

"*Essays and Reviews*" which are now so notorious. This is one important class of men with which the missionaries have to contend in India.

It appears that there are now in India no fewer than 400 European and American missionaries; 48 native evangelists; 700 catechists; 331 native churches; 8500 communicants; 100,000 converts; 1350 vernacular schools; 93 boarding-schools; 102 boarding-schools for girls; 126 English schools; 350 day-schools for girls. Besides these agencies there are twenty-five printing presses and several other means for translating the Scriptures into the native language.

Principal CUNNINGHAM addressed the Conference in reference to the difficulty of obtaining the services of young ministers for the Foreign field. His remarks are so strikingly appropriate to the circumstances of our own beloved and afflicted Church that we cannot refrain from quoting them:—

"But although all that is well known, and frequently pressed on the public attention, the Foreign Mission Committee have not been able to secure the services of many suitable persons from among our students, probationers, and younger ministers, for this field of Christian usefulness. These things ought not so to be. This state of matters must not be allowed to last. *It cannot continue longer without bringing discredit upon the Church and on all concerned, without doing injury to the cause of Christ, and drawing upon us, in some form or other, tokens of his displeasure.* On these grounds, it demands the immediate and serious attention of all who are really interested in the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, whether at home or abroad. In adverting to this subject, we are naturally led to inquire into—first, what may be the cause why it has become so difficult to get well qualified young men to embrace the mission field of labour. Now, here, it may be assumed that the difficulty does not arise from the non-existence, among our students and probationers and younger ministers, of men who are qualified for the mission work. There is, I think, good ground to believe that God has given us such men, but men themselves do not seem to be willing to embrace the opportunity, or to listen to God's call. It is felt, indeed, the mission work should be regarded as presenting, upon the whole, a more difficult and arduous, and therefore a more honourable, sphere of labour than any in our own country, and one, consequently, to which only a class of persons possessed of superior qualifications—that is, qualifications superior to what may be usually expected in the general run of candidates for the ministry—should be encouraged to aspire. Still the qualifications for mission work are, in kind, just what might be expected in the generality of candidates for the ministry; but the degree in which these qualifications are indispensable in the mission field ought not to be exaggerated or placed so high as to exclude any very considerable number of young men from entertaining the question whether they should select this department of labour. The first qualifications, and great fundamental qualifications, for the ministry of the Gospel, whether at home or abroad, whether in Christian or in heathen lands, are just good principle, by which, of course, I mean genuine piety, sincere and supreme devotedness of heart and life to the service of Christ. The great qualifications are just good principle, good talents, good sense, with suitable training and education; and there are surely a very considerable number of men among the classes to whom I have referred who may be fairly regarded as possessed of these qualifications. Statements have occasionally been made in connection with our foreign missions which were perhaps characterised by some exaggeration, and this point may have exercised some influence on the minds of the young men. These have operated as one cause of the difficulty which now presses upon us. Statements have occasionally been made in influential quarters which seem fitted to convey an impression that none but first-class men should ever think of offering themselves for the mission field. I have reason to believe that in some instances such statements as these have deterred young men from entertaining the question, who might have proved valuable missionaries. I never hesitate to inculcate on students that there are no talents, however exalted—no acquirements, however extensive—no capacities for usefulness at home, which they may have, or fancy they