

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>


A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:


https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

THE
CHURCHMAN

A Monthly Magazine

*CONDUCTED BY CLERGYMEN AND LAYMEN
OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND*

——
VOL. XII.

——

LONDON
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW
1885

THE
CHURCHMAN

APRIL, 1885.

ART. I.—AN OFFICER'S EXPERIENCE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

“MISSIONS are all bosh, and Missionaries are all humbugs.” Such were the words one of the senior subalterns of my old regiment whispered into my ear while we sat in the Garrison Chapel at the Curragh Camp listening to an appeal in support of Foreign Missions. I then held the distinguished position of a junior ensign in the regiment, and never having been abroad myself, naturally looked on my seniors as most reliable authorities on all foreign questions. Still, as one who had been brought to realize the constraining love of Christ, I could not accept this view of Missions as correct. I certainly could not believe that men who spoke of themselves as devoted Christians would rob the poor of England to spend the money on themselves, under the pretext of preaching the Gospel to the heathen. I therefore asked my brother officer why he had made the remark. His reply was, that he had been on an Indian station for five years, where there were some Missionaries, and he had never seen a convert, and consequently concluded the Missionaries did absolutely nothing. On afterwards mentioning this to an old clergyman, he advised me to suspend my judgment till I could see for myself. In the course of time my regiment was ordered to a station in India, about five hundred miles up the interior. One of the first people I met was an intelligent native Christian, and on asking him where he had been baptized, I was told, strange to say, that it was in the very place where my friend who so summarily characterised Missionary work had been stationed for five years. The coincidence was noteworthy, as the two stations were in different Presidencies, were in no way connected with each other, and were nearly a thousand miles apart. The

native assured me that at the place where he was admitted to Christian fellowship there was a most flourishing little congregation of native Christians, numbering from five to six hundred members. Exactly ten years afterwards, it was my lot to be stationed for a short time in that very cantonment, and I can bear out most fully what that native Christian told me as to the satisfactory condition of the native church, and the earnest devotion of the two English Missionaries there at work. On repeating this conversation to my military friend he told me he had had no intention of deceiving me, but he had seen nothing of the work referred to. I then asked him, "Suppose you went home from this station in which we are now in, what would you say regarding it?" He replied that his experience of it would be much the same as his experience of the former place, and admitted that he did not know of any Missionary work going on. He seemed quite surprised to hear that there was as flourishing a church and as large a body of native Christians there as in the other station. This officer, I may add, was one of the best-hearted fellows in the world, and one of the last to wilfully misrepresent anything that was good. I believe his original statement was, like that of many others, founded on ignorance of the actual state of affairs.

Ignorance on the subject of Mission work, however, is by no means confined to one profession. Not long ago I heard a clergyman relate a story of another member of his own cloth who had gone to a Missionary meeting at which a great deal was said about work in the Zenanas. At supper afterwards, this clergyman remarked that he wished the Missionary had told them *where* the Zenanas were, as he could not find them marked on the map. His wife promptly said, "Oh, my dear, don't you know? Why, of course they are in Africa!" Whether it is at home or whether it is abroad, the universal rule is, that ignorance on the subject of Mission work arises from indifference. So soon as an individual begins to take an interest in it, he finds that his knowledge increases at a wonderfully rapid rate.

My own experience on the subject was acquired between 1871 and 1881, during most of which period I was in India, with intervals spent in Burmah and South Africa, having travelled altogether some 40,000 miles. In my humble opinion, our Missionaries are doing a great and a noble work, and I always feel sorry for those, whether connected with the army or any other profession, who come home and disparage either the work or its results. That there are no flaws to be detected in their operations I do not for a moment contend. Our Missionaries are, after all, but human beings, and therefore have their share of human shortcomings.

Even were the results far less than they are, surely we ought to recognise with thankfulness that God has so blessed the cause we have espoused as to give us so many souls. Even were Mission work the failure it is often alleged to be, it would still be our duty to fulfil our Saviour's command and follow apostolic example. What right have we to dictate to the Creator of the universe what the immediate results shall be? He might be testing our obedience, or He might be gradually permitting us to prepare the ground for future harvests. I think no better reply could be given than was supplied by the Duke of Wellington in answer to the sneer of an Indian Chaplain about the folly of English people sending out Missionaries like Carey to teach the highly-educated Brahmin. Turning to him, the Duke said, "What are your marching orders, sir?" The astonished Chaplain, not understanding him, asked what he meant, when the Duke said, "Are they not 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel?' The results rest with the Great Commander, who gives the order, who alone is answerable for the campaign. The individual soldier's duty is to obey."

For my own part, I fail to see that the results are so utterly inadequate to the means used. On the contrary, I cannot help thinking the richest nation in the world has every reason to thank God that, while they have spent such a very small amount of money on the Mission-field compared to the money lavished on luxuries and art, He has so wonderfully blessed the little given. Not much above £1,000,000 per annum is spent on all the Missionary Societies put together, while considerably over £26,000,000 is paid to our Excise for intoxicating drinks alone, which does not represent one-fifth part of the amount of money wasted on that particular form of self-indulgence.

When we turn to India, including Burmah and Ceylon, we find that in 1881 (three years ago) there were 528,590 native Christians. Yet, as is well known, the majority of the Missionaries have not been at work in India for more than half a century. The very existence of 528,590 professing Christians is, therefore, very encouraging. It is, however, still more encouraging when we look at the rapid rate of increase during the last thirty years. In the year 1851 there were 102,951 native Christians; in 1861, ten years after, the number had increased to 213,370; in 1871 it had risen to 318,363; and in 1881 it reached a total of 528,590. It will be observed that, roughly speaking, the first two decades mentioned gave an increase of 100,000, and the last decade an increase of 200,000. That is to say, the increase has been exactly doubled during the last ten years. As our Missionaries get to under-

stand the natives better, and the number of qualified native workers increases, the ratio in coming decades should be even greater than in the past. When we compare these figures with the spread of Christianity during the first century, we have no reason to be dissatisfied with the results. It is generally believed that there were not more than 100,000 professing Christians at the close of the first century; and though the Christians were a strong, influential body in the cities and large towns at the time of Constantine's conversion, some three centuries afterwards, the truths of Christianity cannot be said to have spread throughout the Roman Empire. The traditional schoolboy, who has studied the etymology of the word "pagan," will know that many centuries elapsed before the inhabitants of the outlying districts became even professedly Christian.

It may, however, be urged that the native Christians are of a very inferior type. Vague charges of this nature, that deal in generalities only, are very difficult to meet. Having, however, seen a great many native Christians, I can speak from actual experience. When I read of charges made by the Apostle Paul against many of the professing Christians of his time, I cannot help thinking that the native Christians of India in the nineteenth century compare very favourably with those of the earliest Churches. That one has no right to judge these natives, who have just come out of the impurities of heathenism, by the same high standard that he would apply to the spiritual qualifications of an English parish, must, I think, be generally admitted. But, humiliating as it may be to us, the comparison, if made, would in some respects tell in favour of India. The proportion of communicants to mere adherents in India is certainly considerably larger than in England. In 1881 there were 417,372 professing Christians; and the number of communicants for that year was 145,097, or about 34 per cent. Yet, be it remembered, the Missionaries are very strict in admitting communicants to the Lord's Table.¹

A child was once asked what foreign country he would like to see. After a moment's reflection he answered that he would prefer going to Siam, because there he might see a lot of Siamese twins. One may smile at the simplicity of the little one believing that *all* the inhabitants of Siam have the mis-

¹ They cannot help the baptized children of Christians turning out badly, and often disgracing the cause that their parents have espoused; and, in exceptional cases, even those who have been baptized on their own profession, after enduring all the persecution such a step entails, do sometimes turn out badly.

fortune to be born in couples linked together ; but Englishmen really act on a principle hardly less ludicrous than this. They hear of a few eminent converts ; possibly, even, they may have seen one or two of the more superior class of native Christians who have visited England ; and forthwith they go out to India themselves with the idea that *all* the converts are like the one or two they have either seen or read of. Finding that this is not the case, a reaction sets in, and they denounce the whole work of Missionaries as a sham. The truth of the matter is, that the fault does not rest with the Missionaries, but with the fault-finders themselves, who started from a wrong assumption. I have met in India native Christians quite equal in mental culture and spiritual tone to any English Christians I have ever met at home. A converted Brahmin used to come and stay in my house, to preach to the English soldiers in my old regiment, who flocked eagerly to hear him. A more courteous, or a more cultured gentleman, I have never met. I should, however, be very sorry to hold him up as a specimen of native Christians, as he is undoubtedly head and shoulders above the average. At the same time, I think I may fairly adduce him as an example of what a native Christian may become.

Nor is this the only testimony to the reality of the profession of the native Christians. The money given may be no test of the truth of the cause supported, for false worshippers, in their ignorance, often most generously contribute to the maintenance of the principles they have espoused. But generosity is to a very great extent a proof of the strength of the convictions that a body of people hold. The Nationalists of Ireland erroneously think that the English oppress them, but the enormous sums they have subscribed lately towards the attempt to coerce the English Government into severing the Union, show how strongly they feel on the subject. In the same way, the fact that the very poor native Christians of India annually contribute Rs. 120,000 towards the support of Christianity, shows that it has obtained a considerable hold on their convictions.

It is not, however, to statistics and figures that I would appeal, valuable as proofs though they may be. Statistics cannot and never will show the enormous amount of good done by Christian Missions. I had not been long in India before I was appointed to take command of a small fort, held by some fifty men detached from the regiment. The agent of the native contractor who supplied us with our daily provisions used to call on me each day with papers to be signed. Noticing that he was a very intelligent Brahmin, I said to him one day, " I am surprised to find that a man of

your apparent intelligence can believe that the world is flat, and that these lumps of clay are gods." He replied at once, "Oh, Sahib, I do not believe in such things." I then asked him what he did believe, and was told that he was convinced the Christian religion was true. He went on to say that he was one only of hundreds of young men who had received a good education in a Mission School, and had completely given up all belief in Hindooism. He fully believed in Christianity, but did not feel sufficiently interested in the subject to face the tremendous opposition of his ignorant relatives and others who continued to have faith in Hindooism. Subsequently, in travelling through India I found an enormous number of such young men.

One of our C.M.S. Missionaries lately told me a story of a Brahmin, of some position, who bore the highest testimony to the work of Mission Schools in a speech which was intended to be in opposition to them. He said, "I have been brought up in a Mission School, and have received much damage. I can never become a believer again in the Hindoo deities. And yet—I cannot become a Christian!" He meant to say that the Christian Missionaries robbed him of his belief in idolatry, but unless they gave him something better they were doing harm. So far he was right. It is to be feared that the secular education our Government is giving to India is producing a nation of atheists, as no educated man can believe in Hindooism. The actual converts who have become bold enough to come forward and confess Christ are comparatively few as compared with the enormous number who have renounced Hindooism. Possibly the time is not far distant when some native Christian, towering high above the crowd, a born leader of men, may arise to preach the Gospel, and be followed by thousands, infected by his enthusiasm. What John Wesley did for Christian England, so may a native convert, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, yet do for India. Meanwhile, our Missionaries are slowly but none the less surely working on through good report and evil report.

Many who have never even seen a Missionary have cause to thank God for the blessings Christianity alone has brought to India. To take the women alone, no amount of figures will show the blessings, direct and indirect, that they have reaped. Every one has doubtless heard of the little English girl who, when asked what she was going to be when she grew up, replied, "I think I will be a widow." One may, however, venture to think that this young lady, who so coveted the independent position a widow is permitted to enjoy in English society, would have doubted that the choice was altogether a wise one had her lot been cast in the gorgeous East. Suttee

was abolished through the courage of Lord William Bentinck, an enlightened Governor-General and an earnest Christian man, who was urged to take this step by some of the Missionaries; but comparatively few Englishwomen, I believe, have any idea of the awful sufferings endured by their sisters in India, especially those who have had the misfortune to be left widows.¹

Till quite lately a harsh custom existed in India, which made it illegal for a widow to remarry. As a comparatively small percentage of widows in England ever marry again, this may at first sight seem to be a very slight grievance. But when it is remembered that girls are married when only one or two years old, and that often they are widows before they have even lived with their husbands—there being upwards of sixty-three thousand widows in India at the present time under ten years of age—we get a fair idea of the terrible wrong thousands of Indian women are suffering under. Though but few have availed themselves of the new law, still, to the honour of our Missionaries must it be said, it was due to their efforts that widows can now, at all events *legally*, be remarried. We must trust to the further spread of Christianity, and of enlightened principles the indirect results of Christianity, for social ideas to be gradually so improved, that the remarriage of widows will no longer be looked on with repugnance.

It is useless to expect much of any nation in which the women are degraded and looked down upon. God made the woman to be the man's companion and friend; and if the manhood of a nation combine to degrade her, and treat her as little better than a slave, sooner or later the inevitable law of retribution will demand a penalty. It is doubtless to this cause that the low moral atmosphere pervading India is to be traced.

The Koran never speaks of a woman as if she had a soul, and indeed never alludes to her except as a means for the gratification of passion, either in this world or in the world to come. The Bible, on the contrary, makes so many allusions to her, and speaks of her so tenderly, that a poor woman in

¹ To such an extent is this ill-treatment carried, even now, in some parts of India, that it is very questionable if the abolition of Suttee, though a right thing, was altogether a merciful one. An unpleasant reflection is forced on Englishmen on the spot, that if widows were allowed to destroy themselves on their husband's funeral pile, it would be a less evil than having to eke out a miserable existence, which is nothing better than living death, for many years, as is too often the case at present. At all events, the widow could be treated no worse if she had been the actual murderer of her husband.

a zenana is reported to have said that she felt sure the Bible must have been written by a woman!¹

But in spite of all that our Missionaries are doing, there yet remains much to be done for the women of India. What can some 500 Missionaries do in a country containing 250,000,000 people? To this present day it is an insult to ask a native gentleman about his wife. Even the more enlightened would infinitely prefer that their wives should die rather than have European medical attendants. In the same fort in which I was holding a subaltern's command, to which I have already referred, there was a young surgeon who was sent for by a Rajah, who lived in the neighbourhood, to attend his wife. When the young fellow got to the Rajah's palace, he was informed that the most he could be allowed to do was to feel the poor woman's pulse, her hand being extended through a hole in a purdah (curtain). Finding that the pulse showed the woman to be in the last stage of exhaustion, the doctor insisted on seeing the patient. He was, however, informed that such was contrary to all the customs of the country. Even his representations that she must die unless he could personally administer restoratives, only produced the stereotyped answer that the customs of the country must not be infringed. Needless to say she died.

I remember hearing Sir Bartle Frere tell a story which, with the same features of Asiatic immobility, had a happier termination. In this case it was a Scotch doctor whose services were requested. When he appeared, he was informed that he was sent for to be consulted, but that he could not even enter the room in which the patient lay. On his insisting upon being allowed to feel the pulse of the sufferer, he was told that such a thing was out of the question; but that, if he liked, he might feel the pulse of one of the servant-women who attended her! The Scotchman, however, not being satisfied with such a second-hand diagnosis, remonstrated, and with more success than my friend; for with that national characteristic, with which Scotchmen in general are endowed, of pushing their way in the world, he forced himself into the sick-chamber, and was the means of saving the woman's life.

¹ The two great Societies that have undertaken this work are the "Church of England Zenana Mission" and the "Zenana, Bible, and Medical Mission." Owing to the jealous way in which all natives of India guard their women, Englishmen can do no more than repeat what they have heard; but, from all accounts, these two great Societies are doing a glorious work. Wives of officers, and other English ladies who would be permitted to enter the apartments of women in India, should make a point, as many do, of visiting with the English lady Missionaries, and seeing for themselves what is being done.

In speaking of the results of Missionary work, one must always bear in mind the deep-seated prejudices that exist in almost every foreign country against innovations of any kind. I remember reading in one of the secular papers a story of a native gentleman, who, when asked why he did not have his sons educated, replied: "Why, my brother had his boy educated, and he died of small-pox; I don't want my son to die." I have also heard it said, regarding the Medical Dispensaries, that the Government had hired Missionaries to convert the natives, and had promised them so much per hundred; but that finding they did not get on fast enough, they were going to introduce doctors, who, by means of Christian medicines and charms, would succeed much quicker in the work. In China a Missionary one day found his school was unattended, and on inquiring into the cause, he found that a report had been circulated that the English were bent on kidnapping children wholesale! As each decade passes away, however, such prejudices happily show a tendency to die out under the influence of accomplished facts.

The natives who circulate reports to the detriment of the Missionaries little know how they are injuring the cause of their best friends. I am not one of those who are ever casting a slur on the character of the British official abroad. There are, doubtless, some black sheep among them; and many years ago there were, doubtless, many more than there are now. On the whole, however, I venture to say that the Government officials who represent our country abroad are quite equal if not very superior to the representatives of any other country. I believe there is no example in the entire history of the world of a conquered country having been ruled by such a high-minded body of foreigners as are the present generation of officials in India.

In spite, however, of the high tone that exists among our officials generally, there can be but little doubt that so long as human nature is as it is, there is great need for the existence of Christian Missionaries among the natives, quite apart from the direct spiritual teaching they give them. They are the moral police of the countries in which they labour. They there represent the conscience of England, and obey the instincts of her better nature. England is a great trading nation, and too often her wealth-acquiring propensities overpower higher principles. Public opinion, as such, does not exist in these conquered countries. "Who cares what the nigger thinks?" is an expression which too often falls from the lips of the conqueror. Englishmen, as a rule, consist of two classes, viz., the Government official and the merchant. It may be said of both that when away from

the restraining influence of a healthy public opinion the tendency is to deteriorate. Even the wisest of the officials sometimes do not understand the people they govern. This is not unnatural, as they live very much apart from them, and as a rule are only approached through the medium of native officers. Consequently, injustice and wrong exist, and are perpetuated, which would not be tolerated in this country. The Government official is a servant, and, naturally, does not care to speak out against his superiors, more especially when it is very doubtful what amount of good he may do the cause he wishes to further, and may probably do himself an injury. One Commander-in-Chief in Madras, Sir P. Maitland, resigned his command rather than give orders that a salute should be fired in honour of a Hindoo deity. Such examples are, however, too few and far between to have much weight with a Government interested in a time-serving policy, endeavouring to please the natives at the expense of the consciences of its own representatives.

As for the merchant, the planter, and others of the trading community, though there have been noble exceptions to the general rule, they do not cry out unless their own interests are at stake. As this class, however, increases in numbers and importance, there exists every sign that they will gradually make their voice heard on points of public interest other than the mere selfish one of the accumulation of wealth.

Regarding the Missionaries, however, let it be said to their honour that before the present generation of high-minded officials existed they alone represented the conscience of England in her foreign possessions. Independent of Government, warmly attached to the native, they have ever been the first to raise a voice against the existence of cruelty and injustice. Some of the best Viceroys and Governors we have had have been men who made friends with the Missionaries, and ever lent an open ear to those whose sacred profession stamped them as the friends of the native.

I have often heard it urged by so-called philanthropists that it would be far better if Christian people gave up subscribing to Missions, and directed their money into channels for sending out doctors, schoolmasters, and other agencies for the amelioration of the sufferings of the human race, and for spreading civilization. This has always struck me as a very paltry and contemptible form of argument, utterly unworthy of true philanthropy. It amounts to this: these seeming benefactors are not sufficiently in love with the cause they have espoused to support it with their money; at the same time, they want their principles advocated; so, not being sufficiently generous to do it themselves, they wish it to be done

by others. Those who advocate the cause of Missions have not a single word to say against philanthropists subscribing as much as they like—the more the better—to send out doctors and schoolmasters. The Missionaries would be the first to welcome such valuable aids to their work. Strange to say, however, much as one hears of the “schoolmaster abroad” when in England, such an individual, representing English philanthropy, is painfully conspicuous by his absence in foreign parts. With the exception of Government schoolmasters and Government doctors, I have never yet had the pleasure of meeting one who represented any voluntary society at home that was not connected with Christian Missions.

There is no divorce between true Christianity and true philanthropy, though fortunately a very wide gulf separates so-called philanthropists from the friends of Christian Missions. The Founder of Christianity was the greatest philanthropist who ever came into this world, and His servants in the Mission-field have, in spite of all their failings, always attempted to follow His example. Who that knows anything of the lives of such men as the present Bishop of Lahore, Bishop French¹ (late of the C.M.S.), Bishop Patteson, Livingstone, Henry Martyn, Moffat, Judson, Duff, Wilson, and Gordon, can doubt that such men were philanthropists and heroes of the very noblest types. These are only a few of the well-known names, but they represent hundreds who have worked nobly for the cause they had at heart, and have passed away unknown to the world at large. Their names may not be recorded in any list of this world's worthies, their lives may never have been written by the pen of a human biographer; but we may rest assured that One has watched their work and labour of love for the poor ignorant native, and recorded their names in that book of life containing the list of those of whom this world was not worthy.

Though the supporters of Christian Missions do not make the spread of civilization their *primary* object, there cannot be a doubt that Missionary Societies are a great civilising agency throughout the world. In that very valuable book, “Thirty

¹ It is not generally known in this country that when Bishop French was only a simple Missionary of the C.M.S., he came, with a body of Christian natives, during the Indian Mutiny, to the gates of the Agra Fort. He was told by the officer in command that he would be admitted, but that they could not let the natives in. The English Missionary pointed out that the Christian natives, if left outside, would all be massacred. Still admittance was refused. The Missionary then said, “Very well; I will remain outside with them, and share their fate. I will not take shelter and leave them to die.” Fortunately, the General changed his mind and admitted all, or another hero would have been added to the list of martyrs of the Indian Mutiny.

Years of C.M.S. Missionary Work in the Punjab and Sindh," by the Rev. Robert Clark, it is mentioned that at a single Medical Missionary Station under Dr. Downes¹ in one year (1882), there were 30,000 visits registered in the Mission Hospital, 8,000 new cases entered, to whom 24,000 visits were paid, more than 1,200 operations performed, 1,000 in-patients received into the wards, and 16,000 meals supplied. Quite apart from the spiritual results of such a work as this, which is of course the primary object, who can doubt that such an agency has a great effect in civilizing the natives, and certainly of ameliorating the sufferings of humanity. Those who do not believe in distinctly spiritual work, but who do believe in supporting philanthropic work, ought surely to feel called on to support such an agency as this. Even to take the lowest view of the question, they cannot think that the inculcation of the principles of One who even by sceptics has been admitted to have been the holiest, the purest, the noblest that this world has ever seen, can detract from such a self-sacrificing work. Those principles which have permeated the most civilized nations in the world, have given sufficient proof by this time that even if they are not the means of elevating nations, they do not, at all events, drag them down; nay, are generally found in combination with the highest and most advanced views of human enlightenment.

The question has often been put to me since I have been in England, "Which of all the Missionary Societies is doing the best work, and which is most deserving of our support?" I have generally contrived to avoid answering the question by asking the interrogator which of the Societies he subscribes to, and when he answers, telling him that he had better continue to support it. A little competition among our different Missionary Societies is a good thing, if carried on in a friendly spirit. At all events, it would be utterly unworthy of any great Society did its friends attempt to increase its income at the expense of any other Society. All of them are doing good, and room still exists for many more; or, what is still better, for an increase in the support that each now gets from the public. As, however, there is a very large majority who do not subscribe to any Mission agency, I may give my reasons for naming the Society I think most worthy of support by Englishmen in general.

A story is told of some Grecian generals who had to select one of their number, according to his merits, to have precedence. It was agreed that each should have two votes, which

¹ Since this article was written a very interesting paper, by Dr. Downes, on "Medical Missions," has appeared in *THE CHURCHMAN*.

were to be given to different men. When the votes were counted, it was found that every man had voted for himself *first*, and for Themistocles *second*. As the first votes were thus equally distributed, it was decided that Themistocles was the elected chief. I have often been reminded of this story when I have spoken to different Missionaries about the relative advantages of the different Societies. Each one naturally gave his own Society the preference; and I think they would have been unworthy servants if they had not done so. But I have almost invariably found that each was willing to accord the second-best place to the C.M.S. I remember once asking an S.P.G. Missionary which he thought best, and received the reply I anticipated. But when I asked which he thought the second-best, he said that only one other Society of any position had Apostolic orders. In the same way the Nonconformist accords the first place to his own Society; but when asked which is the second-best, invariably replies, "The great Church Missionary Society, which proclaims the same simple Gospel message that we do, is the *second-best*."

The position of the C.M.S. is quite unique in the Mission-field. It is the one rallying-point for all Mission workers and supporters. While the S.P.G. and the Nonconformist Missionaries have ever been very shy about uniting together for concerted action, both have always evinced great willingness to unite with a common friend. I was at a great Episcopalian Conference in Madras once, where we had three Bishops, and representative clergy from the chaplains and the two great Missionary Societies. I need hardly say that the C.M.S. men quite held their own. At another Conference of Missionaries in the north of India, at which none of the S.P.G. attended, there again our great Church Society mustered in large numbers, and held a prominent position throughout the proceedings.¹

What better rallying-point can be desired than the wide platform of the C.M.S.? It appeals to those who have High-Church tendencies and a love of ceremonial services. It offers them all they can ask, in a chain of unbroken orders and traditions from the Apostolic age downwards. In return, it only asks them to put externals in their right place, and to make the preaching of the simple Gospel the aim and end of their work. It appeals to the Broad Churchman on the catholic basis, that it extends the right hand of fellowship to all who love

¹ My own opinion is that the native Christians of India do not attach much importance to the wretched little differences of opinion that divide earnest Christians in England. Even now there are strong symptoms of this healthy current of Christianity setting in amongst ourselves.

the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth; and while preaching Christ and Him crucified, has ever allowed great latitude of opinion on secondary matters. It appeals to the Evangelical, inasmuch as its one great aim is the salvation of souls through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. It appeals to the Nonconformist, by recognising all that is good, noble, and right in their work; and, while maintaining for itself the advantages of Apostolical succession and traditions of the glorious historic past, it does not exaggerate these, but recognises all Christian missionaries who have not maintained this succession as fellow-labourers in the same vineyard.

Lord Palmerston used to say of Mr. Venn, the late honorary secretary of the Church Missionary Society, that he was the greatest statesman among the clergy that he had ever met. It is to that master-mind the public of England are indebted for the statesmanlike principles on which their largest Missionary Society has been based. The English public, with all its faults, is essentially liberal and big-hearted, and recognising that this great Society has incorporated into its principles all that is right and good, while rejecting all that is exclusive and narrow, has very wisely given it the warmest support. Not only is there no other Missionary Society in England that has received so warmly the support of the public, but it stands without a rival in any country.

While the Church Missionary Society pleads for free-will offerings with which to send out agents, and to support them when sent out, it is not money alone that it wants. It is said that money is one of the greatest powers human nature knows; but there is a greater, and that is a power that the poorest and the humblest can avail themselves of—the power of prayer. If every one who systematically sends his annual contribution, would as systematically devote a few minutes each day or each week to prayer for the cause, the blessing on the work of Foreign Missions would assuredly be greater than it has ever been. A Bishop once remarked to me that the Church of Ireland¹ is the only Church that possesses a liturgy in which

¹ *For Christian Missions.*—"Almighty God, Who by Thy Son Jesus Christ didst give commandment to the Apostles that they should go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; grant to us whom Thou hast called into Thy Church a ready will to obey Thy Word, and fill us with a hearty desire to make Thy way known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations. Look with compassion upon the heathen that have not known Thee, and on the multitudes that are scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. O Heavenly Father, Lord of the harvest, have respect, we beseech Thee, to our prayers, and send forth labourers into Thine harvest. Fit and prepare them by Thy grace for the work of Thy ministry; give them the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind; strengthen them to endure hardness; and

a distinct prayer for the work of Christian Missions has been inserted. That prayer has only been introduced in modern days. The only similar prayer in our Church liturgy is that used on Good Friday, for "Jews, Turks, Infidels and Heretics," written long before Christian Missions, organized as they now are, were thought of. It is probably a relic of the Crusades, when the only dealings that the Christian Church had with other religions were battles with the Turk in Palestine, the land of the Jew. It is well known that the Mahommedan calls everyone an infidel who has not embraced the creed of Islam. The word "infidel" placed so closely after "Turk" suggests a *tu quoque* taunt. Considering that Jews and Turks together number a very small percentage of either Hindoos or Buddhists, of whose creeds our forefathers were probably ignorant, the Church of England might very well in these more enlightened days either adopt the prayer of the Irish Church or improve its own, and use it oftener than once a year! Meanwhile, it rests with each individual, in private and in his family, to supplement the prayers of his Church by obeying the commands of the great Founder of Christianity, Who said to His followers, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest."

SETON CHURCHILL.



ART. II.—CHURCH DEFENCE AND RURAL PARISHES.

THE PROGRAMME OF THE LIBERATION SOCIETY: "WHAT ACTION WITH REFERENCE TO IT IS DESIRABLE IN RURAL PARISHES?"

RECENT circumstances make the programme of the Liberation Society of importance to the whole Church. But the question here proposed appears especially important, as the action of the Society is to be directed especially to rural populations.

Towards the end of last year the Executive Committee of the Liberation Society passed and published the following resolutions:

1. "Having regard to the fact that the Bill for the extension of the Parliamentary franchise in the counties has now become law, and that the Bill for the redistribution of Parliamentary seats will probably be

grant that Thy Holy Spirit may prosper their work, and that by their life and doctrine they may set forth Thy glory, and set forward the salvation of all men; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."—IRISH CHURCH LITURGY.