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***FOREIGN***

***MISSIONS***

THEIR

DANGERS AND DELUSIONS

BY

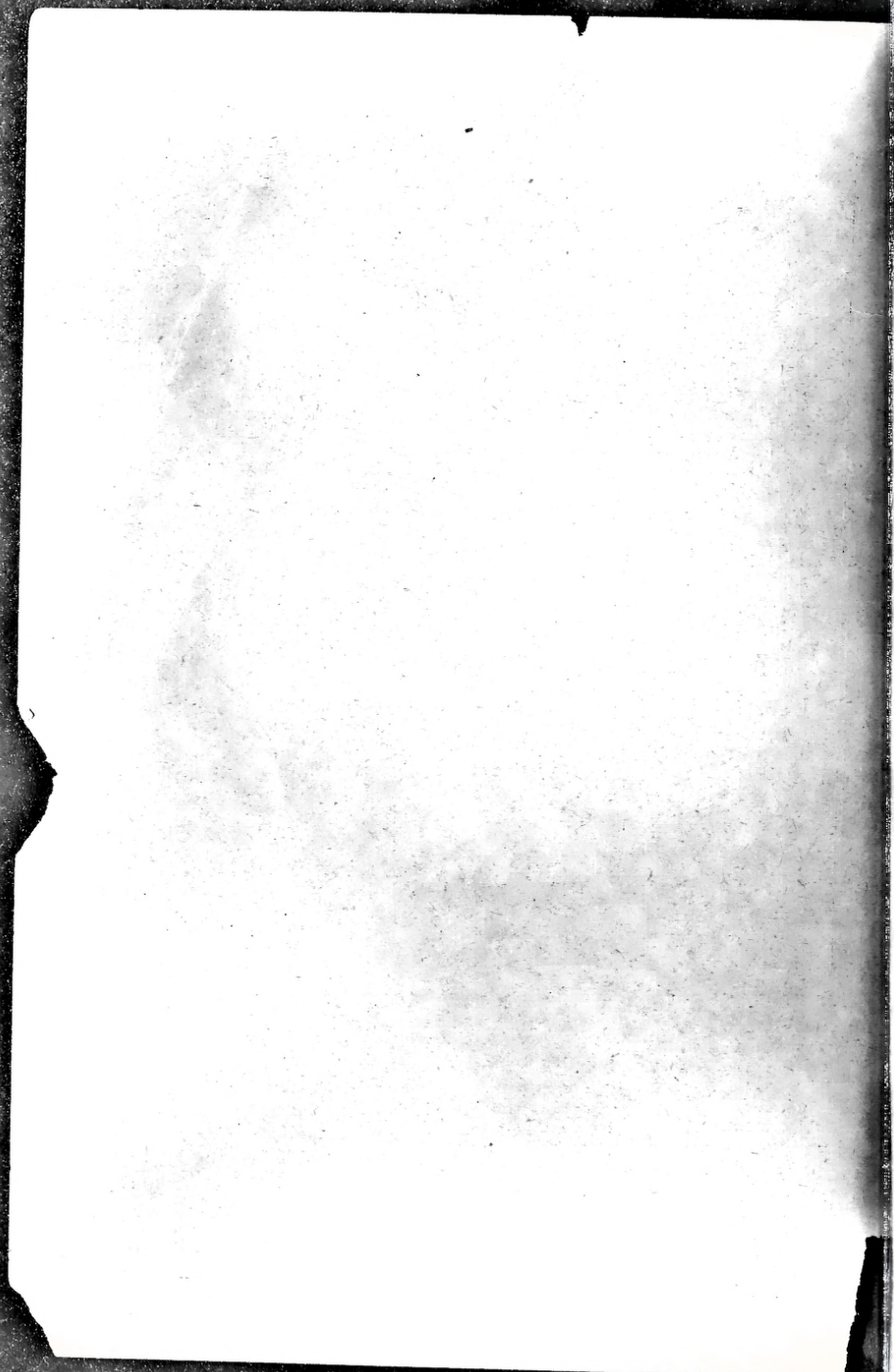
**C. COHEN**

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# FOREIGN MISSIONS:

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## DANGERS AND DELUSIONS

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C. COHEN

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THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, LTD.,

1 STATIONERS' HALL COURT, E.C.

1901

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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## FOREIGN MISSIONS.

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I.

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

IF anything had been needed to impress upon the public mind the necessity for a clearer understanding of missionary methods and results, recent events in China would have made good the deficiency. That missionary activity in that country should have been largely instrumental in producing, not only a lamentable loss of life and a serious dislocation of commercial relations, but also the conditions for a quarrel between various European Powers, is a state of affairs that must give rise to a strong feeling of uneasiness concerning these Evangelistic societies. The control by a few London societies of some thousands of agents, who hold themselves responsible to none but the officers of their own society, the presence of these people among uncivilised or semi-civilised races, creates an element of danger against which we cannot be too carefully guarded.

If all these missionary ladies and gentlemen were persons of judgment and tact, the danger would still be great; but they are far from being that. It is the common experience and the common testimony of travellers and others that, while they may be often honest and earnest, they are usually ill-balanced, fanatical, and greatly lacking in the necessary judgment for dealing with people who, in manners and customs, differ radically from themselves. Throughout the reports issued by the various societies—and these are bulky enough, in all conscience—one rarely meets with the slightest

indication of respect for the customs or feelings of the people on whom the missionary gratuitously thrusts himself. Whatever is not Christian is of the Devil seems to be the general rule; and one can faintly imagine, from the fanatical impertinence of the lower class of Evangelists at home, where they are restrained to a considerable extent by the common sense of their neighbors, what their conduct *would* be when these restraints are removed.

But the danger of missionary activity is not confined to, nor has it commenced with, recent events in China. Far from that being the case, it is scarcely too much to say that wherever missionary work is going on, the danger of it causing trouble is always present in a greater or less degree. As it is, a great many troubles can be partly traced to this source. In New Zealand most of the outbreaks in the early part of the century were caused by the action of missionaries in grabbing the land belonging to the natives. The Church Missionary Society's agents alone claimed 216,000 acres, for which nothing but a few axes and similar things had been given in exchange. The native chiefs, who imagined that they had received the axes in exchange for their hieroglyphics at the foot of the deeds of exchange, naturally objected to the transaction when they discovered its real meaning, with the inevitable result.<sup>1</sup> In India the missionary bodies, by repeated remonstrances, induced the governing powers to withdraw from the maintenance of the Hindoo temple funds that had been taken over on the express understanding that they should be used in their interest, and thus played no mean part in inflaming the native mind and preparing for the mutiny.<sup>2</sup> Of West Africa Miss Mary Kingsley says: "The evil worked by what we

<sup>1</sup> For full particulars see Thomson's *Story of New Zealand*, i. 269 and ii. 154-58.

<sup>2</sup> See article by Sir A. C. Lyall in *Fortnightly Review* for April, 1872.

must call the missionary party is almost incalculable." She asserts that it has led to our policy of destroying the native states, and is the cause of our wars in West Africa.<sup>1</sup> And now in China we have had brought home to the public mind, what has been lying buried in Parliamentary papers issued during the last thirty years, that here, too, it is missionary zeal, missionary indiscretion, the outraging of native susceptibilities by fanatical Evangelists, that are chiefly responsible for the existing condition of affairs.

The good results of missionary labors would, indeed, need to be striking to compensate this constant source of danger; and, in order to see *what* the results are, one requires something more than the vapid, mawkish statements given at missionary meetings, or issued in missionary circulars. Unfortunately, however, the materials for forming an *exact* judgment can hardly be said to exist. For many reasons—some obvious, some otherwise—travellers seem remarkably shy of criticising missionary work. Probably the kindness which they receive from the missionaries, as one white man from another; probably the force of religious organisations, which are still strong enough to make people pay for attacking any of their agencies—may account for their comparative silence; but the fact remains. What is equally remarkable is what we may call their negative testimony. If they do not criticise adversely as much as one would expect, neither do they praise; and this is extremely significant. One may rest assured that if the number or character of the natives Christianised was striking enough to command notice, then notice would be taken by men who are often themselves Christian, and often have friends among the missionaries. As it is, we get accounts of the amiability and self-sacrifice of some missionaries—accounts that we need neither question nor discuss; but there is a suspicious silence

<sup>1</sup> *West African Studies*, p. 322.

concerning the success of their enterprise. Where the statements are clear and definite they are usually, as will be seen later, condemnatory.

From the missionaries themselves we can neither expect nor receive unprejudiced statements of their work. Either we get the accounts of ill-balanced enthusiasts, who see in every pretended conversion in India, Africa, or China the promise of the conversion of an entire people, or we get reports from another class who write with a too obvious eye upon home subscriptions. A long study of missionary reports has only served to convince me of the utter unreliability of many of the statements contained therein. The idle curiosity of one native is transformed into "a heart hunger for the gospel," and subscribers are warned to prepare themselves for great results, which never arrive. The request of another for a Bible, probably because he thinks it may be of use as a fetish, although he may be unable to read it, is strong evidence of the "power of Jesus over the forces of evil."

Uneducated, uncivilised Africans are represented as giving utterance to semi-poetic speeches that have an obvious smack of London training-colleges; and in one case I noted a sentence, said to have been used by the Romans concerning the early Christians, put into the mouth of a poor woman in Yoruba. Canon Isaac Taylor, and many other friends of the missionary movement, have not hesitated to label these high-flown speeches as so many pieces of deception practised on the British public; and Sir H. H. Johnson says they are all so much "gammon" to "encourage the British people to find funds."<sup>1</sup> Native life, too, is usually misconceived, sometimes deliberately misrepresented. Native customs, which may be harmless enough in the native eyes, and which only become obscene under the influence of

<sup>1</sup> *British Central Africa*, p. 191.



missionary teaching, are adduced as proofs of unbridled immorality, and there is served up for home consumption a distorted picture of the African; because, "unless it were stirred up by horrors, the English public would refuse to subscribe."<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, however, so far as the number of the converted is concerned, one is compelled to depend upon the missionary returns; and, with whatever reservations these may be taken, we can at least feel assured that these under-estimate neither the quantity nor the quality of the work done. It has also to be borne in mind that these reports do not meet the eye of the general public as they leave the hands of the agents abroad, but only after they have passed through those of their London superiors, who naturally take care that nothing of a too unfavorable character shall appear. It is tolerably certain that, if an impartial committee of investigation were appointed, missionary work would appear in a far different light from that in which it is usually presented to the world. Even on the reading of their own reports a great many of the conversions are obviously fictitious, while the quality is enormously exaggerated.

On the surface all may appear well; but when one takes such general statements as "A great and wondrous door opened to the Gospel," "A great outpouring of the spirit," "People turning with eagerness and desire to the message of the Gospel," etc., etc., and compares them with actual results, or checks one year's returns with those of previous years, or one society's account with that of another society, it is then that one sees how utterly insignificant the positive results are—so insignificant that the annual increase in the number of the followers of the non-Christian religions, from the surplus of births over deaths, far outnumbers the converts to Christianity in all parts of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Kingsley's *West African Studies*, pp. 321-2.

In what follows I have not thought it advisable to take into consideration the work of all the missionary societies in the places passed in review. To do so would only be to increase the reading matter without there being any corresponding increase in the information derived from its perusal. There is such a wearisome monotony in missionary reports, the same tales appearing year after year, and with society after society, and such a constant relation borne by the number of converts to the number of missionaries employed, that one may fairly take four or five societies as being typical of the whole. Nor have I thought it necessary to examine at length the purely financial aspect of missionary work—although much might be said on this head. All that is needful is to give to the reader some idea of the resources of the societies with which we shall have to deal.

## II.

### FINANCIAL.

The annual expenditure of the whole of the missionary agencies of Great Britain is roughly estimated at about one-and-a-half millions sterling. Of these societies the Church Missionary Society comes first, with an income for 1899-1900 of £404,906 and an expenditure of £367,268. These sums, however, do not include moneys raised and expended in the missions, which form no inconsiderable item, and about which no very clear information is given. There is appended to the financial statement a very cautiously-worded certificate from a firm of accountants, who confine themselves to the curiously empty statement that the balance-sheet is in agreement with the books of the C. M. S. Payments to missionaries is included under so many different heads—

salaries, allowance for house, conveyance, education of children, etc.—that it is impossible to make an exact calculation; but it cannot be less than £500 per head, and is possibly more. The collection of funds runs into an item of £25,843 4s. 7d., and their administration to £15,917 15s. 2d. Nineteen clergymen receive between them £5,432 6s. 8d.—an average of just over £284 each, as “association” secretaries, and whose sole duty, so far as I can discover, is to preach a missionary sermon once now and again. The agents in the society’s employ abroad, white and colored, number 8,077. We shall see the nature of their performances later.

Next in size comes the London Missionary Society, with an income of £150,168 14s. 10d. and an expenditure of £171,903 19s. 7d. The foreign secretary, the Rev. M. Wardlaw Thompson, receives £800 per year, the Rev. A. N. Johnson, secretary, £500, the Rev. G. Cousins £400 as editorial secretary. The retiring allowance for secretaries seems to run to £200 and £250. This society employs about 5,665 agents, and there is the same difficulty in finding out the cost per head as I have pointed out exists in the case of the C. M. S.

The foreign missions of the Wesleyan Methodist Church are carried to different European cities as well as to the customary missionary hunting-grounds—a form of propaganda both needless and impudent. The number of agents, the majority being unpaid, reaches the enormous figure of 8,946. The income from January 1 to December 31, 1899, amounted to £133,690 9s. 1d., the expenditure to £133,738 9s. The home expenses include the salaries of four secretaries (all clergymen), £1,000; and, as usual, there is, on account of the same gentlemen, further charges for “Children, Rent, Rates, Taxes, House Bill, House Repairs, Repairs and Replacement of Furniture, Coals, Gas,” etc., amounting to £872 6s. 6d. One wonders what they are supposed to spend their

salaries on, particularly as they all appear to have churches in addition to their secretarial salary and allowance.

The Baptist Missionary Society has under its control 5,464 agents. Its expenditure for the year ending March 31, 1900, was £73,716; income, £66,593 11s. 5d. Salary of general secretary, £500; association secretary, £450.

It will be seen from the above brief epitome of the resources of four of the principal missionary societies that the work is carried on on a fairly large scale; and, on the whole, there is a gradual increase in the number of agents employed, and consequently in the money raised.

One word further before coming to an examination of the work in detail. A very ready reply to all criticism on missionary work is that the men and women engaged in the work are honest and earnest, and that a great deal of good is done in introducing education and the different civilised arts among undeveloped races. I do not see that either reply can fairly meet the objections disclosed by a careful examination of the facts of the case. That *some* of the men and women engaged in the work are in deadly earnest need not be questioned; but it is a poor movement that cannot boast as much. Nor need it be questioned that in some cases good may be done by the introduction of purely secular elements, such as schools, medical knowledge, etc. But, after all, these are the incidentals of mission work, not the essentials; and if the missionaries were limited to these secular agencies, their ardor would soon cool. The main object of these organisations, the purpose for which huge sums of money are subscribed, is to bring the non-Christian people to a belief in Christianity; and it is consequently by the success of the missionaries in doing this, as well as the influence of the new faith on the lives of those who are converted, that the value of missionary work must be ultimately decided.

## III.

## INDIA.

*The Number of Converts.*—India is the classic ground of missionary enterprise. We read of flourishing churches being established there as early as the fifth century, with proselytising being vigorously carried on in all directions. But, like many other and more modern missionary enterprises, it came to nought. The converts dwindled away, the organisations disappeared, and at the beginning of the present century the churches found in India practically virgin soil. Since the opening of the century the work of propagandism has been vigorously prosecuted; and if the reports of the number of people converted were really genuine, or the conversions lasting, Christians should by this time represent a much larger portion of the population than the beggarly one hundred and fiftieth they are said to muster.

In India, too, missionary work is carried on under peculiarly favorable conditions. It is true that the Government of India stands aloof from all religions, protecting all, but patronising none—a procedure not by any means to the taste of the missionaries; but still its representatives are professedly Christian, and this must always have its due influence on the people at large. What, then, are the results of missionary enterprise in our Indian Empire? We will take, first of all, the question of the number of converts, and deal with the societies operating in the order of their importance.

The Church Missionary Society comes first both in the amount of its expenditure and the number of its

agents.<sup>1</sup> For the year 1899-1900 these latter numbered 3,424, Europeans and natives, and there was sent out for their support £113,630 17s. 6d. These 3,424 agents baptised during the year 8,423 people. Out of this number, however, 5,978 were children, and there is nothing in the Report to indicate whether they are the children of existing Christians, of the adult converts, or simply children that have been baptised *without their parents*. As there is evidence that a very large number of the adult conversions are those of unmarried people, it is clear that these are, for the most part, the infant children of existing church members, in which case the Report is so far misleading, since it sets up the idea of converts gained from non-Christian religions.

The baptism of children in any case can hardly rank as a serious performance; and if we put these on one side we get a balance of 2,445 adult baptisms as the work of 3,424 agents for an entire year. This is not a very striking effect of the work of so large an army, but even this result has to be discounted. The report for the previous year returned the number of communicants at 33,804. Adding to this number the 8,423 adults and children for 1899-1900, the number *should now stand at* 42,227,<sup>2</sup> whereas the actual number is only 35,640. This registers a decrease in one direction of 6,587, against an increase in another of 8,423, and leaves a net gain of 1,836 as the fruits of 3,424 people working for a year, and receiving from home over £113,000.

<sup>1</sup> I have placed under the heading of "Agents" missionaries, teachers, medical missionaries, etc. All help in the work of evangelisation, and we have to reckon their united efforts in estimating the results. In speaking of expenditure I am referring to the sums transmitted from Great Britain only.

<sup>2</sup> I am aware, of course, that all the children would not become communicants at once, but this should be made good by the increase of communicants from the baptisms of previous years. As I am seeking to test the *permanence* of these results, it will be seen that this is not an unfair method.

If instead of taking one year's work we take three or four, the results are poorer still. Comparing the report for 1900 with that for 1896, we note that the total increase of communicants only numbers 3,631, which, instead of giving us even 1,836, just about halves the number, or 918 per year; or, in round figures, each convert represents an expenditure of £110 of *English money*, and the year's labor of four missionaries, and these latter backed up by numerous charitable agencies, such as schools, dispensaries, etc.

We have reached this result by taking the work *en bloc*. Let us see how it looks in detail. The Bengal missionaries have been at work since 1814. The last report placed the number of agents at 443, who received from home over 15,000. During the year 101 adults have been baptised. But even here some reduction has to be made, as during the past four years the net increase has been but 334, out of which number at least 120 would be accounted for by the increase of births over deaths among the Christian community already existing, which would leave a paltry 214 as the outcome of four years' work by 443 agents, and an expenditure of about £60,000.

At Allahabad, the report informs us (p. 215), "most of the educated classes appeared to have a real conviction of the truth of Christianity"; yet on comparing results we find the communicants have *decreased* by 28 since 1896. One of the agents, Mr. Waller, remarks plaintively: "What can a man do in the face of such objections as I heard the other day—'Christ did not suffer willingly, for he cried, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" Or again: "Christ did not know the future, for He said to the twelve (including Judas), 'Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Now we know Judas went to hell, and never will judge the tribes.'" It is a great pity that ingenuity should be exercised in such a wrong direction." Mr. Waller has our sympathy.

Benares, with a staff of 27 agents, has 23 fewer communicants than it had in 1895. Madras, with a staff of 66 agents, has increased by 93 in four years. In Tinnevely there are 1,018 agents: 373 adults were baptised last year, but the total increase since 1895 is only 227. Yet nothing is said in the annual report of the losses, while much is written concerning the encouraging nature of the conversions, which are obviously lost almost as soon as made. The Punjab and Sindh Mission, with 228 agents, has, while reporting hundreds of conversions, 60 *less* than it had four years ago, and has received from home during that time between £80,000 and £90,000. Yet, again, nothing is said of these losses; and the subscribers are led to believe that the missions are stronger by these reported conversions. I am wrong, though, in saying nothing is said of the losses. There is mention of *two* cases of "backsliding," and a casual remark that the plague has prevented any "great advance" in the work. This, in face of the figures cited above, is instructive. One would like to hear a missionary's definition of what is meant by "obtaining money under false pretences."

The London Missionary Society has in India 1,844 agents, for whose support there was sent out, during 1899, the sum of over £47,000. Except incidentally, the number of people converted each year is not given—a circumstance which reflects more credit on their shrewdness than on their straightforwardness. But as in the report for 1896 the Church members were returned at 9,809, and in that for 1900 at 10,998, there has been a consequent gain of 1,189 in four years. This gives us an average growth of 297 per year, without allowing for the increase of births over deaths; or, to look at the matter from another point of view, each additional church member represents the work of *six* missionaries for twelve months, and an expenditure of £158 per member. At this rate the conversion of India would cost the trifling



sum of 45,346 million sterling. Fortunately, this expenditure is not likely to be consummated in a hurry.

Details of the work show pretty much the same features as I have noted in connection with the C. M. S. In Calcutta, we are warned, "the actual number of conversions seems very small when the very large staff of workers, European and native, is taken into account." How many conversions there were we are not told; but judging from the fact that, in spite of an army of eighty-three agents, there are sixty-five *fewer* church members than there were four years ago, they cannot have been very numerous. Mr. Young, one of the missionaries, may well lament that "the number of those won for Christ is appallingly small" (1900, p. 101). Perhaps some light is thrown on the situation by a remark in the report for '96 to the effect that "there is need of a class of workers intellectually stronger and more capable of successfully meeting argument and criticism" (p. 59).

At Berhampur there are forty-six members after seventy-six years' work. And the result of four years' labor, with a present staff of forty-eight agents, has been eight members—one convert to every twenty-four missionaries per year. Yet the report declares, "In all parts of the district and in all branches of the work there is movement" (p. 110). At Benares "the native church is slowly growing in numbers" (Report for '96, p. 63). Very slowly, since, whereas in that year there were forty-six members, after seventy-six years' work, to-day, with a staff of thirty-seven, there are *thirty-six*—a decrease of ten. Still, Mrs. Greaves reports, "We believe a quiet work is going on among the women." Methinks there is some humor in this "believe." At Mirzapur, with twenty-three agents, there are forty-seven members after sixty-three years' work. In '95 there were fifty-one. At Almora, where there are fifty-six agents, it is admitted that the members do not increase very rapidly, "because the losses very nearly equal the gains" (p. 122). When

so much is admitted more may be expected, and we are not disappointed—the church members have decreased by just about half since '95. At Bellary there were, in '95, 172 members. In 1900, in spite of the efforts of forty-six agents, these had dropped to 166. Kadiri, with fourteen agents, has dropped from twenty-one in '95 to nineteen in '99. The report for 1896 said of Salem (p. 95): "The hostility which was so painfully manifest a couple of years ago has now almost entirely ceased, and Mr. Devasagayam has been much encouraged by the attentive hearing of the crowd, and also by the friendly and sympathetic attitude of the educated classes." An altogether cheerful account until the discovery is made that there is now one member less than was returned in the '96 report—in spite of there being seventy-eight agents at work. The population of Salem is over 50,000; the L. M. S. numbers 234 church members after seventy-six years' work. In Madras missionaries of the L. M. S. have been at work for seventy years. There are now 201 church members and sixty-three agents. During the past four years these latter have secured ten new members. At Tittuvlei thirty-six agents have managed to *lose* six of their members in four years. It is only when we thus compare actual results with the statements made, concerning the progress of the work, that we are in a position to estimate the value of sermons delivered by returned missionaries and others. And let it be noted, again, that I am taking these results not from the lips of hostile critics, but from their own published reports.

The Wesleyan Methodists have in India 904 paid and 1479 unpaid agents—2,383 in all. Its expenditure on India for 1899-1900 amounted to £28,479 1s. 1d. In Madras there are 332 paid and 242 unpaid agents. These 574 ladies and gentlemen baptised last year ninety-seven persons; the church membership, however, only increased by sixty-four. In the Mysore district 679 agents baptised sixty-two adults. The native church

membership has, however, increased but by five during the year—a condition of things concerning which, with becoming candor, they say: "It cannot be pretended that these figures are satisfactory" (p. 89). In Calcutta 189 agents baptised fifty people and lost thirty. They are "looking for the mighty workings of the Holy Spirit in the coming year." In Lucknow and Benares 241 agents have secured the baptism of twenty-five persons. Inquirers, we are informed, were plentiful; but "their motives were not so pure as we require them to be, and none have been accepted." Altogether in India the 2,383 agents secured the baptism of 604 adults; but as the church members have increased by 309, we have to write 295 off this magnificent result.

Next to the Wesleyan Methodists come the Baptist missions with a staff of 1272<sup>1</sup> agents, and an expenditure of £25,989 12s. 2d. There are all the usual flowery statements of the progress made, with the customary insignificant results in the shape of actual growth. One or two specimens may serve. The Report for 1899 contained the following from one of the society's agents in India: "I have never before experienced such a general desire on the part of vast multitudes of the people to listen attentively and thoughtfully to the preaching of the old, old story of Jesus and his love" (p. 16). From another: "I have seen an audience of out-and-out idolaters and Mohammedans held spell-bound many times since I came to India" (p. 17). And the result of all this "spell-bound" attention, and "general desire of vast multitudes" to listen to the Gospel? Well, in 1898-9, 919 agents baptised 435 persons and lost 261, leaving a balance of 174. In 1899-1900, with 1,272 agents, there was an increase of 369 and a decrease of 385.

<sup>1</sup> This number includes 720 day and Sunday-school teachers, who play quite as important a part in securing converts as the clergy and evangelists.

Again I have to point out that when we compare statements with facts there can be little doubt of the deliberately misleading nature of the reports. It is difficult to conceive, even with the assistance of the inane twaddle with which the reports are filled, that men and women on the spot could be so blind to their real position, as the assumption of absolute honesty on the part of the writers would involve.

Here, then, are the grand results in India of four of our principal missionary societies. They have maintained in round figures over 8,900 agents, have sent out from Great Britain in solid cash over £215,000, and have secured an increase in the native Christian community of about 2,500 persons. And meanwhile the bare increase of births over deaths among the non-Christian population must number at least a million per year. Instead of making progress they are actually, in proportion to population, losing ground.

*Bogus Conversions.*—But the figures concerning conversions that are supplied to us by the different societies have to be yet further discounted, if we would form anything like an exact idea concerning missionary operations. I have assumed in the foregoing that the converts gained represent a change from “heathenism” to “Christianity.” This is undoubtedly the impression formed by all who read the reports of conversions. It is, however, very largely an erroneous one, since in numerous instances the cases are simply those of people who have left one mission, for more or less interested reasons, and have joined another. By thus going from mission to mission, posing first as a hopeful inquirer, next as a convert, a single individual may be transformed into a dozen or more before he reaches the British public; not one of the reports making the slightest reference to the fact that many of their cases have been “converted” before reaching their hands. If we were to deduct the number of these “rice Christians,” people

whose only object is to secure a certain payment per month, and who leave whenever the payment ceases or whenever they see a chance of getting more elsewhere, the statistics of baptisms would undergo a remarkable shrinkage.

That this is no exaggeration on the writer's part one or two citations from the report will prove conclusively. The L. M. S. complains that the Seventh-day Adventists raided some of their stations, and a pamphlet had to be published so as to enlighten the people (Report 1900, p. 99). In other places they complain of the same people, and also Roman Catholics, Mormons, and others (pp. 232-3). The Baptists in their Report for '96 say: "Among other discouragements under which our missionaries in Bengal have labored, our Barisal brethren have been greatly distressed by the action of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel." And again: "Like other stations of our society in Bengal, the church at Soory has suffered greatly by the strain upon her that has been made by several adjoining missions. Mention might be made in particular of the Church Missionary Society, the Wesleyan Society, and the American Episcopal Methodist Society."

The C. M. S. accuse the Roman Catholics of stealing over 400 families belonging to their congregations, and generally enticing away converts by dishonorable methods (1896 Report, pp. 323-344). The Roman Catholics in turn blame the Protestants for stealing their converts, and, as they are far more successful as missionaries, there seems little reason to doubt the genuineness of the charge.

The Salvation Army comes in for specially severe censures. The C. M. S. report for 1900 asserts that at Kangasha the Army enticed away nearly half the congregation (p. 324). The report for 1896 asserts that all the Army's converts are drawn from other Christian bodies, and that the native agents employed "are such as it is impossible to respect." It further states

that there is no evidence to show that "one Moham-  
medan or Heathen has ever been brought by Salvation  
Army effort to professing in his home his adhesion  
even to unbaptised Christianity" (p. 216). Still  
more serious charges were made against the Army by  
a Mr. Gillespie, of the Irish Presbyterian Mission,  
Ahmedabad. In a pamphlet published in 1896 he  
declares that the agents employed by the Army are  
often men of evil reputation, and those who join  
suffer both spiritually and materially from the change.  
A large portion of the pamphlet is devoted to proving  
the unreliability of the figures furnished by the Army  
concerning its work in India. Thus, on the Bareja  
Farm Colony Mr. Booth-Tucker reports twenty-five  
families regularly at work. Mr. Gillespie found  
only one. At Gugerat the Army claimed 75,000  
"adherents," and 10,000 enrolled adult soldiers.  
Mr. Gillespie challenges them to produce 100 real  
converts. He says that, knowing Gugerat thoroughly,  
he knows of only one man who could be called a  
genuine convert. In the Paneh Mahala Mr. Tucker  
reported 3,000 members. Mr. Gillespie failed to find  
one after a diligent inquiry. He also says that the  
parade of Salvationists before General Booth on one  
of his Indian tours was secured by selling red jackets  
at a quarter of their value, and promising food and  
clothing gratis on future occasions.

Now, I have no intention of sitting in judgment  
on any one of these statements; they are probably  
all well founded. I quote them to show that in a large  
number of cases these so-called "conversions" are not  
conversions at all. They are simply a transfer of pro-  
fessional cadgers from one Christian body to another.  
No announcement is made in any of the reports that  
many of their "converts" come from other Christian  
bodies; that might give rise to awkward questions at  
home; and so the public are carefully encouraged in  
the belief that their conversions are drawn from the  
non-Christian population. Let any reader look back

at the figures I have given, showing the extent of the growth of the native churches; let him or her allow for the natural increase due to the birth-rate, and deduct the proportion that have simply stepped from one mission to another, and then look at the result in the shape of *genuine conversions*. If raising nearly a million and a half sterling annually on the strength of such reports is not obtaining money under false pretences, what is it?

*Schools and Conversions.*—In addition to the direct attack made on non-Christian religions in India, there is an indirect attack made through the medium of medical dispensaries and schools. That good is done by these secular agencies need not be denied, although there is a wide difference between destroying faith in Hinduism and creating faith in Christianity. Still, neither dispensaries nor schools are there with the primary object of dispelling disease or spreading education, but for the purpose of manufacturing Christians; and it is on this success in this direction that they must stand or fall. The C. M. S. Report declares that “the educational work in India continues ‘to demonstrate its usefulness as an evangelistic agency’” (p. 347), and other societies report pretty much the same thing.<sup>1</sup> The position of affairs in India in regard to education, it is worth noting, is not very unlike the position in England, the religious schools running in rivalry to the Government schools, which they seek to supplant. Thus, the C. M. S. report expresses “the great need for missionary schools which are capable of holding their own with the well-equipped Government institutions” (p. 252); and the L. M. S. Report states that at Trevandrum more than 150 girls have left “Mission schools to secure

<sup>1</sup> “The primary object of every missionary college . . . should be the conversion or salvation of the pupils. It was for this purpose such institutions were originally founded, and there is no reason to make any alteration” (Report of Centenary Conference of Foreign Missions, 1888, ii., p. 242).

a higher standard of education in Government institutions, a fact which we very deeply deplore" (p. 181). The last phrase shows clearly enough the real object of these schools, and how very sincere is the concern for the people's educational welfare.

What, then, is the value of these schools as instruments of conversion? None of the societies give the least information on the subject—except indirectly: we are left to find out as we may. We shall, however, get some idea of their value if we compare the number of scholars with the number of conversions. In 1896 the number of scholars in C. M. S. schools in India was 52,004. But as the increase in the number of communicants, from all quarters, between 1896 and 1900, was only 3,631, and as the reports of the various missionaries attribute nearly the whole of these to the influence of *their* preaching, it is difficult to see in what way these schools "demonstrate their value as evangelistic agencies." The fact is that but very few of those who pass through missionary schools ever become Christian; while some of the bitterest native opponents of Christianity are those who have had such training. The truth of the first portion of this statement can be seen by two or three quotations from the C. M. S. reports. At Bannu, Punjab, out of 340 scholars two were baptised. At Karachi the conversion of one boy out of 476 scholars is referred to as a "noteworthy event." At Amritsar among 691 scholars there were "no conversions."

The L. M. S. had in India in school 33,184 scholars; since then the total gain from all quarters has been 1,189. The Baptists register 6,000 scholars. In 1898 they gained 52 converts; in 1899 they *lost* 16. Finally, at the Centenary Conference, held in London in 1888, the Rev. Mr. Matthieson declared that "there are some who have been brought to Christ through these colleges, but it is notorious that the great majority of them remain in decided unbelief in regard to the Gospel" (ii., 247).



Another speaker held "that the outcome of these institutions, considering the vast sums of money spent upon them, is not adequate; the Christian influence that comes from them is of a very meagre description" (p. 250). And yet another confessed: "We have no conversions outside the mission schools, and the Christians that are brought out of them are very few."

Where, then, are the glorious results that we are assured flow from the educational work? Certainly they are not evident in the published returns; and it is not unfair to assume that missionary modesty is hardly great enough to hide these results if they existed. The truth is that, while the Hindoo is willing enough to avail himself of the chances of a European education, he decisively turns his back on the religious instruction. The case referred to on p. 17 of the C. M. S. Report of a man who had no objection to his son becoming a Christian because "I have noticed Christians are coming to the front, and I want my son to come to the front," is typical of the predominant motive in attending mission schools. One may place at the side of the empty assurances of interested parties the explicit declaration of Mr. W. S. Caine, M.P., on his return from India, that "Educated India is looking for a religion, but turns its back on Christ and his teaching as presented by the missionary.....As far as turning the young men they educate into Christians is concerned, their (the missionaries') failure is complete and unmistakable."<sup>1</sup> And a well-informed writer in the *Contemporary Review* for February, 1888, sums up his Indian experience in the following words:—

"Christianity has taken but a poor grip on Hindoo India. The creed has, except in Tinnevely, no perceptible place in any one province. Its votaries are nowhere really visible among the population. Its thoughts do not affect the life, and perplex the orthodoxy of the creeds. No Indian Christian is a leader or even a quasi-leader

<sup>1</sup> *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 14, 1889.

among the Indian peoples ; and a traveller living in India for two years might leave it without full consciousness that any work of active proselytism was going on at all."

*Quality of Converts.*—One more aspect of missionary work in India demands notice before turning to other countries. I have said enough of the *quantity* of conversions ; what of the quality ? That this is poor is admitted on all hands. Indeed, if we were to take a map of India and note the places where the most numerous conversions are recorded, we should find the population to be principally the lower Aboriginal races. With the higher races and the educated classes Christian missions altogether fail to secure a foothold. With unconscious satire Sir W. Temple declared, addressing a missionary audience : " There is a sect called Hindu Theistic Reformers. It is for you, my Christian brethren, to direct that movement in the direction of Christianity. There is difficulty in so attracting it, because these people have considerable intellect, they are not easy to reason with, and cannot possibly be talked over."<sup>2</sup>

Much outside testimony concerning the quality of Christian converts might be cited from the testimony of Sydney Smith, at the opening of the nineteenth century, that the native who bore the name of Christian was " commonly nothing more than a drunken reprobate, who conceives himself at liberty to eat and drink anything he pleases, and annexes hardly any other meaning to Christianity," down to almost similar evidence in our own day. I prefer, however, to keep to the missionary reports, as being more conclusive. The C. M. S. Report for 1900 states that the Bengali Christian Church, " here as elsewhere, is suffering from the effects of a deep-rooted tendency to look upon Christianity as God's method of excusing sin, rather than God's means of removing it." (A missionary euphemism for saying converts are worse

<sup>2</sup> *Oriental Experiences*, p. 163.

after conversion than before.) "The result is a low ideal of Christian possibility and attainment fatal to real aggression and usefulness" (p. 191). To the question, "What is the character of the converts?" the reply is: "While year by year there is a distinct growth in spirituality, yet at present there is a rather low standard of Christian living" (p. 301). The evangelisation of the heathen, we are informed (p. 286), depends ultimately upon the native preachers. Yet of these the Rev. Mr. Stone writes that he is distressed, above everything else, at the ignorance of some, and the utter lack of earnestness of others (p. 307).<sup>1</sup> Of Tinnevely the Rev. Mr. Walker writes: "To the superficial observer all seems fair and hopeful. It has taken us missionaries a long time to look under the surface to the inner reality of things. There is a sensitive plant in South India which is green and fair, and bears a flower of lovely hue.....But if you touch it the flowers droop and the leaves curl up into a shapeless skeleton. I have often thought of that shrinking plant as, in some respects, an emblem of the Tinnevely Church" (p. 319). At Pulga the whole of the population of the village turned out to meet the missionary, and would not rest until he had sent back for *medicine-chest and magic-lantern* (p. 266). There were no converts.

The London Missionary Society refers sorrowfully to the fact that "We have but little to record in the way of open success among the high castes." The more successful work is "among the lower castes who live in the outskirts of the city. These poor and degraded people work as coolies in the streets.....are wonderfully ready to receive teachers. They may not always be so, as the Government is talking of giving them an education—and, of course, this means a

<sup>1</sup> The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel also notes that the native agents regard preaching as a means of enjoyment (Report for 1899, p. 81).

Christless education" ('96 Report, p. 113). The Report for 1900 contains the following from different agents: "Our people are gathered together from the lower castes, are poor in the extreme"; but subscribers are encouraged "not to despise the low ideas and motives with which they come to us" (p. 186). Again: "A very large proportion who profess themselves Christians, and are baptised, are so very ignorant that great care and patience are required to make them intelligently acquainted with the fundamental truths of Christianity" (p. 145). That is, they are converted first, and taught Christianity afterwards. This may, perhaps, account for the numerous lapses. In the Yercaud Church "certain of its members have had to be severely disciplined" (p. 157). In Northern Travancore "the Myanadu Church.....might be one of the most successful and influential churches.....But its spiritual power has gone." The members "frequently spend their leisure time in quarrelling among themselves"—a form of Christian enjoyment not strictly limited to India. "Aggressive Christian work is impossible. The past year has witnessed a long series of unhappy quarrels in the Church" (p. 188). At Trevandrum "only a third of the Christian adherents can read" (p. 190). Among the Mala Christians, a lady worker writes: "When one questions them by themselves, the one appalling factor that forces itself upon one is their unimaginable ignorance.....In most, the anxiety for the daily bread is the largely bulking factor in their consciousness" (p. 137). It is the Malas that the Wesleyan Methodists say "furnish us with the great majority of our converts" ('99 Report, p. 76).

A very interesting table might be constructed, showing the relation between poverty-stricken districts, famine years, and the number of "inquirers." Hunger and "inquiring" seem to go hand in hand. Thus an agent of the "Friends' Foreign Mission" writes: "To our own mission the famine year, 1897,

will stand out as a memorable one, on account of the unprecedented ingathering of inquirers and orphans. These two classes can be numbered by the hundred, and almost by the thousand. *The converts we cannot number.*" And if any ask, "Are not there people coming because of the distress?" the triumphant rejoinder is: "May not God be sending the distress to arouse people from their sins?"<sup>1</sup>

It is needless to multiply quotations of this character. One might go on indefinitely, and reinforce them, if necessary, by the opinions of outsiders. The fact that the native churches have to be maintained by money sent out from England is a sufficient indication of their character. And that hundreds of thousands of pounds should be wasted year after year on enterprises of this description, always unnecessary and often positively injurious, is one of the many glaring follies—or frauds—that characterise our religious life.

## IV.

## CHINA AND JAPAN.

*China and the Gospel.*—During the past twelve months special attention has been directed towards missionary work in China, and, whatever else has been brought about, its evil influence in that country has been made tolerably clear. In India, as we have seen, we have to chronicle, in proportion to effort, failure; but in China there is not only a record of failure, but the exercise of an influence prejudicial to the welfare of the Chinese people and to their friendly relations with other countries. For the outbreaks in China point to a much more serious matter than the

<sup>1</sup> See *Samuel Baker: a Sketch of Friends' Missions in India*, by C. W. Tumphrey, pp. 125, 160, 182.

mere failure of a religious propaganda. It is one of the most significant features of all the Chinese outbreaks during the last forty years that they should have been specially aimed against missionaries of all descriptions. Among many people who are strongly influenced by religious feeling this would not be surprising, but with such a people as the Chinese this circumstance is strange enough to call for explanation.

It must always be borne in mind that the Chinese are both a naturally peaceful and a religiously tolerant people ; and, provided decent respect be shown to the normal customs and institutions of the country, outbreaks need neither be expected nor feared. Mr. Alexander Michie, in his book on *Missionaries in China*, after declaring, as the result of a long personal experience, that "hatred of missionaries is practically universal throughout China" (p. 9), altogether denies that this hatred is due to the native dislike of Christianity. Not that the Chinese are developing any feeling of attachment for it; they are simply indifferent to it. He says:—

"Against the easy-going assumption of the missionaries, that when they are hated it is their Master who is hated, there stands the broad historical fact, in China, of toleration and patronage extended to the two great foreign religions, Mohammedanism and Buddhism. . . . So far as religion pure and simple is concerned, the Chinese bear the palm among all the nations of the earth for toleration, and the presumption is therefore irresistibly strong that it is never the religious but some other element in the missionary propaganda that rouses the passions of the Chinese" (p. 11).

So also Prof. R. K. Douglas:—

"The Chinese have always shown themselves singularly tolerant of faiths other than their own, more especially when the new religions are professed only by strangers, and are of a non-proselytising nature. They have allowed Mohammedans to live in their midst, and to hold offices of all ranks, without imposing on them the slightest disability" (*China*, p. 370).

Clearly we have to look for some cause outside the mere fact of a strange religion being preached, to account for this intense hatred of missionaries. True, the Chinese dislike the Christian teaching, and those

who are acquainted with the written attacks on missionaries know that the bitterest of all are composed of texts selected from the Bible, such texts as could not be read to a mixed audience at home. Mr. Michie's remarks on this head are worthy of note. He says:—

“What is an educated heathen likely to make of the evidence of the central truth of Christianity, the miraculous birth, as presented to him for the first time in the New Testament? What the Chinese *literati* do make of it the missionaries know very well, and have known for a long time, though few dare speak out.

“It so happens that, impure as the Chinese imagination may be, the whole body of their classical literature does not contain a single passage which needs to be slurred over or explained away, and which may not be read in its full natural sense by youth or maiden. And to people nurtured on a literature so immaculate in these respects there are things in the Bible which are calculated to create prejudice against its teachings, even in well-disposed minds” (pp. 66-7).

It is also clear that missionaries, by their general conduct, apart from teaching, excite great dislike. Not only are harmless or even admirable associations, such as societies whose bond of union is abstinence from alcohol, opium, tobacco, meat, or impurity, branded by missionaries as “wiles of the devil,” since they teach the Chinese to trust to their own efforts to be virtuous,<sup>1</sup> instead of embracing Christianity; but the missionaries' conduct in dealing with Chinese worship is such that, if a foreigner were to behave in a similar manner to English Christians, his protection by the police would be a matter of urgent necessity. One missionary boasts of having in a Chinese temple stood “with his back towards the tablet of Confucius (and) addressed the assembled crowd on the folly and sin of worshipping deceased men—perhaps the first Gospel discourse ever delivered in a temple dedicated to the worship of the Chinese sage” (*Social Life of the Chinese*, Rev. J. Doolittle, ch. 14). Another, a lady this time, stood on the steps of one of the principal temples playing the concertina and singing, “Come to the Savior; make no delay!” (cited by the Rev.

<sup>1</sup> See Michie, pp. 56-7.

Dr. Wenyon, Wesleyan, in an address in London, on November 12, 1900). What would happen to an Atheistic lecturer who attempted to attack Christianity in Westminster Abbey, or deliver an address on the steps of St. Paul's, need hardly be said. Mr. A. B. Freeman, in his book, *The Attaché at Peking*, published last year, observes that the picture of a Chinese Buddhist preaching Buddhism in pidgin English to an audience at Charing Cross would give "some measure of the effect produced on a Chinese crowd by a missionary whom I have seen perched upon a cab outside the Tartar city of Peking, haranguing a yellow crowd of gapers in bastard Chinese, delivered with a strong Aberdonian accent."

There is small wonder, on the face of such facts, that more than one traveller has reached practically the same conclusion as Mr. Little, who doubts "if China will ever be Christianised, especially now that innumerable different sects of Protestants from Europe and America have entered the field and rendered confusion more confounded to the naturally sceptical Chinese mind," and believes that "the millions spent by the good people at home in placing the teaching before them, in its present shape, is money thrown away, and which would be spent to more advantage in reclaiming the ignorant poor around them."<sup>1</sup>

But neither the eccentricities of missionary behavior nor the objectionable character of missionary doctrines are enough to account for the bitter feeling amongst Chinese of all classes against missionaries. It is a very real and a very practical grievance that would seem to be chiefly responsible for Chinese ill-feeling; and its nature can be best stated, perhaps, in the missionaries' own words. The C. M. S. Report for 1899 (p. 329) says:—

"It is now a very common practice for men whose sole object is to plunder, to avoid paying their debts, and to escape punishment by the

<sup>1</sup> *Through the Yang-Tse Gorges*, pp. 232-4.



authorities, to place their names as Romanists on the register of the Roman Catholic Church. They are then entitled to the protection of the Roman priest, and bishop, and of the French Consul, and can, and do, commit acts of violence with impunity."

The Report for 1900 also says :—

"The anti-foreign and anti-Christian sentiment finds some palliation and excuse for its existence, alas! in the arbitrary acts of interference with native tribunals....to serve the interests of a religious propaganda" (p. 360).

And on page 383 we are told of "churches" that have been organised by natives for the express purpose of affording protection in law cases.

Of course, the Protestants confine the charges to the Catholics; the Catholics are equally ready in bringing the same charge against Protestants. There is plenty of evidence, however, that this interference with native tribunals is pretty common to all. The L. M. S. Report asserts that their missionaries carefully avoid interference in law cases, except "where downright oppression and interference with religious liberty are involved." There could hardly be a more complete admission of guilt. It is exactly the plea that is used by Roman Catholics to justify *their* acts of interference. Besides, who is to say where there is an act of interference with religious liberty? Could anything be more preposterous than a number of evangelists claiming the right to override the legal tribunals of a foreign country in the interests of their converts? What the average evangelist is at home most of us know; and what he is likely to be abroad, with all his natural narrowness and fanaticism intensified, we can faintly imagine. And far from it being true that it is Roman Catholics only who interfere in law cases, a very large number of the Parliamentary papers issued during the last thirty years, dealing with China, contain repeated warnings to Protestant missionaries on this very matter.

As far back as Nov. 13, 1869, the Foreign Office wrote of and to Protestant missionaries :—

"There is good reason to suppose that the animosity which has

lately been more intensely shown towards missionaries on the part of the ruling authorities in China is in a great measure to be attributed to the injudicious conduct of the native converts to Christianity.... There seems sufficient reason to believe that converts assume, and have acted on, the assumption that by embracing Christianity they released themselves from the obligations of obedience to the local authorities, and from the discharge of their duties as subjects of the Emperor, and acquired a right to be protected by the European Power whose religious tenets they had adopted."<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese Government has raised protest after protest against the fact that "missionaries set themselves above the law, and their converts, improving on this, oppress and insult those who are not of their faith."<sup>2</sup>

Our Ambassador at Peking at the time, Sir Rutherford Alcock, in transmitting the protests of the Chinese Government to our own Foreign Office, denied that the hostility to missionaries was due to the Chinese dislike of foreigners, asserted that the presence of missionaries inland was adverse to the development of China, and said that, if the British Government refused protection to missionaries inland, "certain pretensions of the missionaries to supersede the civil power would either cease to exist or be less boldly pushed.....while their converts, learning wisdom and moderation from their religious teachers, would no longer provoke the hostility of surrounding populations."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Paper on China, No. 9, 1870, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See China Papers, No. 9, 1870, and No. 3, 1871.

<sup>3</sup> China No. 9, 1870, pp. 16-18. This opinion is endorsed by M. Little in 1888—*Yang-Tse Gorges*, pp. 234-5. The circumstances under which missionaries claim the right to settle in all parts of China are of a piece with missionary "sharp practices" in other directions. The treaty of 1859 between China and Great Britain gives British missionaries the right to settle in certain areas. The French treaty, concluded at the same time, has the same provision for French subjects. But a supplementary convention was drawn up a year later, and a clause inserted, *without the knowledge of the Chinese signatories*, giving French missionaries the right to settle anywhere. The Chinese Government submitted to this fraudulent transaction, because it was not strong enough to resist. Thus the

It will be seen from the above statements that the complaint against missionaries is both old and well-founded; and it is clear that no self-respecting Government can quietly tolerate a band of men and women setting themselves up as an independent power within its dominions. In one case, at least, the Chinese Government drew up a series of suggestions for the future conduct of missionary work which, if they had been adopted, might have prevented later troubles. After the Tientsin riots of 1870 the Government presented its famous "missionary circular" to the different foreign consuls for their consideration. The circular consisted of eight propositions, of which the following were the most important. In China all the child asylums, of which there are very many, are under Government supervision. A register is kept for each child admitted, who is carefully trained in the religious belief of its parents or guardian, and may be adopted by childless people or reclaimed by its parents.<sup>1</sup> The refusal of missionaries to comply with these regulations, as well as the much higher rate of mortality in Christian orphanages, has always excited the dislike and distrust of the people, and more than one riot has resulted from this cause.<sup>2</sup> The riots of 1870 and 1891 owed their origin to the refusal of the missionaries to hand back children to their parents, because to do so would plunge them into heathendom and imperil their immortal souls.

French claim the right to settle anywhere on the strength of an act of deliberate fraud, and English missionaries claim the right because the French do. It is a fine lesson on the value of missionaries as "moralisers."

<sup>1</sup> It is almost needless to point out to those who have studied China that the accounts of infanticide furnished by missionaries are enormously exaggerated. It is done with a view to raising subscriptions; and one might read all the missionary reports published without discovering that such institutions as orphanages existed in China.

<sup>2</sup> See Mr. Howard Vincent's *From Newfoundland to Cochin China*. Appendix, p. 368, and Miss Simcox's *Primitive Civilisations*, ii., p. 378, and China Paper No. 1, 1892, p. 56.

With these facts in mind, the Chinese Government suggested (1) that Christian orphanages should be placed under Government supervision; (2) the legal status of missionaries in the interior to be clearly defined, and steps taken to prevent their converts successfully defying the local authorities; (3) examination into the antecedents of converts (to prevent missionary stations becoming refuges for wrong-doers), and regulations to be drawn up concerning the mixed attendance of men and women at places of worship—a proceeding which greatly scandalised the Chinese sense of propriety.<sup>1</sup>

This circular was presented to all the foreign Powers represented in China, but, owing largely to the protests of missionaries, its suggestions were peremptorily declined. The truth of the matter would seem to be that the missionaries are not averse to foreign intervention, but rather court it. Anyone who reads missionary reports attentively will see that, with nearly all, the break up of the present political constitution of China is regarded as an essential preliminary to the conversion of the Chinese. Seeing that China, as it is, will not have the Gospel, the next thing is to create a China that will. Consequently, every fresh act of intervention is hailed with gladness; while it seems to be the general policy of missionaries to irritate both people and Government as much as possible, and then appeal to their respective countries for protection against assaults which their own ill-advised conduct has provoked. This point was put, with all a seaman's bluntness, by Admiral Richards in one of his communications to the British Government in 1892. He says:—

“It seems to be the special aim of missionary societies to establish themselves outside treaty limits; and, having done so, they are not prepared to take the risks which they voluntarily incur, but, on the contrary, are loudest in their clamor for gunboats, as their contributions to the Shanghai press sufficiently demonstrate. . . . It appears to

<sup>1</sup> For full text of circular see Parl. Paper China No. 1, 1872.

be necessary, after the lessons taught by these occurrences, that some understanding should be arrived at with regard to missionary societies in China. . . . It seems altogether unreasonable that the societies should exercise absolute freedom in going where they please, and then their agents should look to her Majesty's Government for protection."<sup>1</sup>

But, despite the repeated protests of the Chinese and the warnings of the British Government, interference with and defiance of Chinese authorities by missionaries has increased to such an extent that, as one of the speakers at the Newcastle Church Congress of 1900 admitted, "It is at times impossible for a heathen to obtain justice in his own courts." And Sir R. Hart, who probably knows more about China than any other man living, points out as one of the principal causes of the last outbreak that "Missionary propagandism was at work all over the country, and its fruits—Chinese Christians—did not win the esteem or goodwill of their fellows, for.....they shocked the official mind and popular opinion also, by getting their religious teachers, more especially the Roman Catholics, to interfere on their behalf as litigants."<sup>2</sup>

The complaint of the Chinese that missionaries serve as a centre of disorder must, therefore, be admitted as well-founded; and if the complaint is oftenest heard against Roman Catholics, it is not so much that they are ethically more blameable, but that their converts outnumber Protestants by something like fifteen to one. And it is also plain that, as long as missionaries persist in their present methods, a permanent solution of the Chinese question is impossible. The Chinese are not savages; they have their customs, habits, their civilisation, as we have ours, and pride themselves on their preservation and perpetuation. Travellers who do not write with an eye to the effect of their stories in increasing subscriptions at home speak of the Chinese as peaceful, industrious, thrifty, and tolerant, possessing all the charitable institutions

<sup>1</sup> Parl. Paper China No. 1, 1892, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Fortnightly Review*, November, 1900.

upon which we pride ourselves, and with a degree of commercial honesty that will compare favorably with that manifested by Europeans.<sup>1</sup> It is simply absurd, not to say dishonest, for missionaries to write and speak of the Chinese as though they were absolute savages, and on this assumption refuse to pay any respect to the institutions of the people on whom they gratuitously thrust themselves. And it may well be questioned, after the tales that have reached Europe concerning the conduct of missionaries during the occupation of Peking by the allied troops, their wholesale looting, and inciting officers to burn down the houses of the Chinese,<sup>2</sup> whether their presence is likely to have a beneficial effect on the practical morality of the Chinese people.

After all, as Dr. Dillon has pointed out in his picture of European robbery, brutality, and indiscriminate slaughter in China, all the Chinese ask of Europe is to be let alone, or at least that missionaries who thrust themselves upon them shall respect their customs and institutions. It is, too, one of the ironies of the situation that Russia, one of the "civilising" powers, would not permit missionaries within its own borders

<sup>1</sup> "It must not be supposed that, to quote one of the many false impressions derived from missionary reports, that the Chinese are so steeped in materialism as to be callous in regard to moral training, and have to be dependent on Western charity for their spiritual food. . . . That a people so generally well read as the Chinese, and possessing in the teaching of Confucius a doctrine in no sense inferior to Christianity. . . should ever pin their faith to a work like the Hebrew books of the Bible seems to a layman preposterous" (Little, work cited, pp. 257-8). "No doubt Europe has much to teach the Chinese in the art of war, in pure science, and in those mechanical and other arts which have developed with such leaps and bounds in the Western world. . . . But apart from these subjects. . . Europe cannot teach them much; while it has something to learn from them. Their code of ethics is as high as ours, and their systems of local government (by parish councils) had, until the first intrusion of Europeans, a durability which every Western nation must admire and envy" (Sir G. Goldie in the *Daily News*, July 13, 1900. See also Simcox's *Primitive Civilisations*, ii., chapters 28 and 32.)

<sup>2</sup> See article in the *Daily Mail* for January 4, 1901.

the liberty they have in China. In Russia no missionary would be allowed to preach for a moment. Yet the missionary societies do not seem anxious to send agents there. China, however, is not a Christian Power; she has no huge army or navy to protect her interests; she is consequently open to the exploitation of the world, and is the easy prey of every society of fanatical evangelists and clerical office-holders that cares to take advantage of her weakness. How long it will be before their action drives China into becoming a huge military force, or European common sense sees the necessity of restraining the impertinent ardor of irresponsible evangelists, the future alone can decide. But that China will *not* have the missionaries or their gospels seems the one certain feature of an uncertain situation.

*Missionaries and their Converts.*—The society operating on the largest scale in the Chinese Empire is the China Inland Mission, conducted by the Rev. Hudson Taylor, who seems as irresponsible as General Booth, if not more so. This gentleman appears to possess all the intolerance and mental narrowness of the low-class evangelist; and his agents, of whom there are 1,525 in China, are said by Mr. Michie to be among the most peculiar and eccentric of Chinese missionaries, being looked at askance even by other Christian agencies. I must again remind readers that in dealing with figures concerning conversions and church membership we have no means of testing their accuracy, except in seaports; and it is worthy of note that it is in precisely these places, where the figures might be tested by Europeans on the spot, that the fewest cases of conversion are reported. The most numerous cases of conversion occur, if we are to trust the reports, in places where almost the only Europeans are missionaries. Still, we have to rely upon their unsupported statements, and it will be seen that even then the case is none too rosy.

According to the annual statement for 1899, the

China Inland Mission has been evangelising China since 1854. Since its commencement, forty-six years ago, it claims to have baptised 11,495 men, women, and children. As a matter of fact, the total number of "communicants in fellowship"—whatever that may mean—is returned at 7,895 only; so that 3,600,  $\frac{2}{3}$  a fairly respectable proportion of the whole, must rank as backsliders, or doubtless figure as "converts" of some other society. During 1898 the 1,525 agents baptised 1,164 people, including children of existing converts. This would give us an average of four missionaries for every three baptisms, and an average cost of £45 10s. 6d. per baptism. Not an enormously successful result in view of China's five hundred millions of population, even granting the genuineness of the statistics, and allowing nothing for cases of reversion.

Taking some of the provinces separately, the results work out curiously. In the province of Kan Suh 110 have been baptised in twenty-four years, fifty-three of which have gone back. In '98 fifty-seven agents worked for twelve months without securing a single convert. In Shen-Si 116 agents baptised eighty-four cases. In Chih Li sixteen agents labored for twelve months; result *nil*. In Shan Tung 192 have been baptised in twenty-one years, but only seventy-five of them are left. In '98, with fifty-six agents, there were three conversions—eighteen missionaries to each convert. In Kiang Su there have been 184 baptisms in forty-six years, sixty-nine of which have disappeared. In '98, with seventy-seven agents, there was one baptism. In Yun-Nan there have been forty-three baptisms in twenty-three years, but only fourteen remain. There was one baptism in '98, with twenty-seven agents. In Hu-Nan there have been nineteen baptisms in twenty-five years, with eleven agents at work. When one compares these results with the population of the Chinese Empire it is evident that not only are the societies failing to convert the people;



they are not even keeping pace with the increase of population. This alone would give an increase of nearly two million per year.

Taking the societies in the order of extent of operations, the Church Missionary Society comes next with a staff of 576 agents and an expenditure of £31,321 6s. 11d. The returns are given for the three districts into which the work is divided—South, West, and Mid China. In the first-named 314 agents baptised during '99 744 adults and 343 children—a surprisingly large proportion of the latter. In Mid China 162 agents baptised 276 adults and ninety-six children. In West China forty agents baptised six adults and two children, forming a grand total of 1,026 adults and 411 children as the result of the work of 576 missionaries for twelve months.

As the figures stand, and counting all as genuine, we should have the unusually large total of nearly two converts per missionary. But the society says nothing of losses, a by no means inconsiderable item, and is thus in the position of a business that takes no notice of bad debts in balancing accounts. We must, therefore, attempt the calculation unaided. Comparing the number of communicants in '95 with those in '99, we find, not an increase of between five and six thousand, as the figures published each year would lead us to expect, but of 1,621 only; so that at least two out of every three converts are subsequently lost, and of this nothing is said in the report. Or to put it in another way, over 500 missionaries working for four years have secured 1,600 out of China's huge population, and at a cost of over £100,000—an average cost of over £60 per convert. At this rate and at this cost it would take over *twenty-seven thousand million sterling* to convert the present Chinese population, while the year 1126900 will have dawned ere the conversion of the last Chinaman will be celebrated.

The London Missionary Society, while employing fewer agents than the C. M. S.—413 only—has a

somewhat larger English expenditure, which reaches £36,851 11s. 2d. This may be accounted for either by their operations being more costly, or by their agents raising less money locally than the agents of the C. M. S. This society gives no tables of "Baptisms for the Year," nor does it mention the number of converts, except incidentally. There is instead vague talk of progress made, and it is only when the facts leak out that we see how misleading such assertions are. The only method I have of estimating the success of the L. M. S. in China is by taking the church members for the current year and comparing them with the numbers given in previous years' reports. This method brings out some rather curious results. At Hong Kong there were in '99 forty-three agents, in '95 there were forty-seven. In the report for the year ending March 31, 1896, it was said that "audiences behave with decorum and listen with apparent interest to Christian teaching," while "the native Christian church is steadily, though at present very slowly, increasing" (pp. 21-22). The reliability of such statements may be determined from the fact that, while in '95 the church members mustered 266 after fifty-three years' work, in '99 they had fallen to 225. This is the result of the steady increase. Yet the 1900 report makes no mention of losses, and has still the same vague talk of progress.

At Canton there are 253 church members after ninety-three years' work. At Chiang Chiu, although there has been a "marked improvement in the attendance and greater eagerness to hear the doctrine," there has only been an increase of fifty-two in four years, with twenty-five agents at work, the members numbering 357 after forty-eight years' work. At Shanghai there are 450 church members, including Europeans, after fifty-seven years' preaching. "The people," we are informed, "mostly listen with attention, as if wishing to understand the message and its claims on their faith and obedience. Still many seem to get no

farther" (1900 Report, p. 57). At Wu Chang the missionaries "have frequently to dismiss the congregation on account of the lateness of the hour, when our hearers themselves would gladly stay longer" (p. 68). Comparing statement with results, we find that, whereas in '95 there were sixty-six church members, in '99 there were eight only, with a staff of eleven agents. A pretty result of congregations being unwilling to leave, and of thirty-three years' preaching! At Tientsin, where there are twenty agents, there were in '95 106 members after forty-nine years' labor. The '96 Report dwelt on the "abundant signs" of better things. The only trace of them is an increase of twenty-seven in four years, unless we count the "spirit of discontent and faction" which has "wrought serious mischief" (1900 Report, p. 78) among Tientsin Christians.

At Peking there are 291 members after twenty-one years' work with a staff of twenty-five. The Report for 1900 dwells on the cheering fact that no less than 160 people recorded their names as "inquirers." This is a fine example of the *suggestio falsi*. The assumption is that these "inquirers" will later become Christians. Their own Report hardly bears out such a view. In 1895 101 put themselves under instruction as "inquirers." How far did they progress? The missionary's own confession is: "Our list of inquirers is always a fairly large one.....But for one reason or another most of these, sooner or later, like the seed on stony ground, wither away; few are gathered into the church" ('96 Report, p. 52). Bearing in mind, also, that the church members have decreased from 520 in '98 to 291 in '99, one hardly sees the promise of their "inquiry." And with this decrease of 50 per cent. before us, the remark in the Report for the current year, that "the large majority of the converts remained staunch and true," is peculiarly "childlike and bland." The real purpose of so many writing themselves down as inquirers is

told unconsciously in two sentences in the Annual Report to the effect that "With few exceptions it is from among the poor that we gather our converts," and "The Chinaman is ready to take all that he can get, without giving anything in return."

The expenditure of the Wesleyan Methodists in China amounted to £6,815 14s. 10d. There were 125 paid agents and 73 unpaid—198 in all. There is no mention of the number of baptisms or conversions in the usual table of statistics; but, checking the figures for 1900 by those of '99, the church membership shows an increase of 158—less than one per missionary. There is a striking uniformity in these results, no matter the society or country with which we are dealing.

The only other organisation calling for notice is the Baptist Mission. This body employs in China 274 agents, who last year received from England £11,244 19s. 1d. In 1898 the agents numbered 298. These baptised 293 and lost 156, leaving a net gain of 137. In 1899 the efforts were unusually successful, 271 agents securing a net gain of 352—an average of about one and one-fourth of a convert per missionary. There are no uncommon features about the Baptist mission calling for special note, but there are the same delusive general statements of progress being made. The Rev. C. Spurgeon Medhurst visited 147 villages in '98 in which preaching had been carried on, but found converts in 26 only. The same gentleman, writing a year later, has "no conversions to report," yet he is "hopefully watching inquirers who are groping towards the light," and "confidently looks forward to annual baptisms by the thousand after a few more years' persistent work." And from the Rev. Mr. Burt comes the ingenuous confession that "Chang Chiu is a specially difficult field owing to the superior social position of the people"—a confession that has its i's dotted and t's crossed by the Rev. Mr. Nicholls' remark, that it is

"in these stricken counties we have most of our church members." One need not look much farther for the cause of people writing themselves down as "inquirers."

A good illustration of the utter unreliability of the statements contained in missionary reports concerning the work done or the outlook before the missions is contained in the following sentences from the Baptists' Report for 1899, pp. 54-80 :—

"Notwithstanding all drawbacks, China to-day is one of the most hopeful mission fields in all the world. . . . The Government of China, imperial and provincial, by the stress of circumstances, is coming to be the protectors of missionaries and their work. The people of China are turning with respect and desire to the message of the Gospel. . . . There never was such a spirit of inquiry in regard to Christianity as is manifested now."

To those acquainted with the history of missionary work in China, such statements bear upon their face the impress of either ill-balanced enthusiasm or deliberate misrepresentation; and had not recent events decisively proved their falsity, such statements might well impose on the class for whom these reports are written. As it is, and in the light of Chinese history during 1900, one can safely say that no man moving among the Chinese people and coming into continuous contact with Chinese officials could honestly have written such words as the above. Such a state of blindness, such inability to comprehend feelings that must have been only too obvious, as the writer's belief in the statements quoted would imply, is simply incredible. There does not exist in my mind the shadow of a doubt that such statements, with many others of a similar kind that might be quoted, are deliberately manufactured with a judicious regard to their effect on home subscriptions.

The quality of the Chinese convert is as poor as the quantity is limited. It would be too much to expect the missionaries to dilate on this aspect of their work, especially as their reports pass through the hands of the home authorities, who naturally delete all

that is most unfavorable to their enterprise. Still, reading between the lines of the reports, some indication may be found of the quality of the "saved souls." I have pointed out above the motives animating "inquirers," who seem to look on missionary stations as charitable organisations run by a compound of knavery and folly. They are ready enough to avail themselves of the opportunity of an English education, but, as the L. M. S. says, "A desire for English education has sprung up, and knowledge of the English language is eagerly sought for, both for commercial and political reasons.....this movement .....is mainly, if not entirely, secular in its inspiration and motive" (Report for 1897, p. 22). And in the Report for 1900 it is said: "The present widespread movement in favor of English is not likely to work much good to the Chinese race (*i.e.*, not likely to make Christians of them) so long as the vast majority of those who study English do so for hand-to-mouth commercial reasons" (p. 38).<sup>1</sup> These admissions effectually dispose of the schools as means of Christian propaganda. The incident related on p. 26 of the Report for 1896, where the converts turned the church into a *loan office*, and refused admissions into the church, so as to limit the profits to as few as possible, also casts a curious side-light on the character of Chinese Christians. In the light of these and similar confessions, one can understand the lament of Missionary Pearce: "It grieves me to see so little apparent advance in things divine.....church membership set down in the 'form of statistics' means, in a large number of instances, only a weak type of Christianity" (1900; p. 36). Nor is the suspicion awakened by such expressions likely to be destroyed by the feeble defence that the accusation of "converts

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Little says (work cited, p. 236) that "In Ichang the Bibles that are distributed broadcast are largely used for the manufacture of boot soles," and, further, that no respectable Chinaman would admit a missionary into his house.

professing Christianity for what they can get" is untrue, "except in a few cases." There is much virtue in a "few."

A missionary, the Rev. Griffith John, who is described as the most experienced in China, openly lamented "the lack of spiritual discernment in the great bulk of his converts. The truths that are lodged in their intellects do not appear to move them deeply. Their spiritual nature is not intensely quickened and greatly expanded by the things of the Spirit of God, neither are their moral activities powerfully energised by them" (quoted by Michie, p. 3). The testimony of the C. M. S. Report fully bears out this opinion. In West China, where forty agents have twenty-two communicants after eight years' work, a woman had to be excommunicated for practising sorcery as a means of livelihood (p. 409), and at another station "the number of baptised Christians was the same as in 1898, and some of them were anything but satisfactory." Many "expressed a desire to join 'the religion,'" but "their motives, on investigation, were found to be unworthy" (p. 407)—a euphemism for "on the make." It is admitted that "inquirers come in from a variety of motives—not ideal ones, perhaps" (p. 386); and of the Christians at Fuh Ang we read that, "of the six or eight Christian shop-keepers in Fuh Ang city, not one closes his shop on Sunday. Gambling by Christians is at present also a great cause of sorrow to us; not only gambling, but gambling in which they invariably win, proving they are professional tricksters. In the more idle times.....they make a living in this way. I am afraid, after some further trial, that a large number of names will have to be struck off the rolls of some of the Fuh-Ning stations" (p. 380). As the total number on the rolls muster only ninety-two, the prospect is a hopeful one. We read of one case of conversion brought about by the desire of a woman to have healthier babies (p. 410), while the following will

well illustrate the mental calibre of both missionary and convert:—

“After feeling our way up a dark staircase. . . . we reached a very dirty loft, where the girl lived. . . . It was a very bad case; she had once before been possessed, and the devil had been cast out by the prayer and faith of Patience and others; but as soon as she was well she returned to her idols, and her last state is worse than the first. At the name of Jesus she sneered in a horrible way, and we really felt the presence of the Evil One” (379).

It is useless to multiply instances. It will be seen that missionary work in China, both in quantity and quality, runs on all fours with missionary work in India. Only in China we have the added evil that we are dealing with a foreign power, and the arbitrary acts of fanatical evangelists in forcing upon a people a religion they do not want and will not have serve but to cast upon the nation an additional burden in the shape of sending out troops to quell disturbances that have been largely created by missionary zeal.

*Missions in Japan.*—From China to Japan is a natural and an easy transition, although the transition is far from a favorable one so far as missionary work is concerned. Indeed, Japan is, perhaps, the most hopeless case of all, since the societies have to face an educated opposition that is fully alive to the nature of European culture, and quite as fully opposed to the Christian religion. In China the usual reason given by missionaries for their failure is Chinese hatred of Western ideas. In Japan this excuse is obviously futile. If anything, the Japs are *too* eager to embrace European ideas and customs; and the really remarkable thing is that they have not been induced to take Western religion along with Western culture. That they have not done so, and do not intend doing so, the following very brief review of the work in Japan will prove.

Neither Baptists nor Methodists seem to have any agents in Japan. There are American societies represented there, with which we are not concerned; but the principal English societies are the C. M. S. and



the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. This last-named body had, in 1899, seventy-nine agents, who baptised seventy-three adults—less than one per missionary, without reckoning losses—and received from England £2,812 9s. The C. M. S., which operates on a larger scale, had in Japan, in 1896, 206 agents; in 1900, 241. The figures for the various years are as follows:—In 1896, 206 agents baptised 292 adults; in 1899, 249 agents baptised 296 adults; in 1900 the baptisms numbered 461. So much for the gains; now for the losses. In 1896 the communicants numbered 1,646; in 1900 they are returned at 1916. This gives us an increase of 270 in four years, or an average of sixty-eight per year, the 270 costing over £50,000. The losses seem more severe in recent years. Thus in 1900 the communicants actually decreased by 117, which, when added to the 461 adult baptisms, gives a total decrease of 578.

In the face of these figures there is small wonder that the reports have a somewhat pessimistic tone. The '99 Report sorrowfully admits that, "as a rule, the upper and moneyed classes stand vigorously aloof from Christianity" (p. 374). Bishop Evington writes that the work "continues to bring us surprises and disappointments, some of them cutting to the quick, and, but for God's promises, enough to plunge us into despair" ('96 Report, p. 368). Four years later the same gentleman laments that many of the catechists leave to get more money in Government employ, and "this finally leads to their deserting their religion"—a confession which throws a strong light on their reasons for embracing it. It is, too, "a growing conviction that our Japanese Christians are lacking in a true sense of what is understood by responsibility" (1900 Report, p. 431). Lapses are far from uncommon. The Report for '99 made much of the case of "a boy (who) fell in with Christians," and was "longing for the day of his baptism" (p. 401); but the 1900 Report informs us that the boy "never

came forward for baptism, and there was little encouragement with the efforts to reach the women" (p. 447).

At Oyamada "twelve families quietly apostatised," and there have been no adult baptisms for four years. Mr. Brandram reports of Nobeoka: "Some thirty Christians were baptised. I really hoped that we should have a strong church there," but at present "only three show any signs of real faith. I do not think we baptised hastily, but, whether we did or not, things are very sad indeed there now.....Nobeoka is a small town, and everyone knows everyone else, and the Christians' lives have not shown the excellence of Christianity."

The Rev. A. B. Hutchinson also reports: "There is a constant lapsing or drifting away from our ranks. This fading of the Christianity of individuals and families is one of the saddest features in the story of Missions in Japan." A great deal of this state of things is attributed to the spread of "infidel literature, which has been sent out in large quantities and from Christian lands." It is difficult to see the bearing of the cases cited of one "educated and refined gentleman, who said that he was searching after the truth, but could not believe in the existence of God"; of another who "considered prayer to be a vain superstition"; or of a third who, when asked "whether he ever thought about his soul, replied: 'We hardly ever think about such things,'" unless it is to show the effects of "infidel literature." It is, however, cheerfully recorded that the children were quite willing to hear "a very nice story," and be shown a picture; and the Rev. Mr. Pole records that he gave a series of lectures "on points of doctrine as maintained against (1) the unorthodox sects, (2) the orthodox Nonconformists, and (3) the Church of Rome." What effect this example of Christian amity was expected to have on the Japanese is not clear; but, as the same gentleman notes, with evident pride at his own profundity,

that "not more than three or four were able to follow satisfactorily the details of the arguments," it probably makes little difference.

The prospect of Christianity in Japan is thus, on all accounts, a tolerably hopeless one. Not only do both Government and people treat Christianity with that good-natured indifference, which is perhaps the greatest obstacle to its diffusion, but they seem fairly indifferent to religion in general. The Japs, while taking their civilisation from Europe, have been cute enough to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials, and have left its religious beliefs severely alone. The schools of the country are completely secular, no minister or preacher of any religion being admitted therein. Their regulations, according to Archdeacon Shaw, one of the S. P. G. agents in Japan, are framed "with the deliberate design of removing the children from all opportunity or chance of religious instruction at the most impressionable period of their life" (Report for '99, p. 97). And the conclusion of Mrs. Bishop is that "Interest (in Christianity) had given place to indifference.....Agnosticism, the result of Western education, was spreading enormously, and an educated Agnostic youth was a 'yellow peril,' not to Japan alone, but to the whole Far East" (Newcastle Church Congress, 1900). When to this we add the testimony of Professor Chamberlain that the Japanese "bow down before the shrine of Herbert Spencer" (*Things Japanese*, p. 321), and of Professor Dixon, that "Religious indifference is one of the prominent features of new Japan" (*Land of the Morning*, p. 517), it does not seem as though the unvarnished shibboleth of the evangelist, "the Bible the source of England's greatness," is likely to gain much of a foothold in the "Great Britain of the East."

## V.

## AFRICA, AND ELSEWHERE.

*The African Mission Field.*—For many reasons missionary work in Africa has superficially a much more successful appearance than it has in many other places. Of a lower culture than any of the other nations we have passed in review, the African is more easily impressed by the superior knowledge of the whites, while his inherent superstition renders the transition to Christianity less difficult than it is with other people. Not that the number of converts in Africa is ever in any sense great; a glance at the results summarised below will show the reverse; but there is a certain *air* of success about African missions delusive to all but those who know the facts of the case. When these are ascertained, one discovers that in the vast majority of cases all that the missionary really accomplishes is the breaking down of the old tribal restraints and virtues without the creation of any adequate substitutes. The African is brought into close contact with a civilisation that has taken its possessors many centuries to acquire, with the inevitable result that he embraces nearly all its vices and passes unheeded all its virtues.

Testimony on this head seems pretty general and fairly conclusive. M. C. Comte de Cardi, in the appendix to Miss Kingsley's *West African Studies*, remarks that, "whilst fully recognising the efforts that the missionaries have put forth in this part of the world, I regret that I cannot bear witness to any great good they have done" (p. 478). He further asserts that, while among the females some were admirable for their decency and good behavior, yet among the males he did not meet a single one of whom he could speak favorably.

Mr. Scott Elliot declares roundly that the "ordinary mission boy is an unmitigated scoundrel."<sup>1</sup> In Cape Colony, Natal, and the Transvaal one of the commonest announcements following an advertisement for a Kaffir "Boy" is "No mission boy need apply." Even firms well known for their strong professions of Christianity decline to employ converted Africans in their stores. Sir H. H. Johnston, our present Special Commissioner for Uganda, and a man of many years' experience in Africa, says:—

"It too often happens that, while the negro rapidly masters the rules and regulations of the Christian religion, he still continues to be gross, immoral, and deceitful....They (missionaries) may have succeeded in turning their disciples into professing Catholics, Anglicans, or Baptists, but the impartial observer is surprised to find that adultery, drunkenness, and lying are more apparent among the converts than among their Heathen brethren."<sup>2</sup>

And again:—

"I regret to say that, with a few—very rare—exceptions, those native African pastors, teachers, and catechists whom I have met have been all, more or less, bad men. They attempted to veil an unbridled immorality with an unblushing hypocrisy and a profane display of mouth-religion which, to an honest mind, seemed even more disgusting than the immorality itself. While it was apparent that not one particle of true religion had made its way into their gross minds, it was also evident that the spirit of sturdy manliness which was present in their savage forefathers found no place in their false, cowardly natures....

"It is not on the spread of Christianity that African missions can at present base their claim to our gratitude, respect, or support....In many important districts where they have been at work for twenty years they can scarcely number in honest statistics twenty sincere Christians—that is to say, twenty natives understanding in any degree the doctrines or dogmas they have been taught, and striving to shape their conduct by their new principles. In other parts of Africa, principally British possessions, where large numbers of nominal Christians exist, their religion is discredited by numbering among its adherents all the drunkards, liars, rogues, and unclean livers of the colony. In the oldest of our West African possessions all the unrepentant Magdalenes of the chief city are professing Christians, and the most notorious one in the place would

<sup>1</sup> *A Naturalist in Mid-Africa*, p. 353.

<sup>2</sup> *Fortnightly Review*, April, 1889.

boast that she never missed going to church on a Communion Sunday."<sup>1</sup>

Besides other drawbacks in Africa, Christian missions have also to compete with a rival missionary faith in the shape of Mohammedanism. This is not only a rival, but a successful rival. This greater measure of success may be due partly to the presence of certain elements in Islamism which are not present in Christianity, and partly because it is free from contact with drink, which is taken to Africa in such enormous quantities by Christian nations. But the success of the Mohammedan preachers as compared with Christian evangelists seems unmistakable. Mr. Bosworth Smith, in his work, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, says:—

“Nor as to the effects of Islam, when first embraced by a negro tribe, can there be any reasonable doubt. Polytheism disappears almost instantaneously; sorcery, with its attendant evils, gradually dies away; human sacrifice becomes a thing of the past. The general moral elevation is most marked; the natives begin, for the first time in their history, to dress—and that neatly. Squalid filth is replaced by a scrupulous cleanliness; hospitality becomes a religious duty; drunkenness, instead of being the rule, becomes a comparatively rare exception. Though polygamy is allowed by the Koran, it is not common in practice, and, beyond the limits laid down by the prophet, incontinence is rare; chastity is looked upon as the highest, and becomes, in fact, one of the commonest, virtues. It is idleness henceforth that degrades and industry that elevates, instead of the reverse.... Christian travellers, with every wish to think otherwise, have remarked that the negro who accepts Mohammedanism acquires at once a sense of the dignity of human nature not commonly found even among those who have been brought to accept Christianity” (pp. 32-5, 6).

Some of the most intelligent and powerful of the African tribes, among whom may be named the Foulahs and Haussas, are almost entirely Mohammedan. The scarcity of Christian negroes in the Government service is remarkable. And as to Mr. Smith's further statement, that “one half of the whole of Africa is already dominated by Islam, while, of the remaining half, one quarter is leavened and another threatened

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, November, 1887. See also the same author's *British Central Africa*.

by it," is borne out by the statement of one of the C. M. S. agents, that on the Niger "the Moham-medans are rapidly making converts, and the whole country seems likely soon to give in its adhesion to the false prophet" (Report 1900, p. 93). And if Canon Isaac Taylor's statement, that no Pagan tribe in Africa which has accepted Islam has ever yet fallen back on Paganism, or has ever yet advanced to Christianity, be true, it would seem that the faith of the "false prophet" does not experience the constant drain in the shape of "backsliders" to which Christianity is subject.

*Conversions.*—In Africa, for the reasons named above, the "conversions" are, on the whole, more numerous than in other places; but even here, if we leave out one or two places, the results are strikingly poor. Thus in the Sierra Leone district 186 agents belonging to the C. M. S. received from England £5,684 16s. 2d. and baptised 57 adults. In the Niger district 65 agents received £11,908 15s. 1d. and baptised 97 adults. There is a standing announcement that over 4,000 have been baptised; but, as the communicants number at present only 313, one has to count the balance, along with others, amongst the lapsed. In Eastern Equatorial Africa—excluding Uganda—there are 154 agents who received £12,177 9s. 3d. One of the agents writes that he has been much struck by "the earnestness of the people, the heart-hunger shown on the faces" (p. 100). The best comment on this is that the 154 agents succeeded in baptising 46 adults. Yoruba and Uganda are the only two places in which large numbers of "baptisms" are reported. In Yoruba 181 agents received £11,908 15s. 1d. and baptised 501 adults. In Uganda 1,551 agents report the baptism of 3,524 adults and received from England £14,477 19s. 11d.

Altogether the C. M. S. has in Africa 2,137 agents. During 1899 these received from England £57,512 12s. 6d. and reported the baptism of 4,225

adults and 2,265 infants. Looking back for four years, however, instead of the increase in communicants being over 20,000, as they should be if these conversions were genuine, we find the increase to be but 6,192, an average of 1,548, which means that three out of every four, after figuring in annual reports, disappear.

The Wesleyan Methodists devote a large part of their attentions to South Africa, where, unless rumor belies them, they are not remotely interested in the prospects of the Companies and the extension of the British dominion. Owing to the disturbed state of South Africa, and the consequent absence of reports, I am bound to limit my survey to other parts of Africa where this society is at work. No record of baptisms for the year is given, and so one is compelled to test the work by the growth of church members. In Sierra Leone during 1899 there were 571 agents and an increase of 156 church members, with an expenditure of £3,351 0s. 7d., exclusive of money locally raised. In the "Gambia Section" there has been an increase of 57 with 70 agents. The Gold Coast district reports an increase of 89 with 1,262 agents; while Lagos has an increase of 74 as the work of 456 agents. The missionaries' own admissions as to the quality of these converts we shall see later.

The London Missionary Society has in Africa 61 agents, who received from England during 1899 £12,903 1s. 4d. The growth in membership averages about 76 per year. The attendance at church has fallen since it ceased to be compulsory (p. 225, Report for 1900), but a certain amount of business seems to be done in making wardrobes, portable dark rooms for photography, etc., for the European inhabitants (p. 223).

The Baptists employ in Africa 214 agents. The cost of these to the London offices was £15,041 10s. 7d. Much money, however, seems to be raised locally, of which no details are given. Thus, the mission



steamer earned in one year £350 carrying freight, and there is mention of a large number of passengers being carried also. In the matter of conversions, during 1898 there were baptised 94 persons and lost 40. During 1899 the 214 agents baptised 120 and lost 58, leaving a net gain of 62. The Rev. S. C. Gordon opined, in 1899, that "the mighty power of God was working upon the people, and they are dissatisfied with their heathen customs"; but the only result of the "mighty power" at this station, backed up by ten agents, has been the baptism of three persons and the loss of one. There is the usual lament concerning the "very low tone of spiritual life evinced by some of our church members," and the Rev. A. E. Scrivener writes expressing his belief that the committee "will not be surprised to learn that, although we [he and 46 assistants] had the joy of baptising five young women about the middle of the year, our numbers do not show any increase, but a small decrease" (1900 Report, p. 99).

*Quality of Converts.*—The opinions given above from outsiders concerning the quality of mission converts is amply borne out on reading between the lines of the various reports. The admissions made by one society in a single year (C. M. S. Report, 1900) will be enough to show this. Concerning the Niger missions there is a standing lament, year after year, that "a higher standard of Christian life is much needed"—an admission that anyone who has visited that part of Africa will readily endorse. At Lokoya, where there are thirty communicants after ten years' work, "two yielded to temptation.....and fell into sin" (p. 91). On the profit side one of the female inquirers has given birth to twin girls, "which has been a source of great joy to all Christians" (p. 90). At Frere Town, with twenty-eight agents, there was one baptism, and the motives of "inquirers" are amusingly sketched by Mr. Binns, who writes that their principal object seems to be to gaze at themselves

in looking-glasses, and wear the most creaky shoes they could obtain (pp. 98-9). A number of "inquirers" who figured in the previous year's report as giving great hopes "were removed from the register for irregular attendance or misbehavior, and some of the catechumens were struck off the rolls for grave offences" (p. 113). Other inquirers were "under the yoke of strong drink" (p. 111), and they were, presumably, dismissed also. Perhaps one may regard the villagers, who, for a whole year, prayed morning and evening, and then, "when nothing came of it, they gave it up" (p. 74), or the statement that "when the new Prayer Book arrived in the country the part which seemed to have the greatest attraction for the native mind was the calendar" (p. 123), as evidences of the growth of a scientific spirit. The permanence of the conversions is shown by the following statement from Archdeacon Wilkes, writing of Uganda, where the largest number of conversions are made: "It is piteous at times to see how the work falls off if the European who has been in charge is removed, and to see that every advance has to be made by the European missionaries urging the natives on" (p. 121). As a matter of fact, a self-supporting native church in any part of the world is a rarity. All have to be kept going by European labor and European money.

The eagerness of the African to get Bibles, etc., of which much is made in missionary reports, has a curious light thrown on it by an experience of Mr. Scott Elliot. Almost the first native he met begged hard for a Bible. As he had not a Bible to give, he presented the man with a book of another description. He found subsequently that the native was *unable to read* (*Naturalist in Mid-Africa*, p. 56). The appeal for Bibles seems to be either a strategic appeal for charity, or a desire to use them as fetishes to ward off evil spirits. A similar instance is related by Sir H. H. Johnson (*River Congo*, p. 53). In this

case a native chief attended the chapel service, followed it with much apparent devotion, and at its conclusion "promptly demanded the loan of a hand saw to effect some alteration in his canoe."

*The North African Mission.*—Before dismissing Africa, it may be interesting to take a brief glimpse at a small society, the North African Mission, described in the Report of the Centenary Conference as being enterprising and having "most encouraging prospects." It will well illustrate the mental calibre of the average missionary, as well as what missionaries understand by "most encouraging" prospects. This mission commenced work in 1885; I have followed it since 1891, in which year the income reached £5,695 10s. 3d., and the expenditure £5,298 14s. 3d. Of this sum £6 4s. 6d. went to the natives in gifts of food, etc., £313 12s. 10d. for the maintenance of hospital and payment to servants, the balance to missionaries at home and abroad. In 1895 the income had increased to £7,845; in 1899 to £10,920 11s. 8d., the same proportion being maintained between the various items. There are no exact statements of results in the shape of conversions or members in any of the reports, although a number of speeches are put into the mouths of "inquirers," which are obvious fabrications to all who know anything of Mohammedan life and character. The following passages from the Reports for '95 and '99 will give an idea of the success of the mission—the italics in each case are mine.

The Report for '95 opens with the sorrowful admission that there is "little to encourage in the way of result," and one has to compliment the writer of the report on the accuracy of his summary. In Morocco, where there are thirteen missionaries, the work is summarised by Dr. Terry thus:—

Number of individuals who have heard the Gospel once..	2,500
Number who have heard it more than a dozen times ..	250
Addresses given .. .. .	420

Gospels and testaments sent to all parts	..	Many hundreds
Baptisms	.. .. .	None
Conversions	.. .. .	None for certain, as far as we know

Yet the report calmly informs us in another portion: "Conversions there are by no means few or far between." From Tripoli, where there are five agents, Mr. Reid thanks God for "giving me more than I had asked or thought." As the same gentleman writes, "I am not able to report any conversions, or even any regular inquirers," his requests of the Lord must have been a minus quantity. One is not surprised to learn that "Although the gratitude for efforts put forth for men's bodies is so great as to be almost embarrassing at times, *the result of the preaching*, on the other hand, is very small." The only conversions mentioned occurred at Tunis. There are thirteen agents there, and there have been "signs of a great spiritual advance." This "great spiritual advance" consists of three regular attendants, two of whom "have professed to be born again, and, though *very ignorant*, they have lived consistently." The third one "shows much intelligent interest in the reading, *but we fear his mind is not quite sound*." This seems the net result of the year's work—three attendants, two ignorant and one mad.

The results recorded in the Report for 1899 are of the same description: "In Tetuan there has been encouragement." Some Spaniards have been converted—presumably from Roman Catholicism—but the only gain from the non-Christian population is a "Moslem girl," who said "she was trusting Christ for salvation." There is the customary qualification that she is "young and ignorant," which to anyone but a missionary would seem to discount the quality of the gain. This is the only case of conversion I can discover. Mr. Reid writes cheerfully from Tripoli that he and his five fellow missionaries "are still not able to speak of converts [*after twelve years' preaching*]. But we know a good work is being done." Mr.

Lilley writes from Tunis (twenty-five agents) that the results are "To the outward eye very little," but "one Arab has decidedly shown his faith in Christ by his consistent walk." Mr. Cuendet writes from Algiers: "Apparently no Kabyle has been converted in Algiers this year"; but he has experienced several wonderful indications, as per the following: "One day I spoke very plainly to a young man of whom I had great hope. He was very much impressed, and I could see tears in his eyes. *But since that day he has not come to the meetings, and I have not seen him again.* I firmly believe the Lord will follow such souls." Mr. Lochhead writes that he "spent six months *in Scotland*, and had many opportunities of telling of God's work in Africa"—in Scotland. He laments that "it is not ours as yet to report definite conversions among the people (after fourteen years' preaching), but in due season we shall reap if we faint not." Finally, Dr. Churcher writes: "Specially do we need help for those too sick to work and too poor to feed themselves, who come to us and simply say '*We are going to stay with you till we get better*'—and that seems about the limit of their interest in the mission." Perhaps, however, the palm for satire has to be given to the text printed on the front page of the annual statement—"Who hath believed our Report?" It is evident that Mohammedans can rest in safety beneath the assault of the North African Mission. As a matter of fact, the number of converts to Islam in England during the last ten years far exceeds those brought from Islamism by the N. A. M. Yet this is a mission which is glibly referred to as having "most encouraging prospects." Is it incurable stupidity or deliberate knavery that is responsible for such statements?

*Palestine.*—After what has been said of the chief centres of missionary enterprise, we need give but a brief glance at the work in purely Mohammedan centres. There is, too, such a wearisome monotony about missionary reports and statistics that one is far

from doing an injustice to missionaries in assuming that the known is a fair sample of the unknown.

In Palestine the C. M. S. has 177 agents. One of the agents, writing in the Report for 1900, says: "When I look back upon the twenty-three years that I have been in the country, I am simply wonder-struck at the very great results.....There is no doubt that the door to the Moslems is opening more and more, *especially here in Jerusalem*" (pp. 154-5). Let us see what these "very great results" are. I have four years' reports lying before me; they work out as follows:—

Year.	Agents.	Adult	Baptism.	Expenditure.		
				£	s.	d.
1895	.... 149	.... 0	....	16,011	9	2
1896	.... 151	.... 2	....	15,006	3	3
1899	.... 174	.... 6	....	18,790	16	8
1900	.... 177	.... 1	....	16,710	14	11

Here, then, are the "very great results" that reduce the missionaries to a "wonder-stricken" state. Over 150 missionaries in four years have succeeded in baptising *nine* adults, for performing which feat they have received from England over *sixty-six thousand pounds*—an average cost of over seven thousand pounds per convert.

The Baptists have in Palestine thirteen agents. In 1899 these baptised five and lost three—net gain, two. Yet Mr. El Karey, the missionary, writes "that, notwithstanding the opposition—much bitter opposition by the Turkish Government, police, and soldiers—the native Christian church grows" (1899 Report, p. 81). I suppose "grows" is accurate concerning a church that gains two in a year, with thirteen people working; but it strikes one as being unduly optimistic; as also does the assurance from the same gentleman a year later, that "in many hearts the good seed of the kingdom has not been sown in vain" (p. 83).

*Persia.*—In Persia there are 59 agents belonging to the C. M. S., to whom was sent £5,373 3s. 9d. During 1899 twelve adults were baptised, and the Rev. Mr.

Stileman writes: "We are now for the first time (after 25 years) rejoicing over a whole family of Persian Christians." Bishop Stuart writes gloomily that "we are as yet only gathering out the stones," and that "there is little to report save that we are holding on." Evidently the "heathens" are holding off. Miss Bird more optimistically writes that "in Jaffa and Ispahan the work is growing steadily." There is a certain feminine diplomacy about Miss Bird's report. Undoubtedly the *work* is growing, but as to the converts, that is another question. There has been an increase of fourteen communicants in four years.

In Egypt there were in 1899 45 agents; in 1900 54. In two years they have succeeded in baptising *one* adult, for which performance they have received from England about £12,000. There are several "promising" cases, however, of which the following may be taken as a sample. It concerns "A great change witnessed in a Mohammedan boy about eleven years old. He was brought into the hospital, and did not know the difference between God and Mohammed. He became interested, and begged for a New Testament to take home with him. *He could not read*, but," says the missionary, "he went off to his far-off village carrying his book, and said to me, 'I will never forget Jesus—never.' *We have not seen him since.*" When such a remarkable result brought about in a youngster eleven years old is thought worthy of chronicling, one can form a fair estimate of the character of the unrecorded work. For Arabia, where there are thirteen agents, there is no report of anything in the shape of converts since 1897. But as during that year the thirteen failed to convert anyone, doubtless there is nothing to report.

*Converting the Jews.*—A survey of foreign missionary work would be incomplete without some reference, however slight, to the most curious of all missions—those for Christianising the Jewish race. In England there are eight of these societies, employing

294 agents. Scotland possesses five, with 71 missionaries; even Ireland counts one—the Irish Presbyterian Mission to the Jews, with 27 missionaries. Each of these societies sends agents to different parts of the world, wherever there are any number of Jews worth noting. I intend taking but one society—the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews—as a type of the whole, and in so doing I am putting the work in its most favorable aspect, since it is the largest and wealthiest and most successful of all. And to make it easier for those who are interested enough in the subject to test the truth of what follows, I intend dealing at length with the movement in England only, where it is conducted under the most favorable conditions.<sup>1</sup>

The London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews—or, as it has been not inaptly called, “The Society for Turning Bad Jews into Worse Christians”—employed during 1898–9 63 paid missionaries, 12 missionaries’ wives, and 18 honorary workers. The expenditure for that year was £38,439 14s. 11d.; for 1899–1900, £36,601 5s. 11d., about half of which sums is spent in Great Britain. There are eight clergymen acting as district secretaries, who are credited with receiving between them £2,435 19s., and two general secretaries, the Rev. W. Fleming and the Rev. W. T. Gidney, who take £833 annually. One striking feature about this type of mission

<sup>1</sup> I append, however, the following brief summary of work and results in various other parts of the world from the Report for 1899–1900:—

Place.	Agents.	Baptisms.			Expenditure.		
					£	s.	d.
Austria .....	2	....	0	....	285	18	4
France .....	3	....	3	....	569	6	11
Holland .....	2	....	1	....	617	8	2
Rome .....	2	....	0	....	400	15	8
Constantinople..	8	....	0	....	947	14	2
Smyrna.....	3	....	0	....	428	9	8
Jaffa .....	2	....	0	....	377	7	9
Persia .....	13	....	4	....	1,033	7	6
Damascus.....	7	....	0	....	689	12	7



is the number of military men who are associated with it. Thus, out of four vice-presidents three are military officers, and out of a committee of 19 no less than eight are drawn from the same class. It would be an interesting inquiry to determine how far several years' service under an Indian sun is causally connected with this frenzied eagerness for the conversion of the Jews.

There are no tables stating how many baptisms have taken place during the year; but, as far as one can make out, by checking the different cases reported, there were 28 in 1898, of whom 20 were children, and 25 in 1899, of whom 9 certainly were children. The total is certainly not more than 25, although, owing to the manner in which the Report is drawn up, there may be less. Thus, the 28 mentioned in the '99 Report appear and disappear like lightning-change artists in a music hall. Page 7 gives the 28 at one sweep; page 8 gives an instalment of a score; page 10 gives two instalments of 11 and 9 respectively; page 12 impresses the reader with one batch of 5 and another of 2; and, finally, page 21 lands another instalment of 4. By this method 28 baptisms—20 of which are children—appear as *sixty-nine*. The Report does not actually state that number, but it conveys that impression, and probably not by chance.

In round figures—excluding children—the converts work out at about £1,100 per head, each one representing a year's labor of six individuals. Not a very startling result, even if all the cases baptised were genuine, and remained Christian after their conversion. But neither assumption will bear examination. It is significant that the converts are drawn almost entirely from among the indigent foreign Jews. The better-class Jews—better intellectually or socially—will have nothing to do with the missionary, as is confessed by the agents over and over again. In the Report for 1899 Miss Dora Barry confesses she has

“tried to reach a Jewish family of the better class, but, though I have been again and again, I cannot gain admittance.” Miss Barry has evidently found the task of converting the Jews a hopeless one, as I see by the current Report that she has retired. Mr. G. Priestly writes plaintively that the attitude of the Jews “towards me is one of supreme contempt” (p. 23). Mr. Bachert also says: “I have met on several occasions Jews of high intellectual calibre who have forsaken Judaism, not, however, to enter the Christian Church.” And a year later the same gentleman laments that his labors have been marked “with no perceptible progress so far as admittance into Jewish houses of the better class of Jews is concerned.” Yet, in face of the paucity of conversions and these admissions, the Rev. E. H. Lewis calmly writes: “All Jews residing in the United Kingdom do feel after Christianity” (p. 45), and Mr. Priestly writes in all seriousness that Jews have told him that the one thing that keeps them from baptism is that “Christianity is so perfect that it is fit for angels in heaven only, not for men on earth” (p. 29).

The class of Jews who become converted, and the reason for their conversion, are pointed out quite clearly, albeit unconsciously, by the missionaries themselves. In the Report for 1899 the Rev. E. T. Sherman states that during the year he was visited by about twenty Jews, “*some for help, others as pedlars.*” In the Report for 1900 Mr. Bachert writes: “I have received a good number of visits from Jews, *but they were of the poorer class*; some came from sincere motives, others for what they could get” (p. 17). “The Wanderer’s Home,” at Bristol, seems to be taken by Jewish tramps quite literally, and Mr. Eppstien writes that the applicants for admission come, “some with pure, others with interested motives” (p. 28). The Rev. J. Lotka writes from Birmingham that after the Christmas services clothing was given away to adults and toys to children,

and then proceeds to say everything in the following passage :—

“ Most of the Jews who attended the Bible classes . . . were such as have no abiding place anywhere. They go about from town to town in search of work, or under the pretence of doing so, and call on the missionary in the hope of receiving assistance, just as they would call on the Jewish Board of Guardians. To such Jews—and their number is legion—the Mission House is a sort of house of refuge. They come there seeking shelter from the cold of winter and the heat of summer.”

After this further citations would be superfluous.

Of course, to those who know anything of the workings of the various missions to the Jews, it is no new information that its converts are practically bought. In many cases the missionaries lie in wait for the poor downtrodden specimens of humanity that land here from “ Holy Russia ” ; in other cases they do not hesitate to entice young people away from home, more than one case of this kind having come under my own observation. But in the majority of cases the converts are simply professional “ Schnorrers ”—cadgers who have drained Jewish charitable organisations of all that they feel inclined to give. When further help from this source is refused the commonest of all threats is that they will apply to the mission for help. Sometimes the threat serves its purpose, at other times it fails. In the latter case a visit is paid to a mission, and a fresh addition is made to the list of “ inquirers.” Having in many cases gone through the same mill himself, the missionary usually knows well enough the motives animating the applicant, but it suits his purpose to assume that he has a genuine case. All the missionaries tabulate the number of “ inquirers ” they receive, and this term is elastic enough to cover anything and everything—from the man who asks a question out of idle curiosity to the one who is on the eve of baptism. A more or less regular allowance is given to these inquirers from the various funds for assisting poor Jews, and the potential convert is usually willing to keep on “ inquiring ” as long as the allowance holds out.

Sooner or later, however, the allowance ceases. After the individual has served the agent's purpose of figuring in one or two annual reports as an "inquirer," he must either be baptised or leave; even after baptism he is got rid of as speedily as possible, save under exceptional circumstances.

A favorite plan among many missionaries is to visit a possible convert in the guise of a brother Jew, sympathise with him on his poverty, his ignorance of English, and offer to find him a place where he will be found work and taught English. In such cases the capture is drafted off to the "Operative Jewish Converts' Institution," or some similar place, and for a time set to work for a small sum weekly. But here he cannot remain for more than about six months, unless he accepts Jesus. Many leave; a few remain and agree to conversion. During the time of probation all goes well. After being baptised and paraded in the Annual Report as a convert, trouble begins. The object is to get rid of him so as to make room for new comers. Ultimately, in spite of the original promise that he would be employed for at least three years, the poor devil is got rid of on some pretext or other, and what becomes of him afterwards the Society neither knows nor cares. In a few cases a situation is found for him, and in a still smaller percentage of cases he is trained as a missionary, although it is a significant commentary upon his character that the field of labor allotted to him is one in which he is not known.

I have said that the Society neither knows nor cares what becomes of its "converts." I ought to qualify the statement by saying that it often knows, but does not care, for in a vast majority of the cases the baptised Jew usually rejoins a Jewish community in this or some other country where his career is unknown. Indeed, one can safely challenge any of the societies for converting the Jews to put their hands upon ten per cent. of their converts who are leading

Christian lives *five years after they have been erased from their pension list.* I have in my possession documentary evidence of the destinies of a great many of these converts on whose behalf the British public have been bled, but for obvious reasons do not care to disclose them. Let the Society, however, accept my challenge, and the accuracy of my description of their methods of working can soon be demonstrated.

To return to the reports. Although the number and quality of the converts reported leave much to be desired, yet there are some wonderful results otherwise. Dr. Ellis, the head of the London staff, reports that during the year his agents have given away "146 Bibles, 262 portions, 344 New Testaments, 1,231 portions, and 5,403 tracts." This is evidently a branch of the work that admits of indefinite extension, although the ordinary door-to-door bill distributor might show a larger record, at about two shillings per day. Dr. Ellis also held "discussions and conversations" with 291 Jews during the year. The conclusion to be drawn from this fact is not indicated; probably it is quoted as some sort of confirmation of Judges xv. 15-16. The Rev. A. Bernstein also reports "interesting religious conversations," and the compilers of the report select "the following instances of encouragement from the Rev. Mr. Denman's experience :—

" 'I have quite altered my views about Isaiah liiii.,' said an educated Jew . . . ' (But) I am quite content to leave all to the mercy of God, and not question how He made atonement.'

" Another Jew asked me to write out for him, to read quietly, the proofs that our Lord was descended from David, and was the son of Mary. This was the result of many conversations, and has led to further talk.

" One Jewish medical man . . . who cannot grasp the Deity of Christ in the New Testament, is reading a book I lent him called *Jesus is God*. He says he thinks a great deal more about the facts of Christianity than I imagine."

A sense of humor seems needed with Mr. Denman.

The Rev. N. Herz notes that "one blessed result

of our united endeavors is, that in no previous year have so many copies of the Scripture been *given away*." The Rev. Paul Bendix noted in 1897 the "significant sign that many Jews at present take part in the celebration of Christmas, not religiously, but socially." Nothing seems to escape the lynx-like vigilance of this gentleman, for in 1899 he notes : "It is a fact that some of them have a Christmas-tree." Here is progress indeed ! First Christmas festivities, then Christmas-trees ; soon we may expect to see the Jews of Highbury celebrating the birth of Jesus by getting drunk "allee samee Clistian," as Bret Harte's Chinaman would say. Mrs. Guttmann, a lady worker in the same district, gets on remarkably well. She visited 2,000 houses during the year, there were 2,093 persons seen and spoken to, 200 portions of New and Old Testaments given away. "Some of them are read and returned without comment, others are brought back with various expressions of regret or approval." Similar wonderful results might be quoted from provincial missionaries, but these will serve. When we have such absurdities as the above quoted as "instances of encouragement," one almost despairs of human sanity or honesty. Yet this is all the society has to show as the result of a year's work in Great Britain ! Is the game worth the candle ? To those who manage to squeeze a living out of the movement, probably yes ; but what of the general public ? How long will it take to convert 8,000,000 Jews at the present rate of increase ? How much will it cost to convert them at the present rate of payment ? And how much are they worth when they are converted ?

Of all Christian missions, that for the conversion of the Jews has the least justification for its existence. Other missions may plead that they are at least taking to lower races the elements of higher secular civilisation, and that by the introduction of fresh habits these people will be ultimately benefited. The Mission

to the Jews can plead no such extenuation. I do not see it even claimed that the Jew becomes better, either individually or socially, as a result of his adopting Christianity. What he was before his baptism, that he remains afterwards. The whole object of these missions is at best a theological one; what it is at worst I leave those who have read the foregoing pages to say.

## VII.

*Conclusion.*—Every task must end somewhere, and mine must, at any rate for the present, end here. I do not pretend that the foregoing brief review of the missionary movement has by any means exhausted the subject. A great deal might be written concerning the deliberate misrepresentation of the life and customs of the people among whom the missionary resides; an offence that is particularly grave when dealing with people like the Chinese or the inhabitants of India. I have referred to this matter but slightly for two reasons: first, because I have not wished the mind of the reader or the attention of any possible critic to be distracted from the real point at issue—namely, the quantity and quality of the converts gained; and, secondly, because, if I had dealt with that aspect of the matter, I should have needed a large volume instead of a small pamphlet. But I do not think anyone who studies the lives of the non-Christian peoples, as depicted by non-missionary writers, can doubt the truthfulness of Miss Kingsley's statement, that the missionaries draw distorted pictures of the people they seek to convert, in order to bring in subscriptions at home.

There are, too, several aspects of missionary life—particularly in South Africa—upon which I have not dwelt, for the reason that, although sure of the facts myself, and with the full belief that there is

proof enough to command the assent of any impartial jury, yet I am at present lacking the necessary documentary evidence to demonstrate the truth of charges that might be made. I have preferred to make no statement that was not supported by positive proof; and, as readers will have observed, in most cases the proofs are taken direct from the reports of the missionary societies.

As it is, I do not think that anyone who carefully considers the bearing of the foregoing pages will assert that there is anything like an adequate return for the huge expenditure of energy and money that is going on year after year. I know all that may be said about "the devoted men and women who sacrifice the comforts of civilisation," etc., etc. I know that it is true in some cases, and I know that in others it is the veriest drivel that ever found vent. There is no more hardship in the life of the average missionary abroad than in that of the average white man in the same country, and often not so much. The latter usually faces all the dangers faced by the missionary, and is without a great many of the compensating pleasures enjoyed by the preacher. Nor is it any reply to what I have said to argue that certain secular benefits flow from the presence of the missionaries. Every movement has to be tested by the success with which it achieves its object, not by the incidental results of its work. The object of the missions is to make Christians, and it is by their success in this direction that they have to be judged.

Not that I am willing to admit that there is any great good done by the missionaries in any direction; at any rate, the good is not at all commensurate with the efforts put forth. And it may well be questioned whether the probable good done by spreading a slight knowledge of English or of Western science in India or China is not more than balanced by encouraging sectarian feelings in the one case, and breeding international animosities in the other. It is surely far



from an insignificant fact that the white people resident in China or India or Africa are usually those who speak most slightly of the benefits of missionary work. A great deal of praise is bestowed upon it by the clergy at home, and by a number of old ladies—of both sexes—at Exeter Hall meetings; but those on the spot think generally but little of it. That I am not overstating the case will be seen from the following sketch of the attitude of the average Anglo-Indian, drawn by no less a personage than the Rev. Principal Fairbairn. The sketch was intended as a satire, but it nevertheless expresses the truth:—

“The orthodox Anglo-Indian, though possibly himself a Christian, must believe that Christianity produces the most disastrous results in India. He should remember that the natives already possess two excellent religions of their own—*i.e.*, Hinduism and Islam. He should point out that almost invariably converts to Christianity spring from the lowest orders of the people, and that the hope of financial gain is the main inducement towards baptism rather than any real conversion of the heart. He should himself, as an official, be very careful to abstain from even a suspicion of in any way favoring Christians; and, as they are, of course, worse than other natives, he will neither employ them as household servants himself nor suffer others to do so without warning them of their folly.”

Although intended as satire, I do not think it can truthfully be questioned that the above is a fair picture of the attitude of the average European resident in India towards missions. And what is true of India is equally true of China. If the presence of missionaries in China were to be determined by the votes of the white residents, they would be withdrawn at once. Even in the case of uncivilised races, it may be questioned whether the forcing on them of European customs is a real benefit. Let us take a single illustration of the least injurious effect of Christianising the lower races as depicted by Lord Stanmore, late Governor of Fiji<sup>1</sup>:—

“In the centre of the village is the cricket field, a desolate expanse of dry earth, on one side of which is the church, a wooden barn-like

<sup>1</sup> Speech at St. James's Hall, May 31, 1894, reported in the *Daily Chronicle* for June 1.

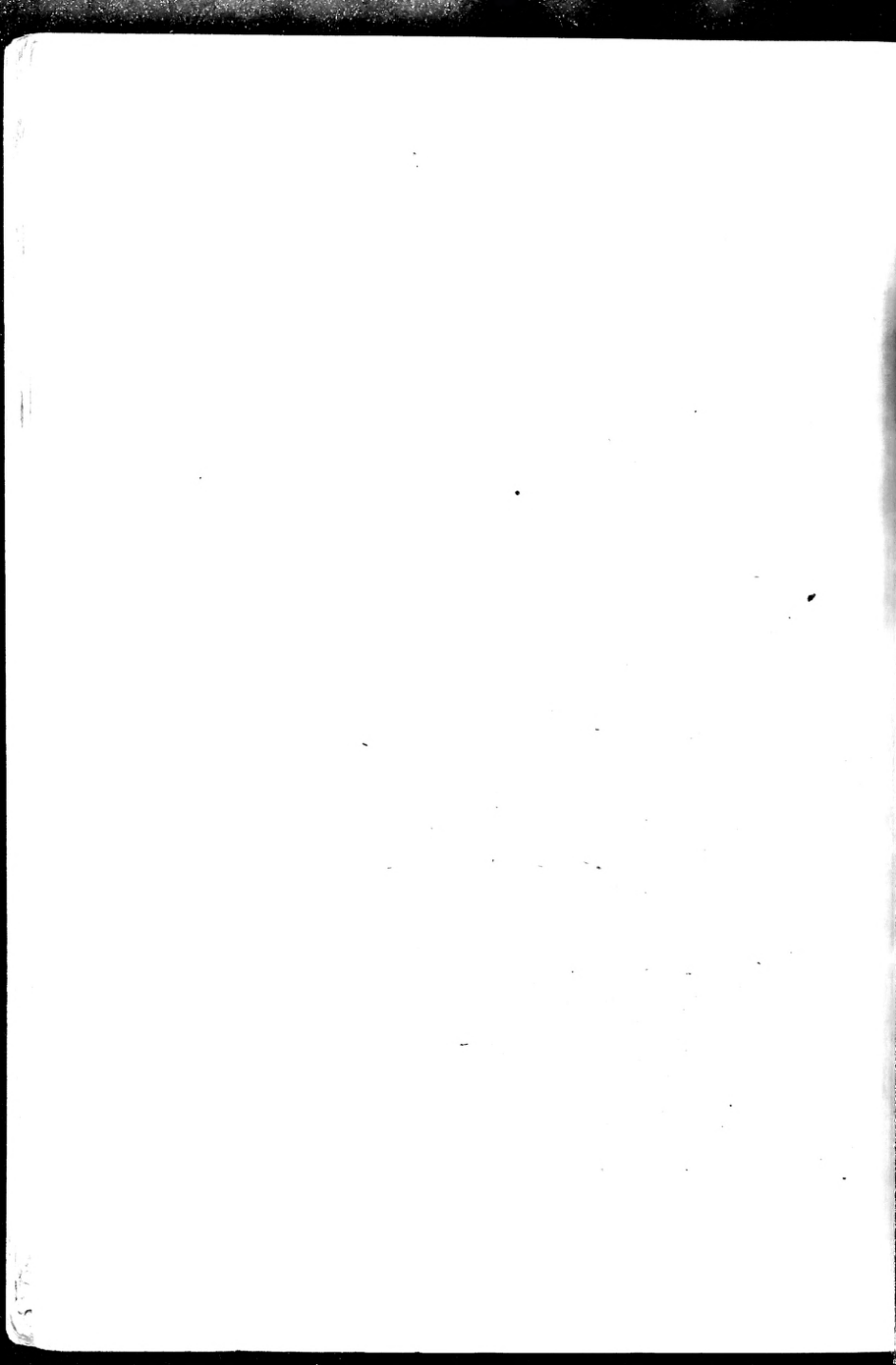
building. If entered, it will be found filled with crazy benches; beyond them rises a huge octagonal pulpit, in which, if the day be Sunday, we shall find the native minister arrayed in a greenish black swallow-tail coat, a neckcloth, once white, and a pair of spectacles which he probably does not need, preaching to a congregation, the male portion of which is dressed in much the same manner as himself, while the women are dressed in old, battered hats and bonnets, and shapeless gowns like bathing-dresses, or, it may be, crinolines of an early type. Chiefs of influence and women of high birth, who in their native dress would look, and do look, the ladies and gentlemen they are, are, by their Sunday finery, given the appearance of attendants on Jack-in-the-Green. Hard by is the school where, owing to the proscription of native clothing,<sup>1</sup> the children appear in tattered rags, under the tuition of a master whose garments resemble those of an Irish scarecrow, and is probably repeating a list of English counties, or some similar information equally useful to a Polynesian Islander. . . . The whole life of these village folk is one piece of unreal acting. They are continually asking themselves whether they are incurring any of the penalties entailed by infraction of the long table of prohibition, and whether they are living up to the foreign garments they wear. Their faces have, for the most part, an expression of sullen discontent; they move about silently and joylessly, rebels in heart to the restrictive coils on them. . . . They have good ground for their dissatisfaction. At the time when I visited the villages I have specially in my eye, it was punishable by fine and imprisonment to wear native clothing; punishable by fine and imprisonment to make native cloth; punishable by fine and imprisonment to smoke tobacco; punishable by fine and imprisonment to make the native beverage kava; punishable by fine and imprisonment to wear long hair or a garland of flowers; punishable by fine and imprisonment to wrestle or to play at ball; punishable by fine and imprisonment to build a native-fashioned house; punishable not to wear shirt and trousers, and, in certain localities, coat and shoes also; and in addition to laws enforcing a strictly puritanical observation of the Sabbath, it was punishable by fine and imprisonment to bathe on Sundays. In some other places bathing on Sundays is punishable by flogging, and to my knowledge women have been flogged for no other offence, by order of a native teacher, whose action was by no means so decidedly disapproved by his white superior as it should have been. Men in such circumstances are ripe for revolt, and sometimes the revolt comes."

With this picture before us, which contrasts curiously with the missionaries' reports, one may well query whether the life of the Polynesian Islanders has, after all, experienced much of a change for the better by the introduction of a new religion. The truth is that the missionary is far too apt to measure

<sup>1</sup> A regulation not probably unconnected with the desire to push the sale of Manchester cottons.

the morality of a race by the readiness of a people to repeat the shibboleths of his own particular faith, rather than by any common-sense standard of human well-being; and one finds over and over again that customs, harmless enough in themselves, become in the mouths of missionaries evidence of gross immorality, and their suppression proof of unqualified improvement.

But it is the gratuitous character of these missions that strikes the outsider most forcibly. The people do not want the faith of the missionary, and, as the figures show, a great many of them will not have it, and on the strength of their own statements but few are the better for accepting it. According to Mr. Little, the bulk of the Chinese people believe that all Europeans are wealthy. Their reason is that it seems to them that when people are so anxious to put things right so many thousands of miles away from their native land, they can have little that is wrong at home. The Chinese seem to me to be fairly reasonable in their contention. There is something in the Gospels about removing the beam from one's own eye before clearing the mote out of another's; and surely, while there are so many wrongs to right, so much misery that needs alleviating, so much ignorance that needs dispelling at home, it is sheer folly—to use no harsher term—to spend millions of money and waste the energies of thousands of men and women on a movement in which folly, knavery, and stupidity are almost inextricably mingled—a movement in which the presence of a handful of earnest but misguided individuals serves as a cloak for crowds of office-holders, and others of a still more dangerous description.



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