

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

THE RELIGIONS OF INDIA.

Sir. William Wilson Hunter read recently a profoundly interesting paper, before the Indian section of the Society of Arts, in London, of which the following is a synopsis :

It has slowly come to be understood, at least by some, that Hinduism, though utterly incapable of being, like Christianity, a missionary religion for the world, or like Islam, for two parts of the world, or like Buddhism, for Asia generally, being absolutely territorial, is yet, within its own sacred land, not only a missionary religion, but the chief missionary religion, having annually, it is said, more accessions by far than either Christianity or Mohammedanism. After 4,000 years of occupancy, it has not yet by any means closed up its assimilation of aboriginal tribes. And according to Sir William Hunter, there are still in India fifty millions of human beings lying outside or barely inside the pale of orthodox Hinduism and Islam. Here he holds, is the line of least resistance, along which the church is called to regard it as her principal immediate duty to advance. Hes apts. "I believe that within fifty years these fifty millions will be absorbed into one or other of the higher faiths, and that it rests in no small measure with Christian England, whether they are chiefly incorporated into the native religions or into Christianity." This shows, as Sir William remarks, that Christianity in India has a vast area of extension opened before it, even if it should not for a indefinite length of time lessen the numbers, or even stay the advance, of Hinduism and Mohammedanism. One-fifth of the people of India is a prize worth trying for even according to the canons of ordinary probability.

Islam has another fifth of the people of India, and these, both according to Sir William and to the author of an article only less important than his, published in the February Contemporary, are very far from having been principally won by the sword. Indeed, around the three centres of Mohammedan rule, Delhi, Agra, and Lucknow, the Mohammedans are under fourteen per cent. of the population, while in Lower Bengal they are thirty-one per cent. Islam, Sir William shows, while not forgetting its advantages of conquest, and its obligations to violent conversion of its Hindu subjects, did also what the church is invited to do, plunged among the teeming millions of the lower races, "fishermen, hunters, pirates, and low-caste tillers of the soil, whom Hinduism had barely admitted within its pale." To these, "Islam came as a revelation from on high. It was the creed of the governing race; its missionaries were men of zeal, who brought the Gospel of the unity of God and the equality of man in His sight to a despised and neglected population." And in this century a great religious revival has purged out the abject pagan superstitions and "filiginous rites of low-caste Hinduism," amid which "the white light of Semitic monotheism had almost flickered out." But the author shows that it is unwarranted to suppose that Mohammedanism is advancing largely now in India. Of the five Provinces outside the famine area of 1877, within which a religious census has been taken, the Moslem increase in one, from 1872 to 1881, has gained a good deal on the population, in two more has gained somewhat, in one has fallen behind, and in one has fallen a good deal behind. In Bengal, where Islam is strongest, the population has gained 10.89 per cent., the religion 10.96 per cent. Intellectually, it has made very rapid progress, of course, on lines laid out by Christian culture, within a generation, and Sir William declares, contrary to general impressions, that "Islam in India has shown that it is perfectly able to dwell in peace and comfort in the new Indian world."

Though Christianity in India has been said to be advancing much less rapidly than Hinduism, and in several Provinces much less rapidly than Mohammedanism, yet regarded as gaining on its own numbers, it seems to be growing much faster than either. Passing over, though not with disparagement, the 1,600,000 Catholic and Syrian Christians, who do not seem to represent at present "the new disruptive force" of Christianity, the author dwells mainly upon the 600,000 Christians of India. Protestant Christianity was introduced by Danish and German Lutherans, who are still, though now overshadowed by the missionaries of the governing race, going quietly and steadily on. "English missionary work practically began in the last year of the last century. It owes its origin to private effort. But the three devoted men who planted this mighty English growth had to labour under the shelter of a foreign flag, and the Governor of a little Danish settlement had to refuse their surrender to a Governor-General of British India. The record of the work done by the Serampur missionaries reads like an Eastern romance. They created a prose vernacular literature for Bengal; they established the modern method of popular education; they founded the present Protestant Indian Church; they gave the first great impulse to the native press: they set up the first steam engine in India; with its help they introduced the modern manufacture of paper on a large scale, in ten years they translated and printed the Bible, or parts thereof, in thirty-one languages. Although they received help from their Baptist friends in England, yet the main part of their funds they earned by their own heads and hands. They built a college which still ranks among the most splendid educational edifices in India. As one contemplates its magnificent pillared facade overlooking the broad Hugli River, or mounts its costly staircase of cut brass (the gift of the King of Denmark), one is lost in admiration of the faith of three poor men who dared to build on so noble a scale.

FULLY-ANSWERED.

"SUBSCRIBER'S" QUERY CAUSES COMMENT.

As our readers will remember, a letter was published in our columns a few days ago, signed "Subscriber," which dwelt at some length upon a subject of general interest, and which contained several inquiries which will be found answered in the following:

To the Editor:—Several days ago I noticed a communication in your paper from "Subscriber," in which considerable comment was indulged in concerning the pamphlets which are widely distributed by Messrs. H. H. Warner & Co., of Rochester, N.Y. These pamphlets are published in order that the public may become conversant with the symptoms and growth of disease peculiar to the kidneys, and which is, it must be admitted, the productive cause, in a majority of instances, of other organic disorders. The publishers of these pamphlets are also the discoverers and manufacturers of the noted Warner's Safe Cure, which is known to be the only means for the prevention and cure of kidney disease, as can be testified to in every community. In the pamphlets referred to there appear a number of testimonials from parties who speak in the highest terms of how they have in many instances been restored to health by Warner's Safe Cure, after having been given up by doctors to die, and attached to those statements are the fac simile signatures of the parties themselves.

I am personally aware that all the testimonials published by this firm are genuine and are the voluntary statements of persons who are anxious to manifest their gratitude for the unexpected return of health and vigour which Warner's Safe Cure has brought them. To make assurance doubly sure, it can be added that Messrs. H. H. Warner & Co., have for years published a standing offer of \$5,000 to anyone who will prove to an impartial referee that any testimonial published by them is not, so far as they know, bona fide and absolutely true. What more does "Subscriber" desire to convince him in addition to his own statement, that his neighbours all tell him that Warner's Safe Cure has done more good for them than they have received from the doctors.


In view, Mr. Editor, of the many persons who are sacrificed daily to the bigotry and ignorance of physicians, who persist in treating patients for symptoms called consumption, apoplexy, brain troubles, and nervous disorders, when the real cause is disease of the kidneys—which should be detected and quickly eradicated by the use of Warner's Safe Cure—I maintain that the value of those pamphlets, which place in the hands of the public the means of knowing the truth, cannot be over-estimated. FAIR PLAY.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL.

But if the physical results of alcohol are varied, much more diverse are its effects upon the mental and moral nature of man. Indeed, they are as multiform as man himself. One general classification only is possible. Certain individuals (fortunately the small minority) are always pleasurable affected by stimulants. Each successive dose arouses in them increased exhilaration, and when intoxication supervenes, their sensations are delightful. Their very sense is exalted, they fancy themselves endowed with every gift—with all power and possession. As it is often remarked, these are generally men of the most brilliant intellect, and of the most charming moral qualities. Once led captive by alcohol, these unfortunates seldom have sufficient power of will to refrain from renewed indulgence. No moral considerations avail to restrain them, and, with few exceptions, they yield wholly, finally, and fatally to the tempter. For such men total abstinence is the only refuge. . . . Upon the large majority of men the effects of alcohol, taken to intoxication, are clearly and essentially different; although at first exhilarated, repeated indulgence brings drowsiness, dulness of apprehension, anaesthesia, vertigo, nausea, and vomiting—in short, bodily and mental symptoms which are excessively disagreeable. Of this class very few become drunkards, and those are men whom anaesthesia becomes desirable as a temporary refuge from bodily pain or mental distress. Herein lies the sole explanation of the fact that the proportion of drunkards to moderate and habitual drinkers remains so small.—Dr. W. S. Searle, in North American Review for April.

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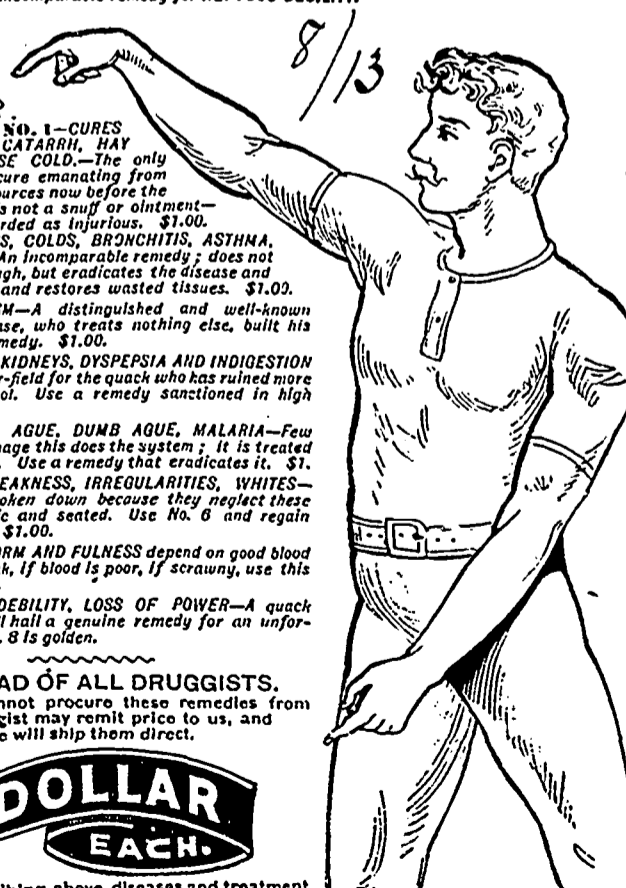
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