

Pastor and People.

LOVING WORDS.

Loving words will cost but little,
Journeying up the hill of life;
But they make the weak and weary
Stronger, braver for the strife.
Do you count them only trifles?
What to earth are sun and rain?
Never was a kind word wasted,
Never one was said in vain.

When the cares of life are many,
And its burdens heavy glow
For the ones who walk beside you,
If you love them, tell them so.
What you count of little value
Has an almost magic power,
And beneath their cheering sunshine
Hearts will blossom like a flower.

So, as up life's hill we journey,
Let us scatter, all the way,
Kindly words, to serve as sunshine
In the dark and cloudy day.
Grudge no loving word, my brother,
As along through life you go;
To the ones who journey with you,
If you love them, tell them so.

—Golden Days.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS—THEIR CLAIMS, PROGRESS AND REWARD.

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(Concluded.)

3. But once more, because of Christ's command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," our fellow-men justly claim the glad tidings of salvation from us. The efficacy of Christ's atoning blood is sufficient for all mankind, and it is His will that free salvation through that blood should be proclaimed and offered to every human being. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil." He, the invincible Leader and glorious Captain of Salvation vanquished Satan and all the powers of darkness, triumphing over them in His cross and resurrection; all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth and when He issues His command every true soldier of the cross should know nothing but implicit and prompt obedience. When one was complaining to the Duke of Wellington of the hopelessness of Christianizing India, that stern old veteran, the hero of a hundred fights, quickly silenced him with the question, "What are your marching orders?" so as we profess to fight under the banner of King Jesus our only question should be, What is His command? As loving and loyal subjects of this Almighty King and as souls redeemed through His precious blood we are under the very strongest obligations to obey Him and to spend and be spent in His service. There are some works of the devil which need to be destroyed in the hearts of professing Christians before they will respond to this claim of Jesus and of their benighted brethren and sisters as they ought. Prevailing apathy, indifference, worldliness and covetousness which is idolatry, are unmistakable evidences of the handiwork of that arch enemy who ever hinders the work of Christ where he cannot altogether prevent or stop it, and always mars its symmetry and beauty where he cannot utterly despoil or deface it.

And oh, what works of the devil are still to be destroyed in those dark places of the earth which are full of the habitations of horrid cruelty!

Faithful to Christ, loyal in our allegiance to Him, it admits of no question that what is dear to His heart ought to be dear to ours, what He loves we ought to love, what He hates we ought to hate, what He commands we ought to do, and what He longs to have done we ought to lay all our power and talents and energies and means under tribute to accomplish. And what illustrious examples we have in some of our fellow-men of the fulfilment of this command of Christ so far as it lay in their power! The noble self-denial, the heroic endurance and sufferings, and the martyr's death of so many in the mission field in the past in fulfilling this command of our Saviour ought to be like a trumpet call to awaken us from our lethargy and bid us go forward in the work in which they toiled and struggled and suffered and sacrificed their lives. "To appreciate the divine spirit of missions we need to study the missionary biography which teaches by examples its power to illumine and transfigure human character."

Many indeed there have been whose lives constitute new chapters in the acts of the Apostles, and both demonstrate and illustrate that true apostolic succession of a Christ-like spirit and a Pauline enthusiasm and self-oblivion.

A preacher in England asked some British soldiers, "If Queen Victoria were to issue a proclamation and placing it in the hands of her army and navy, were to say, 'Go ye into all the world and proclaim it to every creature,' how long do you think it would take to do it?" One of them after a little thought replied, "Well, I think we could manage it in about eighteen months." The professed soldiers of King Jesus very far outnumber the British army and navy; if they were all faithful to duty the knowledge of the Lord would soon cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

PROGRESS.

Time and space forbid taking more than a passing glance at the progress of Christian missions. In fact, scores of volumes might be written upon it, and yet the half would not be told. God hath done marvellous things in missions whereof we are glad. The history of missions is more wonderful than the pages of romance, and is worthy of being written in golden letters of sunlight. Theodore Christlieb attempted a survey of Protestant missions. Awed by the greatness and grandeur of the theme, he was as one who from a balloon seeks to command a general view of an army so vast that no one horizon bounds it, because its lines reach round the world. It is proper, however, to refer to the progress of missions, even if I can do little more, for it is well-fitted to arouse enthusiasm, stimulate effort, strengthen faith, brighten hope, enkindle love, increase liberality and encourage Christian enterprise. "All the shallow pretexts for our neglect and selfishness, our meagre offerings and few labourers are shamed into silence when our opened eyes behold in the history of missions itself a burning bush whose every leaf and twig are aflame with the presence of Jehovah."

Taking the small cloud no bigger than a man's hand appearing on the horizon in 1792 as the beginning of modern missions when the "Society for propagating the Gospel among the heathen" was formed at Kettering and when thirteen pounds two shillings and sixpence was the amount given, that little cloud has increased in size till it covers the whole heavens, and there is a sound of abundance of rain. One missionary was sent out by that society in 1793, the heroic and devoted William Carey; now the Protestant mission work of the world has 2,755 ordained missionaries, or about three and a half times the number of ministers on the rolls of the Presbyteries of our Church in this Dominion; 2,163 female missionaries, 2,243 ordained native helpers, and 644,584 communicants, while the total amount given to missions is in round numbers \$10,000,000. The Bible is now printed in two hundred and fifty languages and dialects, and there are one hundred and fifty million copies of it in circulation. The number of missionary societies is tenfold what it was eighty years ago, and the number of converts nearly fifty-fold. The increase in membership in heathen lands is thirty times greater than at home in proportion to the number of ministers employed. In the missions of Siam and the Laos country the membership of the native churches has increased just about five hundred per cent. in the last ten years. Look at the marvellous work in Formosa under our own Dr. Mackay; see four thousand choice young men in the Christian colleges offering for the foreign field, see twenty-five Woman's Boards in Britain and America actively engaged in foreign mission work, see the unparalleled uprising of our young men and women in behalf of missions, behold the wonderful work of woman for woman in heathen lands, look at some of the most active workers in the Young Men's Christian Association in Kansas, Nebraska and Minnesota deciding to be the pioneers in carrying the Gospel to a district of one hundred millions of benighted Africans, and the fuller opening up of the Dark Continent to Christian civilization, by the recent travels of Henry M. Stanley, the successor of the immortal Livingstone; "Africa girdled, crossed, penetrated by missionary bands drawing to itself the wondering gaze of the world;" see the hoary systems of heathen philosophy and idolatry honey-combed and undermined by the persistent and persuasive power of Gospel truth, see the opening of every country of the world to the missionary of the cross, and "the isles waiting for the law of God," and you behold in these things a few of the facts which are "the finger of God" pointing not merely to past progress and achievements, but also to future and glorious triumph when "the heathen shall be given unto Jesus for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession," and from a ransomed world shall ascend the glad shout of praise, "Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

At the world's missionary council held recently in London there were representatives from almost every people and kindred and tongue and nation on the face of the earth, and it was there and then shown "that from the Pillars of Hercules to the Golden Horn, from the Arabian Gulf to the Chinese Sea, from the silver bergs of Greenland to the Southern Cape and the Land of Fire, God had flung wide the ports and portals of sealed empires and hermit nations, hurled to the very ground the walls and barriers of ancient customs and creeds, and made all nations neighbours, and that even the seeming waste of precious lives had been but the breaking of the costly flask filling the world with the odour of unselfish and heroic piety, and prompting to its imitation. It was shown that India is now a starry firmament sparkling with missionary stations; the "Lone Star," a mission which in forty-five days gathered nine thousand souls into the fold of Christ, having grown to a constellation of glories; Turkey is planted with churches from the Golden Horn to the Tigris and Euphrates, and the cross is beginning to outshine the crescent; Syria, whose soil is sacred to Jesus' blood, educates young men and women in her Christian schools, seminaries and colleges, and from her consecrated press scatters throughout the dominions of Mohammed the million leaves of the Tree of Life; Japan strides in her 'seven league boots' towards a Christian civilization and with a rapidity that rivals apostolic days; Ethiopia stretches out her hand to God; Polynesia's thousand church spires point like fingers to the sky, and where the cannibal ovens roasted the victims for the feast of death the Lord's table is now spread for the feast of life and love, and even Papal lands invite Christian labour." Well may we

stand in astonishment and admiration and exclaim, "What hath God wrought?"

REWARD.

As to the rewards of Christian missions they are manifold, great, rich, abundant and most blessed and glorious, affecting both temporal and spiritual interests and relating to both time and eternity. I need not remind you that the commerce of Christian nations has been wondrously enlarged through the civilizing and elevating influences of the Christian religion upon pagan and heathen lands, and that corresponding profit of a material character has accrued to Christian nations who lead the van in commercial enterprise. But no enlightened Christian mind can ever regard the financial or material benefits of missions as being anything more than of secondary importance. It seems evident, too, from God's Word, that those who give to the cause of missions from right motives may properly expect a blessing upon their worldly interests. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in Mine House and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall your vine cast her fruits before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." "In trying to defraud God we only defraud ourselves. The eagle that robbed the altar set fire to her nest from the burning coal that adhered to the stolen flesh. So men who retain God's money in their treasuries will find it a losing possession. No man ever yet lost by serving God with a whole heart nor gained by serving Him with a half one. We may compromise with conscience for half the price, but God will not endorse the compromise, and, like Ananias and Sapphira, we shall lose not only what we thought we had purchased so cheaply but also the price we paid for it. If we would have God open His treasury we must open ours. One cause of the barrenness of the Church is the parsimony of its members."

"There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

But especially will there be a rich and abundant spiritual reward in this life to the man who cheerfully and with loving heart gives liberally whether of service or of means that the kingdom of Christ may be extended and established in the world. "The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." And when men and women lay themselves upon the altar of missions, and with consecrated lives labour and suffer, and dare and do and die for the glory of our Redeemer and the salvation of souls, who shall say that they have no reward in this life? Have they not the noble satisfaction of knowing that they are following the footsteps of Him who died for us while we were yet sinners, that they are treading the way of self-denial which He trod, and having fellowship with the eternal Son of God in laying down their lives for the brethren? Is true pleasure to be found only in sordid gain, or in the lap of ease, luxury or selfishness? Is not the highest and purest enjoyment realized exclusively in the service of Christ? Let the martyrs and missionaries of the cross bear witness. Who can estimate the joy of the missionary in seeing the mighty work of God the Holy Spirit as He restores the divine image to fallen and degraded and corrupt humanity, and in receiving the gratitude and love of those whom he has been instrumental in saving? And those who are unable to go to the heathen but who give generously of their Christian love, prayers, sympathy and money, have these returned ten-fold into their bosom in the large accession of spiritual life and comfort and joy which they receive from the Lord of All. And is there not a blessed reward here and now in entering into the mind of Christ as to the salvation of the world, and enjoying the exalted privilege of being co-workers with Him, feeling confident that "if we suffer with Him we shall also be glorified together," and shall at length hear the welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

And the final and glorious reward of missions shall be when He, the first and unapproachably the greatest of all missionaries, shall gather all His own faithful ones in His own heavenly home, when a multitude which no man can number of every people and kindred and nation and tongue shall come from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south, shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, and the King shall say unto them, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me."

Then they "that were wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turned many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." No one will then think that he laboured enough, or suffered enough, or gave enough that his glorious Redeemer might see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied (but every one will be satisfied), but every one will be lost in wonder, love and praise of that blessed Lord who graciously accepts and owns his imperfect and unworthy service and rewards that which He Himself has enabled him to do with eternal glory.