

## THE TRUE TEST.

Christian friends, we have no fires of martyrdom now to test our fidelity to Jesus Christ; but we are not left without a test. God is testing us all continually; testing the measure of our *faith*, of our *love*, of our *devotedness* to his Son, by the presence of eight hundred millions of heathen in the world. It is a tremendous test! so real, so practical!

It is no trifle, no myth, no theory, no doubtful contingency, but a great, awful fact, that we Protestant Christians, who rejoice in our rich gospel blessings, and claim to be followers of Him who gave up heavenly glory and earthly ease and life itself to save these heathen, are actually surrounded by eight hundred millions of brothers and sisters who must perish in their sins unless they receive the Gospel. This Gospel they have never yet heard. This is a fact too many forget, but a fact none can deny; a fact of which we dare not pretend to be ignorant; a fact that ought to influence our whole Christian course from the moment of conversion; a fact that ought to shape our plans and prospects and purposes in life.

*It tests our faith.* Do we believe that "idolaters shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone,—the second death"? Do we believe that "the Gospel is the power of God to salvation"? Where, then, are the works wrought in us by our faith in these truths? What do we do to turn idolaters to the worship of the true and living God? What do we do to carry to them the Gospel which can save them?

*It tests our love.* "If ye love me, keep my commandments," said our Master; and his last commandment was that we should preach the Gospel to these heathen. Judged by our obedience to it, how much do we love Him? And how much do we love these poor neighbors, stripped and robbed and cruelly handled by the devil, and left half dead in our path? What oil and wine have we poured into their wounds? What efforts for their recovery have we made? We ought to love each one as ourselves. Has the aggregate of our love for the whole eight hundred millions ever led us to endure a single suffering or to deny ourselves a single indulgence for their sake?

*It tests our devotedness.* Hearts wholly given to Jesus would lead us to long that his wishes should be gratified, his desires fulfilled. What are those wishes and desires? Let His life, His death reply. That all should return, repent, and live; that the lost should be found, and the dead quickened. If, knowing that eight hundred millions of our fellow-creatures are still lost in heathenism, we make no effort for their enlightenment, how do we show our devoted attachment to Jesus Christ our Lord? *We devoted to Him?* What, even, of *ours* is devoted to Him? Is even a tithe of our time, a tithe of our substance devoted to Him? Have we surrendered to Him for this service even one child of our family or one year of our lives? No, but we give an annual subscription to some missionary society. Ah, friends, *gifts that cost us no personal self-denial are no proofs of devotedness!* Christ's devotedness to our interests involved Him in suffering, loss, and shame, because of the state in which we were; though, hereafter, devotedness to us will involve to Him only joy,—*"the joy set before Him."*

Devotedness to Him now must similarly involve suffering, loss, and shame to us, because of the state of those for whom He died; hereafter, it will involve only joy and honor, the bride's share of her royal Bride-

groom's throne. But that time is not yet. Devotedness, consecration to Jesus, in a world tenanted by eight hundred millions of heathen, means *stern labor and toil*, means *constant self-denial and self-sacrifice*, means *unwearied well-doing, even unto death.*

Judged by this test, how many faithful, loving and devoted followers has Jesus Christ? Are we of their number?—*Selected.*

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Miss A. E. Johnstone, of Dartmouth, N. S., is Correspondent of the LINK for the Maritime Provinces. She will be glad to receive news items and articles intended for the LINK from mission workers residing in that region.

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## The Canadian Missionary Link

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT TORONTO.

Communications, Orders and Remittances to be sent to Mrs. Mary A. Newman, 116 Yorkville Avenue, Toronto.

Subscribers will find the dates when their subscriptions expire on the printed address labels of their papers.

Subscription 25c. per Annum, Strictly in Advance.

Subscribers failing to receive their papers will please make inquiry for them at their respective Post Offices, if not found notify the Editor at once, giving full name and address and duplicate copies will be forwarded at once.

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