentioned, any practical training in the way of manual work suited to the sphere of man or woman, will not come amiss. If one's lot is cast in the interior, far away from the ordinary source of supply, his ingenuity is taxed to the utmost in furnishing some of the most common things of life. In such cases there seems to be no kind of knowledge which does not come into play. In the line of

housekeeping, for instance, a woman's quick wit and experience has saved her family much discomfort; and so it might be said of many other things.

The next point is to decide how and where this training can be obtained. In many cases a varied experience in the various mentioned lines makes a course in a training school unnecessary; but to the young man or woman fresh from home or college, whose contact with the lower classes is limited, and who has had no experience in home mission work, a year or two of training in these kinds of work is worth far more than the time lost by the delay in getting to the field. For this purpose the establishment of regular training schools under competent instructors, is one of the most hopeful signs in the present policy and management of missions. They furnish the means for obtaining these advantages which fit one for the best work on the field, and by giving him an insight into what is expected of him, they enable him to decide as to his ability and fitness for the work. If one is mistaken as to his call to the foreign field, or is lacking in those qualifications which are most essential to successful work, this is very apt to be developed in a course of preparatory study and training. In this way he can be tested before going to the field, and the society spared the expense of outfit and transportation.

In England this special training is becoming more and more a requirement of the foreign mission boards, and in this country there are now several excellent institutions of this kind under the control of denominational boards. Many are availing themselves of the advantages thus given, but would it not be well to make it obligatory on the part of all who offer themselves for the work, to get more or less of this testing and training before they are sent to the field? For ladies, especially, who have not previously been engaged in any regular work, this training would be invaluable, and the benefit would work both ways. The wives of missionaries would realize the same benefits as the single ladies, as this previous preparation would enable them to utilize many moments of time in the midst of a busy household life.

As the work on the field develops and broadens, the very best material is needed in the work to meet its requirements. So it does seem eminently wise and fitting that the best means should be employed to bring about this desirable result. So far as we can see there is no better way, humanly speaking, of producing efficient workers, than in giving them a thorough and practical training before they enter upon their life work.—*Mrs. John L. Stewart in Woman's Work for Women*

In Dingab, Punjab, the missionaries of the Church of Scotland have met with much opposition from the Hindus (Sikhs). But one of the most prominent of the adversaries had just been won over in a remarkable way. He asked for a private interview with the missionary, who expected a fierce expression of hostility, and was immensely surprised when the man pulled out a New Testament and said: "Sahib, I have read this book, and I find it to be pure and holy. Up to ten days ago I was a bitter opponent of yours. I gave a public lecture against you and against your work. Then I resolved that I would expose your book. So I began to read it in order to pick faults in it; but, do you know, as I read it I was drawn to it. My heart was captivated, and now I cannot oppose you. I know God's light is in that book."

From the twenty-fourth annual report of the Evangelical Church of Italy, it appears that in connection with this body there are twenty-six churches and thirty-five stations, with 132 places visited regularly. The ordained ministers number twenty-one; evangelists, ten; colporteurs, eight. There are teachers and Bible-women, Sunday-schools, and associations for young people. The communicants number 1,697, and the adherents 6,315.

### PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Rutherford: There are depths of love in Christ beyond all that we have seen. Therefore dig deep, and labour, and take pains for Him, and set by as much time for Him as you can. He will be won by labour.

Great Thoughts: A personal dignity which cannot take care of itself cannot be protected by incessant guarding. The quality of a great creative nature is unconsciousness, and this is also the characteristic of a great character.

Mid-Continent: Cease fretting and begin praising. Quit murmuring and begin singing. The Lord is the same Lord. He will deliver in the future as He has done in the past. Sometime He may hide His face for a little while but for eternity He will never forsake.

Gladstone. No wave on the great ocean of Time, when once it has floated past us, can be recalled. All we can do is to watch the new form and motion of the next and launch upon it to try, in the manner our best judgment may suggest, our strength and skill.

Dr. Wm. M. Taylor: Christ fits His ministers through manifold experiences of sorrow and pain for the highest service. He writes their best sermons for them on their own hearts by the sharp stylus of trial. Such as He would make most eminent in His service, He takes furthest with Him into Gethsemane.

Mrs. Humphrey Ward: Reading above all things widens one's world; it takes one to new scenes and gives one new friends. Perhaps this is especially so in regard to fiction. It is within the power of good imaginative literature to transport us into another world. And what is true of fiction is still more true, or quite as true, of biography.

Ryle: However false or unhealthy religious feeling may sometimes be, the great truth still remains behind, that feeling is the secret of doing. The heart must be engaged for Christ or the hands will soon hang down. The effections must be enlisted in His service, or our obedience will soon stand still. It will always be the loving workman who will do most in the Lord's vineyard.

Frederick W. Robertson: There are few temptations more common to ardent spirits than those which lead them to repine at the lot in which they are cast, believing that in some other situation they could serve God better. If each such man had the spirit of self-surrender, the spirit of the Cross, it would not matter to him whether he were doing the work of the mainspring or one of the inferior parts. It is his duty to try and be himself—simply to try to do his own duty.

Rev. James Millar: When Jesus met the advances of Nicodemus with the blunt statement: "Ye must be born again," he was simply putting into a sentence the sum of human experience. For conversion is the first need of humanity, as the guarantee of it is the first promise of Christ's religion. His gospel is in this respect the gospel of civilization. The commentary of history is that the Gentiles—"the heathen"—are only fitted to take a place amongst the nations as they are converted. Before the individual can be elevated to his proper place, and rightly use the faculties he possesses, he must be "turned to another man." Hence it is that the nineteenth century, which is pre-eminently the missionary century of Christendom, is a century of triumphs of civilization.

## Christian Endeavor.

### GOD'S TRIUMPH IN THE MISSION FIELD.

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Dec. 1.—Pas. lxxvii. 1-7.

#### A MISSIONARY MEETING SUGGESTED.

So numerous and so signal have been God's triumph in the mission field that the subject could be better presented in a volume than in a single column of a newspaper. God has triumphed gloriously in the South Sea Islands. Probably there never was a class of people more deeply sunk in the mire of degradation and superstition than were the inhabitants of Polynesia. So very meagre were their attainments, and so far removed were they from anything like what obtains in civilized society that one might almost be excused if he questioned whether even the Gospel could raise up such a people. And yet many a times since the year 1816, when John Williams, "the Apostle of Polynesia," landed there, the Christian world has been astonished and pleased by tidings of what the Gospel has done and is doing. Men who were once cruel, brutal and degraded, were so transformed that they became kind, earnest, considerate. Women, who were once treated in the most barbarous and revolting manner, are now looked upon as God intended they should be—as the friends and companions of their husbands and brothers. Children once had sharp sticks thrust through their ears, and were driven to heathen temples, but now they are treated with tenderness and sympathy. It is said that when Williams went to Raratonga in 1823, he found all the inhabitants heathen; that when he left in 1834, they were all professed Christians; that instead of heathen temples there were three large churches with an attendance of six thousand; that instead of heathen rites in their homes God was worshipped as in the dwellings of Jacob.

The cause of God has signally triumphed in Madagascar. The story of the entrance of missionaries into that island, the blessings with which God accompanied their efforts, the determined stand taken by some to check the work and to exterminate Christianity there; the zeal with which the enterprise was taken up again; the way in which Christianity broke down the barriers which opposed it, eradicated superstitious notions and overthrew idolatrous practices—all this makes very stimulating and exciting reading.

A very wonderful triumph, humanly speaking, has been won in the Island of Formosa by our own Dr. G. L. MacKay, one of the most apostolic missionaries in modern times. It is only twenty-three years since he landed on that Island, and yet though he had no knowledge of the language spoken by the people, he soon acquired it, and in a remarkably short time he was the instrument of leading first one and then another from the darkness of heathenism into the light of the Gospel. According to the statement submitted to the last General Assembly there are now in the field two ordained native preachers, sixty preachers who are not ordained, twenty-four Bible women, 1,738 communicants and sixty chapels.

It would be an easy matter to dwell upon great and glorious achievements in China, Japan, Persia, Burmah, India and many other countries, but it is scarcely necessary inasmuch as the literature bearing on these subjects is abundant and can be easily procured.

Notwithstanding what God has wrought, we are told by some who regard themselves as very wise, and who put forth claims to superior knowledge of foreign lands that mission work is a failure, and that it is useless to prosecute it further. One regrets to find that such a man as Mr. Flinders Petrie, the great Egyptologist, should, indirectly, at least, lend countenance to this view. But even if the triumphs had not been so remarkable as they have been, it would be our duty—because the Master has commanded it—to continue sending the Gospel to others. And there must be no retrenchment in this work until the Word of God has been proclaimed to every nation under heaven.