

an active part in providing for the religious instruction of the enfranchised negroes; and a special fund was raised by subscriptions and donations, to be expended in aid of the cost of building churches and school-houses, and of maintaining clergymen and schoolmasters, in the *British West Indies*. In pursuance of this plan, large grants of money have been made towards the erection of churches and schools; and the number of clergymen, exclusive of other teachers, now in connexion with the Society, and deriving a portion of their income from its funds, is thirty-seven. The vital importance of communicating moral and religious knowledge to the negro population, and the feeling of the country in favour of that class, encourage the Society to persevere in this branch of its operations. The present annual charge, independent of grants for buildings, is £60,000.

Lastly, in the year 1837, the spiritual destitution of the *Australian Colonies* having been represented to the Society by the Bishop of Australia, it has engaged to contribute towards the support of twenty additional clergymen, to be employed as chaplains in the provinces of New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land; and it has much pleasure in announcing that no less than twelve of the number have been appointed, and have sailed for Australia. The dreadful state of wickedness into which the great body of the people throughout these colonies were falling must plead the Society's excuse for entering at the present time upon a new field of labour and expense. It rejoices at having been enabled to induce so considerable a body of clergymen to devote themselves to the service of their Heavenly Master, under circumstances of much discouragement; and trust that the appalling accounts, recently published by authority, respecting the moral and religious condition of our convict settlements, will awaken the attention of the country, and produce an attempt to wipe out this foul stain upon the national character.

From the foregoing statement it will be seen that the recent extension of the Society's labours commenced at a time when, by the discontinuance of the parliamentary grant, the whole expense of the North American missions was cast upon its funds—an expense which they were barely able to meet. And in the years which have elapsed since that period the Society's annual income, arising from subscriptions, donations, and collections, has not increased by a sum larger than £1,992. In the year 1833, the receipts under these heads amounted to £8,747; in the year 1837, to £10,739. During the same period, the permanent annual expenditure, exclusive of the sum paid in the former year on account of government, has increased from £23,867 to £35,190; and a further sum of £15,224 has been laid out in the West Indies, from the special fund. The excess of expenditure above income in each year has been defrayed by sales of stock bequeathed to the Society as legacies, or purchased with money collected under the authority of King's Letters.

The existence of such a state of things can only be accounted for by supposing that the circumstances of the Society—the rapid extension of its operations—and the heavy additional charge incurred thereby—are not generally known; and the object of the present address is to promote the more general formation of committees, parochial or otherwise, for the circulation of reports of the Society's proceedings and extracts from the correspondence of its missionaries, and for the increase of its funds.

The distinguished mark of the Institution is, its close connexion with the Church of England, and its adherence to her rules of ecclesiastical discipline. The effect of the system is, that clergymen, carefully selected for the office of missionaries, are subject to a discipline and assured of a protection not to be exercised upon any other plan.

It is also distinctly understood in the colonies, that the permanent maintenance of the colonial clergy cannot be defrayed by the mother country; and that when the Society has succeeded in planting missionaries in places hitherto unprovided with them, it will proceed from time to time to other districts, until the whole of every province is supplied with the means of religious instruction. Much more is now done by the colonists themselves for the maintenance of clergymen, and the erection of churches, than was attempted or even thought of in former times; and

their demand upon the mother country for assistance should be met by a corresponding increase of exertion. As fellow-countrymen, and still more as fellow-Christians, they call upon us to come over and help them; and our help, to be effectual, must proceed from every corner of the kingdom, and be in some measure proportionate to the vast field before us, and to the sacred interests by which it is called forth.

A. M. CAMPBELL, Secretary.

REV. MR. MELVILL.

The following graphic sketch, is from the pen of the Bishop of Ohio. It forms part of a preface to a volume of Sermons, by Mr. Melvill, which are in course of publication by Swords, Stanford & Co. of New York.

Episcopal Recorder.

Mr. Melvill is well known in England as an eloquent and earnest preacher of the Gospel. 'Envy itself,' says the British Critic, 'must acknowledge his great abilities and great eloquence. After having occupied the highest standing, while an under-graduate of the University of Cambridge, he was chosen to a Fellowship in St. Peter's College, and, for some time, was a tutor in that Society. Thence he was called to the pastoral charge of Camden Chapel, (a proprietary chapel) in the overgrown parish of Camberwell, one of the populous suburbs of London. The first twelve discourses in this volume were preached in that pulpit, and the rest, while he was connected therewith. It has not unfrequently been the privilege of the Editor to worship and listen, in company with the highly interesting and intelligent congregation that crowds the pews and aisles, and every corner of a standing-place in that edifice; fully participating in that entire and delightful captivity of mind in which their beloved pastor is wont to lead the whole mass of his numerous auditory.

Melvill is not yet what is usually called a middle-aged man. His constitution and physical powers are feeble. His lungs and chest needing constant care and protection, often seem determined to submit no longer to the efforts they are required to make in keeping pace with his high-wrought and intense animation. The hearer sometimes listens with pain, lest an instrument so frail, and struck by a spirit so nerved with the excitement of the most inspiring themes, should suddenly break some silver cord, and put to silence a harper whose notes of thunder, and strains of warning, invitation, and tenderness, the church is not prepared to lose. Generally, however, one thinks but little of the speaker while hearing Melvill. The manifest defects of a very peculiar delivery, both as regards its action and intonation; (if that may be called action which is the mere quivering and jerking of a body too intensely excited to be quiet a moment)—the evident feebleness and exhaustion of a frame charged to the brim with an earnestness, which seems labouring to find a tongue in every limb, while it keeps in strain and rapid action every muscle and fibre, are forgotten, after a little progress of the discourse, in the rapid and swelling current of thought in which the hearer is carried along, wholly engrossed with the new aspects, the rich and glowing scenery, the bold prominences and beautiful landscapes of truth remarkable both for variety and unity, with which every turn of the stream delights him. But then one must make haste, if he would see all. Melvill delivers his discourses as a war-horse rushes to the charge. He literally runs, till, for want of breath he can do so no longer. His involuntary pauses are as convenient to his audience as essential to himself. Then it is, that an equally breathless audience betraying the most convincing signs of having forgotten to breathe, commence their preparation for the next outset with a degree of unanimity and of business-like effort of adjustment, which can hardly fail of disturbing, a little, a stranger's gravity.

There is a peculiarity in the composition of Melvill's congregation which contributes much to give peculiarity to his discourses. His chapel is a centre to which hearers flock, drawn by the reputation of the preacher, not only from all the neighbourhood, but

from divers parts of the great metropolis, bringing under his reach, not only the highest intellectual character, but all varieties of states of mind; from that of the devout believer, to that of the habitual doubter, or confirmed infidel. In this mixed multitude, young men, of great importance, occupy a large place. Seed sown in that congregation is seen scattered over all London, and carried into all England. Hence there is an evident effort on the part of the preacher to introduce as much variety of topic and of treatment as is consistent with the great duty of always preaching and teaching Jesus Christ; of always holding up the cross, with its connected truths surrounding it, as the one great and all-pervading subject of his ministry. To these circumstances he alludes in a passage towards the end of the sermon *Difficulties of Scripture*, a sermon we would particularly recommend to the reader—and a passage, introductory to one of the most eloquent and impressive parts of the whole volume. 'We feel (he says) that we have a difficult part to perform in ministering to the congregation which assembles within these walls. Gathered as it is from many parts, and without question including, oftentimes, numbers who make no profession whatsoever, of religion, we think it bound on us to seek out great variety of subjects, so that, if possible, the case of none of the audience may be quite overlooked in a series of discourses.' We know not the preacher who succeeds better in this respect; who causes to pass before his people a richer, or more complete array of doctrinal and practical truth; exhibits it in a greater variety of lights; surrounds it with a scenery of more appropriate and striking illustration; meets more of the influential difficulties of young and active minds; grapples with more of the real enemy of scepticism, and for all classes of his congregation more diligently seeks out acceptable words, or brings more seasonably, out of his treasures, things new and old, and yet without failing to keep within the circle of always preaching Christ—teaching not only the truth, but 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' without obscurity, without compromise, and without fear, pointedly, fully, habitually.

It is on account of this eminent union of variety and faithfulness, this wide compass of excursion without ever losing sight of the cross as the central light and power in which every thing in religious lives, and moves, and has its being; it is because that same variety of minds which throng the seats and standing-places of Camden chapel, and hang with delight upon the lips of the preacher, finding in his teaching what rivets their attention, rebukes their worldliness, shames their doubts, annihilates their difficulties, and enlarges their views of the great and precious things of the Gospel, are found every where in this land, especially among our educated young men, that we have supposed the publication of these discourses might receive the Divine blessing, and be productive of very important benefits.

It is in the *expository* character of this author's discourses, that we would present them for imitation. Of the expositions themselves, we are not speaking; but of the conspicuous fact that whatever Scripture he selects, his sermon is made up of its elements. His text does not merely introduce his subject, but suggests and contains it; and not only contains, but is identical with it. His aim is confined to the single object of setting forth plainly and *instructively* some one or two great features of scriptural truth, of which the chosen passage is a distinct declaration. No matter what the topic, the hearer is sure of an interesting and prominent setting out of the text in its connection, and that it will exercise an important bearing upon every branch of the discourse, constantly receiving new lights and applications, and not finally relinquished till the sermon is ended, and the hearer has obtained an inception of that one passage of the Bible upon his mind, never to be forgotten. In other words, Melvill is strictly a preacher upon *texts* instead of *subjects*; upon truths, as expressed and connected in the Bible, instead of topics, as isolated or classified, according to the ways of man's wisdom. This is precisely as it should be. The preacher is not called to deliver *dissertations* upon questions of theology, or *orations* upon specific themes of duty and spiritual interest, but expositions of divine truth as that is presented in the infinitely diversified combinations, and incidental allusions of the