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THE
CHURCHMAN

JANUARY, 1886.

ART. I.—THE REFLEX BENEFITS OF CHURCH
MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.

AT the present time there are many tokens which seem to indicate that a widespread and increasing interest is being awakened in the great work of Foreign Missions. This is manifested in an evident craving for Missionary information; in an increase of ready willingness for self-sacrifice in the cause; in a deeper tone of spirituality pervading all the home efforts; and in the growth of that blessed spirit of prayer which is ever the forerunner of greater things. This interest is also manifested in certain developments of Missionary zeal and co-operation recently organized in connection with the Church Missionary Society, such as the Unions for Prayer which have been formed in many districts throughout the country. I may also refer to the three London Unions, which are so rich in promise of happy results; viz., "The C.M. Lay Workers' Union for London," with its 285 members; "The Ladies' C.M. Union," and the C.M. Union of Younger Clergy for London and its neighbourhood. I can bear personal testimony also, from what I witnessed on a recent visit to Cambridge, how real and eager a Missionary spirit exists among many of the undergraduates of that University—a fact full of hopefulness.

As we now pause on the threshold of a New Year and look around, the Missionary cause evidently stands forth in the forefront of indispensable agencies, second to none for its beneficent fruits. We would express the wish that the prominent position which has been awarded to it in the January CHURCHMAN may be significant of the awakening of a greatly increased Missionary interest in this year of grace 1886. And we may point to the scheme of the C.M.S. for holding simultaneous meetings at convenient centres throughout the country

during a week in February as giving fair promise that this wish will be realized. When we think of the very small portion of the world already evangelized, and of unenlightened souls going to their final account with every tick of the clock, ought we not, as a Christian Nation, to redouble our efforts for their speedy rescue? The consideration of that especial aspect of Missionary enterprise which consists in its reflex results and blessings may help to stimulate our zeal in the great world-wide work. We shall thus learn how great is the faithfulness of Him Who commissioned His Church to evangelize all nations. Though through so many centuries the Church of Christ has been very backward in fulfilling her high mission, no sooner did she begin to obey her Lord's command than He poured forth His promised blessings upon her, and loaded with benefits both her and the nation whose sons came to the help of the Lord against the mighty powers of evil. It is these reflex benefits, mainly in connection with the Church Missionary Society, which we are to consider in this article.

The writer of a "History of the Nineteenth Century" devotes a chapter to the subject of Christian Missions, and in it he boldly affirms that "in the foremost rank of powers destined to change the face of the world stand missions." This undoubtedly is true. It is impossible for us fully to understand how intimately and how vastly this statement holds good as regards the indirect yet most important fruits of Missionary work and interest; but the attempt to trace it out cannot fail to be instructive.

This present century has been manifestly a time of national prosperity, of freedom from devastating wars, of world-wide growth of our nation's prestige and influence, of rapid increase of our home and colonial population, of steadily advancing civilization, and of many other tokens of healthy progress. How is this, but that the old declaration ever holds good: "Them that honour Me I will honour." And, though tardily, and very scantily, yet still in some degree, we have honoured the Lord of the harvest by obedience to His last command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Reflex benefit is a law written upon all work for the Lord Jesus Christ. No true-hearted deed of Christian duty is ever unrequited. Utterly undeserving as we are of reward, utterly unworthy as are our efforts, and entirely as the grace and the power are His alone, yet in His infinite mercy the law ever holds good that "he that watereth shall be watered also himself." And this is in accordance with the analogy written in nature. The active employment of our physical powers results in the increase of vigour and the maintenance of health. "The benumbed traveller amid Alpine

snows, just ready to succumb to the fatal fascination of a sleep which must prove the sleep of death, has re-animated himself in re-animating his fellow."

I. In application of this law to the case of Missions we may touch upon the vast increase in science and knowledge which has resulted from Missionary work. Consider how often the Missionary has been the pioneer of discovery. He has ventured—as has been the case in China, Polynesia, and Central Africa—amid hostile tribes, waving the white flag of the Gospel of peace, and, from his brave investigations, geographers have been enabled to fill up large blank spaces on the map, which previously indicated unknown territory. Again, how richly has the knowledge of natural history been increased in consequence of discoveries made during tours of evangelization! We may mention that brave pioneer, Bishop Hannington, an able naturalist, who is at the present time penetrating unknown tracts in pursuance of his devoted labours in Central Africa. Again, the student of language owes a debt of gratitude to the infinitely patient research of many a Missionary, who has laboriously studied native tongues and dialects in order that he might translate the pure Word of God and preach intelligibly. And the same may be said of many another gain to knowledge and scientific research, and to the various arts which go to form the round of attainments necessary for a great commercial and intellectual community.

II. I pass on to the inner circle of reflex benefits; and we will consider those which we may call *evidential*. I believe that the store of sound and unanswerable proof which Missionary enterprise has accumulated in support of what we hold most sacred can never be estimated. The Missionary has ever found the old Book to be world-wide in its mission. When translated into various languages it has not lost its force or efficacy in any case. It adapts itself readily to every nation under heaven, whatever be its creed or customs. The Gospel which many at home, who deem themselves wise, are rejecting in favour of some new thing, be it agnosticism, atheism, or "science, falsely so called," is still proved infallibly to be "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." Its native force is not diminished; still the blessed Spirit uses its grand sound for conviction and conversion, for sanctification and edification all the world over. This message of life and truth and peace has elevated the degraded Fuegian, so that Darwin was convinced that the Gospel had in it a marvellous power, and he became a subscriber to Missions up to the close of his life. The learned and argumentative Brahmin has been pricked to the heart, and the saving message has "poured contempt on all his

pride." Gigantic systems of error have tottered and fallen before its persuasive sound. Where now is the Car of Juggernaut with its self-immolation of numbers of ignorant fanatics? Where the inhuman fires of the Suttee? The devil-worship of many a savage tribe, and the cruel medicine rites of the North-West American—where are they? Wherever the Gospel is preached, these works of darkness have been put off. So has the fearful recklessness of the slave-trade, while the social separation of caste gives way under the humbling yet elevating truths of Christianity, and Eastern women are regaining their position in society. Now all this, we maintain, contains certain proof that the Word of God is true, and that the Holy Spirit of God mightily uses it.

We could point to the influence of the Gospel in preventing cruelty and war. We find Mrs. Hinderer, for instance, recording, concerning the change wrought in the great town of Ibaddan, through the patient labours of her husband and herself: "It is only since the Word of God entered this town that it has been free from civil war." And we might produce evidence to show that where conditions are other than those of the Gospel the result is not the same. Thus in North Canada, when a tribesman, who has been trained to hunting during a great part of his life, settles down to the peaceful work of the farm, and a practised Government instructor is sent to teach him how to cultivate the soil, failure has often attended the attempt; while in those farms where the Missionary (with less actual knowledge of farm work) is the instructor, the result has been that the wild hunter has become the patient diligent farmer under the influence of the civilizing truth of God.

Here then are facts of great evidential value, which may well silence the tongue of the scorner.

And further: What emphasis do the Missionary results of to-day give to the Divine revelation of the mind of the Spirit in the Written Word! Illustrations of the principles, and even repetitions of the incidents of the earliest Missionary records—such as those of the Acts of the Apostles, seen to be passing before our eyes at the present time in the Mission field—insensibly rivet on our hearts the mighty teachings of Holy Writ. A great painter like Turner, when composing some portraiture of a scene in the history of ancient Greece, carries with him his note-book and his colours, and jots down in word or colour many a hint taken from river or sea; from the rising or the setting sun; and all is turned to account in the great composition. The same is true of a Mendelssohn or a Milton, in the spheres of their respective pre-eminence.

Thus the devout student of Holy Scripture, who studies the annals of contemporary Missionary enterprise, gains, by the

teaching of passing events, ever fresh testimony to the living Record of the Volume of the Book. This becomes to his mind and soul ever a firmer and fuller evidence that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

III. We may trace reflex benefits of another kind, which I may call, perhaps, *defensive*. In the account of one of David's battles against the Amalekites, recorded in Samuel xxx., we read that while some of his army remained behind in charge of all that of which the soldiers in battle had no need, the king led his hosts forth to battle and victory. As they were returning home with the spoil, certain wicked men suggested that the protectors of "the stuff" should not have any of the acquired treasure. Not so, said David, in righteous indignation, "As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike." And this was "made a statute, and an ordinance for Israel from that day forward." Now our single-hearted Missionaries go forth, the weapons of their warfare being not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds—kings with their armies flee apace—the hosts of the evil one are slain in death unto sin, as they become subject to the Prince of life. And what is the result? "She that tarried at home divided the spoil." What do we learn here? Surely this, that there is no more blessed feature in a Christian Church than that she should have a Missionary contingent carrying on the warfare against sin for the rescue of the souls of the Heathen, Mohammedan, or Jew. And the Church at home divides the spoil; she reaps great gain.

I have not the slightest doubt whatever that our Church of England, in her increased vitality, in her greater power for usefulness among our teeming millions of home population, is even now sharing the blessing of that same principle; she is dividing with the brave advanced guard, whom she sends forth, the spoil of spiritual blessing, increasing usefulness, and temporal preservation. Such an organization as the Church Missionary Society is a true Church Defence Institution. It is a mighty bulwark. It constitutes in an eminent degree the "blessing within her" which we may well believe will elicit from Him that ruleth on high the merciful decree, "Destroy her not," by which our foes shall be driven back, and our Church permitted to extend yet farther and more purely the wide stretch of her usefulness. God grant it!

And I think that I am not mistaken in tracing of late, since Missionary interest has diffused itself more widely among English society, that there has been closer union, increased mutual understanding, truer brotherly sympathy, and more Christian toleration. We at home have thought more about

our points of agreement, less about those unhappy divisions which do exist, and cannot ever be wholly healed. Now this is gain. It is gain if toleration does not exclude distinctiveness. A pure Church—a truly Missionary Church—must have a distinctive creed, loyally believed and faithfully followed. And the Church Missionary Society, in her staunch maintenance of Evangelical principles, in the high standard of spiritual efficiency and thorough training of her Missionaries, and in the constant spirit of prayer which actuates her throughout, has doubtless exercised a mighty reflex and restraining influence upon the whole Church of England. May this largest of all Missionary Societies ever remain great also in these blessed features; then she shall continue to be a real blessing to our land, as she is to the farthest limits of the habitable globe.

If we review the vast array of home Evangelistic efforts, and also of benevolent and philanthropic institutions, it can easily be proved that Missionary zeal and energy exerted for the benefits of foreign lands has produced, as its direct and beneficial result, this tide of blessed effort for the spiritual and social uplifting of our home population. As the Bishop of Ossory and Ferns graphically puts it (in his sermon before the Society in May, 1882): “The pebble of Missionary influence dropped into the then stagnant waters of religious society, has created circles of benevolence which are touching every part and portion of our life and duty, and continually increasing in extent and influence.”

IV. We must now look at a series of reflex benefits which we may call *spiritual*.

(1) And, first, I will mention, the increased spirit of devotion, and especially of that most Christlike form of devotion, Intercession, which certainly seems to be spreading. I believe I am right in stating that the origin of the special occasions of united prayer which are now so common, dates from the invitation of a remote Mission in Lodia, for world-wide prayer at the opening of the year, twenty-six years ago. And who that was present at the valedictory dismissal of Missionaries in St. George's Hall, in September last, was not deeply moved as one after another stood up and just added his Amen to the earnest Apostolic request, “Brethren, pray for us;” while, when the honoured veteran of the Punjâb Mission, Rev. Robert Clarke, spoke his touching farewell, the hearts of all present must have been thrilled with emotion as he recorded his experience of answered prayers in some such language as this—the measured utterance of ripe experience: “I never knew any prayer for God's glory in the success of His work to fail.” These valiant soldiers of the Cross who endure so bravely and humbly the burden and heat of the day, do deeply need the prayers of

the Church at home. And is it not an evidence of the wonderful spirituality of the almost inspired compilers of our Liturgy that it bears so much upon Missionary work? This is a fact which space will not allow me to illustrate, but each reader of *THE CHURCHMAN* may resolve by God's grace to follow its indication, and, like Epaphras of old, be always labouring in prayer for everything in connection with Missionary effort and enterprise.

We have a happy proof of the vitality and unity of our central Church Missionary Society Committee, in the recent commencement of a weekly prayer-meeting at the house in Salisbury Square, on Thursday afternoon, from 4 to 5. When business or recreation takes us up to Town, can we not sometimes so arrange our visit as to join with our brethren in this blessed hour of praise and intercession? Surely every Missionary Union should be primarily and principally a union for prayer. In this manner each County Union should exemplify and propagate this reflex benefit, the spirit of which was long ago wafted home from a remote Mission station in Northern India.

(2) But again, another reflex spiritual benefit of Church Missionary enterprise is the encouragement it affords to faith, in its fruits of endurance and patience. Our own beloved Church in her mid-course passed through a fiery ordeal indeed. Of the great and noble army of martyrs, hers form no insignificant array. At the time of the Reformation—not to go further back—what multitudes willingly laid down their lives for the entirety and purity of the Gospel of Christ! And did not this brave band of triumphant victors foreshadow a correspondingly abundant harvest in connection with our favoured branch of the Catholic Church? I firmly believe so. If now our lot is fallen in times for which we pray in our Litany when “being hurt by no persecutions, we may evermore give thanks,” such immunity has its dangers; and we have in very truth need to add, “O Lord, arise, help us and deliver us, for Thy name's sake.” If we look abroad, however, what do we see? Let me quote an utterance of Archbishop Trench, which contains words of sound wisdom: “It seems,” he said, “an almost universal law of Mission work that the definite victory is not won without a temporary reaction of more or less severity. The powers of darkness, seen and unseen, the spiritual wickedness which constitutes the real background of every form of heathenism—these, with all whom they can enlist in their ranks, gather themselves up, as with the energy of despair, for a last and decisive struggle with the kingdom of light. A fierce tempest of wrath sweeps over the Church, and the patient work of years perishes, or seems to perish, in an hour.” In

other words, almost every pure infant Church suffers martyrdom, or passes through scathing troubles. Her members are chosen and purified in the furnace of affliction; and it is usually the case, as it was with Israel in Egypt, that the more they are afflicted the more they multiply and grow. India, Abbeokuta, China, Japan, Ceylon, and many other Mission fields have had their share of bitter persecution, imprisonment, death—ere the remainder of man's fierce wrath was restrained to the glory of God and the gratitude of man. And lately we have a most touching exemplification of the fact that the days of martyrdom are not over, in the triumphant witness and confession of three V-ganda youths, who met death singing God's praises. Now how does this exemplify our subject? Thus: We at home, whose lot is graciously cast in peace and quietness—and such times, as I have remarked, are often times of danger, of worldliness, indifference, and selfishness—we gain the reflex benefit of the early history of these infant Churches, while, in sympathy with them, we share the heritage of their persecutions, weep with them as they weep; ready also to "rejoice for joy" with that daughter Church when the Lord shall appoint for her "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

(3) Another reflex spiritual blessing of great importance, which is consequent upon an awakened interest in Foreign Missions, is, the promotion of unselfishness. Nothing so expands the heart, and enlarges the sympathies, and elicits a generous bounty and a wide tolerant charity, as the thorough taking-up of God's world-wide work for study and prayer. Then we see ourselves as units in a myriad-peopled universe, the vast preponderance of whose inhabitants are "without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world." Then our hearts bleed with pity for the dwellers in the far-off habitations of cruelty, superstition, and gross darkness. And selfishness evaporates while zeal for God's cause expands.

Thus we learn to look upon life, not from the meagre niggard standpoint of self-interest, self-pleasing, or self-love; but, constrained by the love of Christ, we rise into the lofty dignity of being fellow-workers with God, while we engage with whole-hearted interest and generosity in the cause for which Jesus died and rose again.

And what I have said of the *individual* is true of the *community*. A veteran Church Missionary Hon. Sec. writes to me stating how entirely he attributes the waking up of two parishes which he consecutively held to the fact that he made it his prime endeavour to draw out their interests in Missionary work. His words are: "When I went to my last parish, little or nothing was done in spiritual work. I began

at once and tried to interest the parish in the work of the Church Missionary Society, and a speedy response came. I was able to build a school and restore the church." And I can testify how true was likewise the spiritual development of his flock under his able ministry. He goes on to say of his present parish: "I have found the same effect here. We are by no means a rich parish, but are enabled to send £500 a year to the Church Missionary Society and Zenana Missions, and I get considerable help in other ways." Surely such drawing-out of generous sympathy, when the motive is pure and the cause good, cannot but prove a rich blessing.

And there is a reflex blessing and benefit to the family from which son or daughter, responsive to the Divine call, goes forth to the Mission field. Not long ago I was in conversation with one who told me how, when two brothers left the circle of a singularly united family, the blank was great; but he added that the subsequent inborne tide of traceable blessing infinitely counterbalanced the pain of separation. Blessed are the parents who willingly give up their best and holiest—their most cultured and cherished—in obedience to the Master's last behest. Such unselfish denial shall surely bring ample recompense.

We have now completed our survey of some of the more prominent reflex benefits of Church Missionary enterprise. May we leave the consideration determined to aid with more devoted zeal, and more unsparing energy, the work of Foreign Missions. If such reflex results are to be richly fruitful, the weapons of the spiritual warfare must be pure and true. The *Missionary Life and Labours of Francis Xavier*, by the late Rev. H. Venn, contains evidence which fully bears out this, on the very confessions of the disappointed Jesuit labourers themselves (see, for instance, pp. 282, 283). Deceitful workers, however zealous, cannot be rewarded by either direct or reflex blessing.

While our survey in this paper has mainly had in view the Church Missionary Society, I would close it by recognising most cordially the excellent work done by other Missionary Societies and organizations, whether of the National Church or among our Nonconforming brethren. May each and all, with redoubled effort and revived spirituality, and in Christian union, toil on in their endeavours to advance the Redeemer's Kingdom.

W. A. BATHURST.

