

**"MISSIONARY REVIEW OF THE WORLD."**

The first article in the August number is a review of "Reality vs. Romance," by Dr. Pierson. It will be remembered that Dr. Johnstone,—better known in Canada as "Jamaica Johnstone"—went to Africa, with a company of negroes, at considerable expense, and with a considerable flourish of trumpets, in order to do mission work. His expedition so far as work was concerned, was a total failure, and he wrote this book, which Dr. Pierson thinks is a greater failure than the expedition. He crossed the Dark Continent, visited a number of missions, and professes to have gathered absolutely reliable information, which he communicates without fear or favor. As Dr. Johnstone is well-known to have been an autocrat in his own way in the past, he is in this book true to himself. He pronounces judgment upon men and things with as much confidence as if he had been in the field thirty years, instead of a few months. Indeed, had he been longer in the field, and caught something of the spirit of the heroic missionaries who have been and are laboring in Africa, he would have been more temperate in his criticisms, more cautious in his judgments, and it may be the book would never have been written—which for the cause of truth would have been better. Happily the book is expensively got up, and so wearisome in details, that few will ever read it.

Dr. Pierson quotes several instances of his rashness and indiscretion of which one or two specimens may be given. It is well-known that the aim in all missions is as quickly as possible to reach the self-supporting stage, but that few have reached that point, which is not to be wondered at, in view of the poverty of the people and the comparatively recent date of modern missionary effort. Dr. Johnstone, however, does not condescend to discussion, but declares "Self-supporting missions a grand mistake—an absolute failure."

His delineations of native character are not sympathetic. He neither seems to have been tenderly touched by the exhibitions of native depravity and the needs of souls utterly lost, nor to have appreciated the patient self-denying labors of men who have gone to Africa, not for a holiday trip, but to spend their lives in the endeavour to introduce some ray of light into the dense darkness of that unfortunate country. All honor to such men, and they will be honored in that day. There is one point, however, to which Dr. Johnstone draws attention that needs to be emphasized—viz. the incessant demand upon missionaries for letters that can be read to the congregation, or Mission Band, or Sunday school at home. It must be an intolerable burden to many missionaries, and is in danger of resulting in exaggeration—simply for variety's sake—as all experience giving is apt to become.

Rev. Arthur H. Smith contributes a thoughtful article on "Time as a Factor in Christian Missions" which is quite seasonable. Many are heartless, if not indifferent to missions because of the slowness of the process—it takes so long a time to evangelize a heathen nation or tribe that it seems practically impossible, and does not that indisputable fact suggest another, more depressing still, that God is not in sympathy with Missionary effort and does not bless it. The position is made even more hopeless by another fact, that such successes as have attended missionary labors have often been followed by reaction, and the church has relapsed into heathenism. The dying out of the seven churches of Asia are but a type of the numberless cases in which the candlestick has been moved out of its place, and the glory departed. These two thoughts often cause spiritual paralysis—it seems as if we had not only to fight heathenism, and the powers of darkness, but Providence as well.

These two objections are met and satisfactorily met by Mr. Smith by the analogy of history, which shows that great changes take place slowly. "Sudden effects in history," says John Stuart Mill, "are superficial; causes which go down deep into the future events, pro-

duce the most serious parts of their effects only slowly and must have time to become a part of the familiar order of things."

"Providence moves through time as the gods of Homer through space—it makes a step and ages have rolled away." Its logic is not less conclusive for reassuring slowly. The story of the physical universe—the history of nations—the development of character—the evolution of thought all go to prove that in God's plans a day is as a thousand years. The conclusion of the whole discussion must be that the slowness of the process argues that missions are one of the great movements of God, and demand, therefore, ages of time.

One of the most perplexing problems in connection with Foreign Mission work is, the place due to Higher Education. Dr. Ellinwood's paper on that question, read before a Conference held in New York in January last, is published in full. In India especially, much attention has been given to education with unexpected results. It has put a weapon into the hands of the enemy. It was expected that an European education would open the eyes of the natives to the puerilities and absurdities of their own systems and prepare them for the reception of the Christian system of faith and morals, but other results have appeared that were not anticipated. Amongst the worst of these is, that the educated have become accessible to the enemies of Christianity, and it is found that more infidel and immoral literature is distributed than that of all missionary societies put together, and the Rajahs and other wealthy natives, hostile to Christianity, are contributing largely for the circulation of the writings of such men as Ingersoll and Bradlaugh.

Dr. Mitchell when on a visit three or four years ago to Siam was informed that the high officials of the Government were receding from their favorable attitude towards female education for the reason that the Siamese women and girls who had learned to read were being corrupted by the vile literature which was thrown upon the market at Bangkok.

Whilst all that is true and discouraging, yet there is another side to it, over against that let us read the following: "At a summer school attended by about four hundred young native ministers and teachers in Japan, four or five years ago, a summary of conclusions was reached one of which was in substance this, 'We do not deem it necessary that more missionaries should be sent us from America to preach the Gospel to the masses of our people. The ordinary work of preaching can be done quite as well by educated men of our race; but if our friends across the ocean can send us men capable of becoming leaders, able to teach us how we may grapple with rival systems of religion or philosophy and all the burning questions which confront us, then the more they send the better.'

In striking contrast with Dr. Johnstone's estimate of African missions is an article by Rev. James Douglas, on Africa as one of the great unoccupied fields, notwithstanding the fact that in recent years many precious lives have been poured out to heal the world's sores. "Forty societies are at work, with over seven thousand ordained missionaries, and the converts last year were over twenty thousand," but what are these amongst so many? The vast region of the Soudan from east to west—as far as from San-Francisco to New York—and from 250 to 500 miles wide is a continent of itself and is scarcely broken ground. The Central Soudan has a population of sixty millions which has as yet no missionary. They are a noble race, already enjoying a high degree of civilization, living in walled cities of 50,000, 80,000 and 100,000 inhabitants.

"Dr. Duff once told an Edinburgh audience that if the ladies of that city would give him the cost only of that portion of their silk dresses which swept the streets as they walked he would support all his mission schools in India." If that is true how shall we answer for these millions of Africa, and elsewhere, whom we might have enlightened?