

## Missionary World.

### THE LAMENT OF A MISSIONARY BOX.

Forgotten and forlorn I live,  
Upon a dusty shelf,  
And feel so downcast and so sad  
I hardly know myself;  
A missionary box am I  
And better days have seen,  
For copper, silver, yes, and gold,  
Within my walls have been.  
Now I am empty, no, not quite,  
For something you may hear—  
A mournful jingle from my depths  
By pennies made, I fear;  
I scorn not pennies, no, indeed,  
Their worth too well I know,  
But twopence only in a box  
Does make one's spirits low.  
The missionaries say indeed  
That pence to pounds soon grow,  
But older people ought to give—  
We want our money so.  
And thus, in emptiness I wait  
And dustier grow each day,  
While heedless of my silent plea  
You round me work and play.  
My words are poor and weak at best,  
I know not how to plead,  
But look upon the distant fields  
"To harvests white" indeed;  
The heathen be in thickest gloom,  
Do you need a stronger plea?  
Then listen to His voice who said—  
"Ye did it unto Me."  
The smallest offerings for His sake  
Into the treasury given,  
He with an eye of love will note  
And own one day in heaven;  
And even here you'll have His smile  
While you the words believe  
That far "more blessed 'tis to give  
Than only "to receive."

—The Juvenile.

### SOME OF OUR SISTERS IN INDIA.

From an English magazine, *Medical Missions at Home and Abroad*, we take the following account of a visit to a Bengali home by Annie R. Butler:

Miss Harris took us to a Bengali house where she taught, and where Christian teaching was beginning to tell.

A scholar at this house, a young girl of fifteen, looked different in dress and expression from those who surrounded her. She read out of an English third standard book, and answered some questions out of a catechism beautifully.

Fancy this girl of fifteen having a little daughter of four months old. That sounds odd to you, does it not? But in India it is nothing remarkable. There, on the ground, on a thick counterpane or *rezai*, lay little Short Shorshy, looking as fat and strong as her best friends could desire. She had a good many friends, as we found, for she was the delight and pride of all the women in the house; and an Indian household is generally a very large one.

These women stood by and looked on while the young mother read to Miss Harris, and while we nursed and praised the dear baby, to the joy of that girl-mother's heart. One of them, we were told, with dark, wild, loose locks, and with nothing over her head, was a priestess or servant of a heathen temple.

'They are wonderfully pretty,' said the women at last, after a long contemplation of my sister and myself. They thoughtfully added, after making the same remark about a missionary friend of ours one day:

'Is she considered so in her own country?'

Presently one of the women came up to Miss Harris and said:

'It is our custom to give something to eat; but will they eat if we bring it?'

They thought they had better make sure of this first, for it is a great trial to them to have offered hospitality refused. The neighbors taunted them with the fact as if it were an insult; and an insult, indeed, it is considered.

'O, yes,' said Miss Harris, cheerfully, and we both stood committed.

Happily, it answered the same purpose if one takes the eatables home. The natives are too bashful themselves to feed in public, and are not surprised if they find that Europeans prefer to take their presents of food away with them. And when a quantity of square, white-colored cakes appeared, and a

number more of another kind literally running with ghee, and some other delicacy, the nature of which I have forgotten, why, I think you will not be astonished to hear that we were thankful to be able to say:

'How very kind you are! But you will allow us to take it with us in the carriage?'

Those women were generous indeed. Just as we were leaving, yet another pile of cakes was presented to us.

Once in our gari, we tasted a specimen of each kind of cookery, so that we might be able to pronounce truthfully upon its merits; and then the feast as a whole was consigned to Mrs. Harwood's care to give away.

None but a very low caste Hindoo will accept food from a Christian. We offered a cake to a boy in the road that day, and he took it, but our missionary friends said that they had never known such a thing to happen before. Either the boy must have been of an extremely low caste, or he must have been very hungry, indeed.

While we were at this house, Miss Johnstone had seen several patients at another.

She could not at first quite make out what was the matter with one of the women; but at last she found out that she was a widow, and only, therefore, allowed to eat once in the twenty-four hours. The poor creature was suffering from the exhaustion and indigestion occasioned by this barbarous plan.

Another poor woman brought tears into the missionary's eyes by her earnest entreaty:

'O, make me well! I am a widow, and so, whether I am well or ill, I have to slave just the same for the others.'

She was told of Him who, unlike the cruel Hindoo deities, is a Father to the fatherless, and a Husband to the widow. How sweetly such words must fall on the ears of the down-trodden women of India! No wonder that one of them said once:

'I think that the Bible must have been written by a woman, for it says so many kind things about us.'

I forget what was the matter with another of Miss Johnstone's patients, a child; but, whatever it was, it necessitated a trifling surgical operation. The missionary got out some scissors, for she thought:

'These will look less alarming than a knife.'

No sooner did the old grandmother catch sight of them, however, than she cried out and protested, and made such a *tomasha* (fuss, noise, excitement) that the child took the alarm, and added its cries to hers. The mother, happily, was sensible and firm, and the needed treatment was carried through, and before Miss Johnstone left, the grandmother apologized for her folly, saying:

'I have only a little heart, and so I am easily frightened.'

'It is scarcely a figure of speech to say that "woman is the corner-stone of heathenism." Notwithstanding their degradation, heathen mothers have immense power over their sons. The fear of a mother's curse prevents many Chinamen from listening to the claims of the gospel. An intelligent Hindu exclaims: "It is the women who maintain the system of Hinduism." Christ and His gospel are the only levers that have raised the nations. But in all the Orient only a woman's hand can adjust these levers to the corner-stone.'

A missionary in Bangalore, visiting a *zenana* lately, came across a young wife who had been educated at a mission school, but had married a heathen husband. The poor young wife told the missionary that she remembered the lessons she had learned at school, and that she prayed secretly every day to "Jesus Swami." It was a glimpse into the secrets of a Hindu woman's heart.

The Protestant Missionary societies have 2,500 agents in the field, and there are a thousand more women than men. This advance of female agency has been chiefly made during the last quarter of a century.

In Kyoto, the capital of Japan, at a great prayer meeting, all were asked to rise who had become Christians through the influence of some friend or kinsman. More than half of the audience rose.

### PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Golden Rule: Criticism is a fertile seed when watered with fit praise.

The New York Independent: Missionaries are optimists and not pessimists; and while they do not fail to realize the tremendous power of evil they have confidence that the still more tremendous power of good will conquer, not merely in some future age, but in the present.

Presbyterian Banner: The public school is one of the most important institutions of the American republic, since upon it depends the safety of its future, and it needs to be watched with careful eye. It is in these schools that citizens must be reared, and good citizenship is something which is not born in a day. France once tried the experiment of creating a nation of citizens without preparation, and their new-born liberty nearly wrecked the country. The mission of the school is to educate by slow degrees a race of men and women who will be animated by a love for country and home, who will guard with jealous care the interests of both.

Mid-Continent: There is a wide difference between the pastoral call and a social call. In the former the subject of a personal religion is the paramount topic of conversation. Once upon a time a pastor made a regular pastoral call upon a family that had complained that he did not call upon them enough, and he said he never afterwards heard a complaint from that family. The truth is, a good many people do not want a call of this character. No wonder that many self-respecting ministers have a feeling bordering on contempt for such a demand upon their time. Social calling is a matter which society regulates, and in respect of such calling the obligations resting upon a minister and his people are mutual and reciprocal.

Philadelphia Presbyterian: Money-getting is not reprehensible. It is the getting it in the wrong way, or the making its acquisition the chief end of life, or the holding on to it unduly when gotten, that are to be condemned. Money is a necessity, and can be made exceedingly serviceable to the church, to the home and to society. It becomes a test of one's principles, and indicates the bent of his mind and heart. It serves as a criterion of character. He who manages it aright evinces a high sense of honor and of responsibility. He who acquires it legitimately has due regard to the laws of God and the rights of man. He who spends it wisely, considerately and beneficently, evidences love to God's Kingdom and to human kind. John Wesley's simply but comprehensive rule in regard to its use is ever timely: "Get all you can, save all you can, give all you can." This calls for diligence, economy and benevolence—three fundamental elements in worthy character-building.

Christian Work: But not all discipline comes from bereavement. It often comes in through the open door of the home, where the son or the daughter grieves the heart of the father or mother. It is felt, too, where the husband turns away from the wife and has no welcome for her sweet and tender offices: then indeed the iron enters into her soul. And not unfrequently—would it were rarer!—the conditions are reversed, and the wife returns kindness with neglect, or with positive coldness. Sometimes, too, she lays down boundary lines which the sensitive, loving husband is forbidden to cross—and such things have been. Even more helpless is the man under such circumstances, and oftener more to be pitied than the woman, when the neglect is on the other side. Alas for those, whoever they be, who are the cause of the heartache, the secret sorrowing!—they do not see what sometimes it is given to others to see,—that while one life is being enriched by the suffering and discipline imposed, the other is becoming impoverished. And so the twain cease to walk together, and each day sees them farther apart.

### Teacher and Scholar.

Sept. 9th, 1894. } JESUS AND NICODEMUS { John iii. 1-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—John iii. 16.  
Soon after the miracle at Cana, Jesus went to Capernaum. He remained there only a few days, for we soon find Him at Jerusalem to be present at the Passover Feast. It was during this visit that He drove out of the Temple court those who were making it a market place, as was seen in last lesson. At this feast also Jesus did many miracles.—John ii. 23.

Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin. He was a man of good position, and perhaps wealthy. He seems to have been a just, fair-minded man, though perhaps timid in disposition.

Though he did not openly confess Christ, yet later on he protested against the condemnation of Jesus. The last notice of him is when, with Joseph of Arimathea, they ask Pilate for the body of Jesus and provides for its burial. It is interesting to note how his interest in Jesus grew. At first he sought Jesus under cover of night, then he boldly defended Him in the council, and at last bravely ministered at His burial.

I. The Enquiry of Nicodemus. vv. 1-4.—There was a man . . . Nicodemus, v. 1. He was a ruler and teacher among the Jews. He was a man of position and influence. His case is remarkable, for not many of this class sought Jesus, or became His followers.

The same came to Jesus by night . . . v. 2. Why he came by night we are not told, and we should not judge him harshly. Better than that not at all! Perhaps his natural timidity was one reason, but there may have been other reasons also. Perhaps Jesus was then at leisure, and possibly Nicodemus was busy during the day.

Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher sent from God, v. 2. Nicodemus opens the interview in a respectful manner. He addresses Jesus as he would one of his own rank, calling Him, Rabbi. He acknowledges that Jesus must have had peculiar divine authority as a teacher. This authority was proved by the miracles which Jesus did. His works proved that God was with Him, and that His message was divine. It does not clearly appear that Nicodemus recognized the Messiahship of Jesus, but that God was with Him, and in His message he confessed.

Jesus answered, . . . Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, v. 3. At first sight this scarcely seems an answer to what Nicodemus had said. But the connection is closer than at first appears. Jesus would assure Nicodemus that it is not a teacher merely but a Saviour; not instruction simply, but renovation he needs. So when Nicodemus said, "Rabbi, Thou art a teacher," Jesus replied, "Ruler, thou must be born again."

Nicodemus saith, . . . How can a man be born, v. 4. It can hardly be that Nicodemus spoke thus, in irony, as some think. Such a view does not agree well with the serious and respectful temper shown by this ruler.

II. The Reply of Jesus. vv. 5-14.—Jesus answered, . . . Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, v. 5. That which is born of the flesh is flesh . . . of the Spirit . . . Spirit, v. 6. Here we have the essence of the reply of Jesus. There is much debate as to the meaning of "born of water" here. Some take it to refer to water-baptism, and to teach that this rite is necessary to salvation. Others see in the "water" a symbol of the "word" as the "incorruptible seed" by which a man is born.

That such spiritual renewal is necessary is evident because the "flesh" produces only what is carnal. That which is spiritual can only come from the working of the Holy Spirit in the soul.

Marvel not, v. 7. The wind bloweth, v. 8. The mysterious nature of the new birth is stated and illustrated. It is hidden in the soul. It is wrought by an unseen agent. But the effects are visible. So Jesus admits that there is mystery in being born again. Then the operation of the wind as it blows to and fro in gentle breeze or raging storm, illustrates this mysterious reality.

Nicodemus answered, . . . How can these things be, v. 9. Jesus answered, . . . Art thou a Master, v. 10. Nicodemus confesses his ignorance of the meaning of Jesus. Jesus gently chides him for not having some knowledge of these spiritual realities. From this we may gather that under the Jewish dispensation men might possess this spiritual light into which He would lead this ruler.

We speak that we do know, . . . and testify, v. 11-13. In these verses Jesus assures Nicodemus of the reality of what He had said. He spoke what He knew. He testified to what He had seen. Having come from heaven, and had certain knowledge of these things, He could speak of them to men with divine authority. He further chides Nicodemus and others like him for not receiving this testimony. If the outward visible things of the gospel be not believed, their faith in the inward spiritual realities cannot be realized.

III. The Gospel Message. vv. 14-16.—As Moses lifted up the serpent, v. 14. Here the death of Christ as an offering for sin is set forth. The case of the brazen serpent is used to illustrate this great fact. Here the sacrifice which Christ offered once for all for sin is set forth as the basis of the new life.

That whosoever believeth, v. 15. This is the simple condition on our part of obtaining eternal life. For God so loved the world, v. 16. Here is the gracious source of this new life. God's love is so great that He gave His son to be lifted up on the cross, that whosoever looks unto Him may live.

IV. Doctrinal Teachings.—1. Jesus is Saviour as well as teacher. 2. Spiritual light is needed to discern spiritual things. 3. Regeneration precedes faith and makes it possible. 4. Faith receives Christ consciously as Saviour. 5. The death of Christ a real sacrifice for sin.