

CHRISTLESS

ASIA

By

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MRS. BISHOP, who was heartily greeted on rising, said:—My Lord Archbishop, ladies and gentlemen, this is not only the first time that I have had the pleasure of addressing an Irish audience, but it is the first time that I have spoken at a meeting of the ancient and honoured Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and it gives me exceeding pleasure to meet with a Dublin audience under such circumstances. I have since coming home from my last Eastern journey—and especially during the last few weeks—been almost wearied of hearing perpetual discussions on what is known as “The Chinese Question,” a most interesting question, but not as interesting as it might be, in the way I have usually heard it treated. On Friday I heard a great debate on the Chinese question in the House of Commons, and have heard various other discussions on it in other places. What has impressed me most—of course leaving the importance of the question on one side—is that it has been treated on a low plane, from an entirely, shall I say, selfish standpoint, *i.e.* from a strictly commercial standpoint—and there has been much talk of “the open door.” It is very refreshing to-night to come into an audience which looks upon China, and other Asiatic countries, from a different point of view, and which, while quite recognising the importance of conserving free commercial relations with China, recognises equally the importance of

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carrying the Gospel to the Chinese. And it makes it pleasant to speak, and it is very pleasant to be lifted for an hour out of this exceedingly worldly commercial groove into an atmosphere in which human souls and their needs are to be the sole subject treated and thought of.

With regard to Foreign Missions, I doubt not that most of the audience are in thorough sympathy with them. There may be some here, however—doubtless there are—who see and feel a sort of antagonism between Home and Foreign Missions. I do not think that such an antagonism really exists or can exist. If one might go into the subject at all in a few words, I should say that Home Missions are utterly invaluable, and they are not only the first duty of the Church but part of the whole duty of the Church, a part not to be neglected without a criminal neglect. But I should also say, and this is from a very extensive experience of heathen countries, that at home there does lie within the reach of everyone the knowledge of salvation; that all, no matter how far they have “lapsed,” or how little they have heard of the way of life, are within reach of hearing it. Our Church exists but for the object of teaching and preaching the Gospel to all who will hear. The solemnity of our marriage and burial services, the solemn oath in the Courts of Justice, the Sabbath chimes of our church bells, our Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter days, and fifty things besides, tell of a God and of a Christ to those who are unwilling to hear and who are perfectly indifferent. There are means of healing all around; they have only to be sought. Everywhere it is the same. In all our crowded cities and in our agricultural districts also, healing is at hand. And it is also a solemn reflection that even the blasphemies of our streets are launched with Jehovah’s name.

In what I have seen of the great heathen and Mahomedan world of Asia there is no such thing. If a

man is longing after righteousness, to whom shall he go for instruction? No one knows more than he knows himself. He is in the midst of evil and superstitious influences. There is no teacher, no "healing for the nations" within his reach. He must go blindly on in the darkness, reaching with lame hands after Him who is not far from any one of us, but with none to tell him of the love and the fatherhood of God, or of the atonement of Christ, or of that wonderful combination of justice and mercy which met on the head of our Lord on Calvary; and he goes down to his grave in the dark—darkness all round him, while the worst of our home heathens has all the influences surrounding him of which I have spoken. I do not mean to institute a comparison. The duty of the Church lies equally to both, I think. The command of our Lord to "preach the Gospel to all nations" applies to both equally; and I will just read a few lines from a speech of the present Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject of obedience to this command.

"It is well that we should endeavour to impress on men's minds the obligation that lies on all Christians to take part in the conversion of all that are not Christians. We are called upon to make them see that this obligation is not a something external to their Christian life, but a part of Christian life itself, and that Christian life is not complete if it is shut up within a man's own bosom, or within a man's own neighbourhood, or is limited by anything short of the whole human race. . . . If you would see the Christian life in its completeness, understand that a very real part of it consists in the spiritual and self-denying desire to make His name known all over creation."

These words are very strong and very beautiful; and, no doubt, as I read them, they have found a sympathetic echo in many a heart here.

But now I should like to speak of the heathen

world as I have myself seen it. I have travelled for seven and a half years in Asia, in some of its most outlandish regions, leaving European settlements and treaty ports as soon as I could get a caravan and an interpreter. I have lived for the greater part of this time among the people, seeing their habits, conversing with them freely through my interpreter, seeing their religious observances and hearing their religious ideas, and that in every country in Asia but four, from the Eastern shores of Japan and of the Sandwich Islands to the Black Sea, and from the Yellow Sea to the willow-shaded streams of Babylon; from the Caucasus to the Persian Gulf, and from Siberian snows down to the fierce heat of the sun in the Golden Chersonese. I have seen the peoples and their religions, and heard their views on different subjects. And I have never seen anything in the way of man rising towards God—all is darkness, more or less deep, except when here and there faint glimmers of light sent out from Europe and America serve to make the surrounding gloom more intense and visible.

One starts on such journeys expecting to find some good, something hopeful, some teachings which have not fallen into utter corruption, but one does not find it. My great hope was that in Buddhism—so much lauded by many at home—there might be some seeds of good, some teaching of righteousness. But Buddhism, perhaps more than any other creed, has fallen lowest in corruption. There is no resurrection power in Heathenism or Mahomedanism. As man has come to be, so he must remain, or rather he must sink, as he has sunk, lower and lower. For the good with which the Asiatic philosophical systems started, the high moral teachings which distinguished them, have been practically lost, leaving, almost invariably, only a residue of corrup-

tion, and of darkness, growing yet darker as time passes on, and the result of my observations in Asia is that Asia lies in "a darkness which may be felt," and that the only hope for the countries of Asia of being lifted up in any and every way is through the reception of the Christianity of which we are to-night enjoying the manifold blessings.

I will say a few words on what appear to me to be the great foes of Christianity in Asiatic countries. Of course, the greatest foes to Christianity in Asia are the great philosophical systems of Heathenism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Tauism, and I should add—though it is philosophical in a less degree—Mahomedanism. Asia is pervaded by these systems, elaborate, fine-drawn, subtle and philosophical. And we must remember that it is long-established systems that the Gospel has to encounter in Asia, and systems which are thoroughly well organised, and that most of them are deeply rooted in the affections of the people. There is an idea prevailing among many people in this country that it requires but a touch, and that these colossal fabrics of error will crumble away. It is by no means so. They are ingrained into the intellects of the people; and much indeed will have to be done, and great will be the power of the working of the Holy Spirit, before these systems are in the slightest degree shaken. Then, again, they have the sanction of the law, and are under the influence of the greatest and most venerated names of the sages and saints of these countries. There is no name in the Far East so venerated, for instance, as that of the great teacher Confucius. In Japan, Corea, and China his teachings are profoundly and universally venerated, and Confucius himself is regarded almost as a deity. We also know the great veneration for antiquity that pervades the Far East, and that these systems are hoary with antiquity; that

they possess the reverence of ages ; that the ancestry of the nations is believed to be bound up with them ; that the reverence for ancestors, which is the leading feature of China, Corea, and Japan, is indissolubly bound up with the philosophical systems of these countries, and that the sanction which attends these religions is the sanction of ages. Then these people have a deep-rooted veneration for the sayings and doings of their ancestors, which is one of the causes of the ancestral worship which prevails. Then we must remember that these religions are not, as our own religion too often is, a thing apart. They are bound up with everything in those countries, with their political systems, with the whole of their social order, and there is no department of life which is not closely interwoven with them. Everything is connected with them, and from the time of birth to the time of death, and beyond death, they hold a complete sway over the people. The idea of assailing any one of them, if it were not for the Divine promise, would be utterly preposterous, considering the sanctions by which they are attended and enforced. It is an awful consideration, the absolute grip that these faiths hold over the people from infancy to old age. It is no child's play to go out and fight with such foes, with religions which are rooted in the affections of the people. And it is not only their social intercourse and habits, even their amusements are penetrated and bound up with the sanctities, as they term them, of religion. It often struck me in those countries how lightly we hold our own religion as compared with the way in which these people hold theirs, that in some sense it is never absent from them, and that everything is connected with it. Such systems constitute in themselves a terrific foe.

And then underlying all these philosophical systems and every system of belief in Central and

Eastern Asia—possibly in India, though of it I know less—there is the belief in demons. This belief, which is the sole religion in Corea, obtains in China to a deplorable extent; and it being the strongest and apparently the most natural creed is the most difficult to conquer. I believe that the work of the medical missionary is the one successful means of assailing demonology in its last resort; and to multiply medical missionaries in tens and hundreds, to multiply women medical missionaries, and send them among the secluded women of the East, is one great work which lies before the Church of Christ, and which it is only just now beginning to take up. I should like the audience to remember that the belief in demons, and in all sickness as the result of demoniacal possession, is the last belief to be shaken, and the belief which underlies all others. There are hundreds of foes in the laws and social customs of these peoples, but there is one foe which is of great magnitude and of enormous strength. We are accustomed in this country—thanks to the Christianity which we have received—to speak of the influence of women for good. There is, thank God, a great influence in the women in England for good. There is the influence over the children, of the prayer and the teaching at the mother's knee, which often wields a great power even over men. But the influence of women in the East is of a very different order. Women are secluded, despised, and degraded—degraded by the system of polygamy and the facility of divorce, regarded as not possessed of souls or immortality; and spoken of in China as the “mean ones within the gates.” There is no apparent respect given to women in these countries. But though shut up in complete ignorance of the outer world and its interests, not taught to read and write, and totally uneducated, they are yet possessed of a most powerful influence.

On my late journey of three years I learned a great deal more about the influence of women in the East than in the previous five years. The woman secluded in the zenana has complete control of her children, in the case of boys up to the age of six, and in the case of girls till they marry ; and, when the daughter-in-law succeeds her own child, she is the object often of her tyranny, and always of her control. She shrinks from no maternal responsibility, and in many ways, as far as the physical well-being of the child is concerned, the Eastern mother is an exemplary mother. Her very devotion to her children in this respect gives her a powerful influence over them. It is she who inculcates in them obedience to the customs and superstitions in which she has herself been brought up. It is she who continues and carries on the absolute seclusion of her girls. Safety to her thinking consists in seclusion. Outside the walls of the zenana there is nothing but peril. We are very apt to think that these secluded women would welcome release from what we call imprisonment, but imprisonment is the custom of the East handed down from remote centuries, and is regarded by the women, as well as by the men, as seclusion from all danger, and as showing the way in which they are regarded as valuable chattels by the men. I have often asked the women of the zenana what they think of the ways and the freedom of the women of Europe wherever they have a chance of seeing them, and they reluctantly but invariably have answered, "We think that your husbands do not value you very much." In India, China, Corea, Ceylon, and Persia the same answer, if not in actually the same words, has invariably been made. This is inculcated on their children, and the offerings to the idols and demons and all the superstitious observances in connection with their religion are carefully, from the very earliest infancy, taught to boys and girls. It is the women

who keep up the idolatrous systems of these countries infinitely more than the men. When the men would lapse and become agnostic, and when they would give up the observances of their religion, the women keep them up to it. Not only that, but women make the marriages of their sons, and they, as I said before, control their daughters-in-law who come to live with them. In the supposed interests of their sons they are continually spies on the conduct of their daughters-in-law. They are "past-masters" of intrigue. Without any power, without what we recognise as influence in this country, their genius for intrigue gives them influence, and many a minister of State is deposed, and many a person high in the confidence of another loses his position, owing to the intrigues of the women of the harem. Everywhere the women conserve evil in Asiatic countries. They conserve the religions, the customs which degrade them, and much besides. And by conservating the idolatries they constitute in themselves one of the most powerful foes to Christianity in every one of these countries. This is the last of the foes of which I will speak.

Now, what are the results of the activity of the foes to Christianity in these countries? I have been asked to speak here to-night solely as a traveller, unconnected with any mission work whatsoever. But I must add that it is because in my travels I have become deeply convinced of the necessity of Christian Missions that I am addressing you to-night. In the first years of my travels in Asia I cared for nothing of the kind; but as my travels continued, and I lived more and more among the people, I came to see that being without God in the world meant to be without hope, and that the populations are in a state of piteous darkness, in very great temporal misery, and without hope for the next world. I saw also the self-denying efforts of missionaries, both male and female, and the

righteous lives lived wherever there was a Mission Station—lives of purity, truthfulness and kindness, of justice and honesty ; lives which, in themselves, without a word spoken, uplifted the standard of living among the people of the country. I should have been blind and deaf if these things had not made a strong impression on me, and converted me from total indifference to the mission cause to a very strong and earnest interest in it. And I imagine it to be the duty of every traveller who has seen what I have seen, and has become convinced, as I have become convinced, to add his or her testimony to what it is to be in countries without God, and what it is for those glimmers of light to shine in the darkness, and what might be hoped for if these agencies, miserably small as they are, could be magnified a thousand-fold. For, if we are to attempt the downfall of the philosophical systems and their results in Asia, the agencies must be multiplied a thousand-fold and more. One hears much said by the people in reference to the paucity of missionaries. One hears the people say, "Oh, these are not missionaries. These men have not come to teach a new religion ; they have come to work for political ends. If they came to preach a new religion, they would send a thousand of them." A General of five thousand Persian troops said to me, "When we go to preach Mahomedanism we send five hundred men where you send one." And it was true. I met with Mahomedan missionaries in numbers here, there, and everywhere, from the frontiers of China to the frontiers of Russia, everywhere preaching the creed that they believe to be the Gospel of salvation for men. And it was always painful to be taunted and to be told that we were not in earnest in sending the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ to the heathen.

I have mentioned what women are as the foes of

Christianity. I understand this to be a meeting of the Women's Association* in connection with the S.P.G., and that it, of course, is naturally and chiefly concerned with women wherever they may be. It is only by women that the Gospel can be carried to the women of the East. There is no question about that. It is only by women doctors that our Western methods of healing, with all their blessedness, can be carried into the women's houses, and made to supplant the barbarities and brutal methods of native treatment. Therefore, every woman who has not only Christianity in her heart, but humanity and philanthropy also, should exert herself with all her might to send these blessings to our sisters in the East.

I will now give an idea of the women's houses as I have seen them when travelling. I think I have been altogether in a hundred zenanas in Southern Turkey, Arabia, Persia, China, and Corea. In some of these I have been a guest for periods varying from a day to a week, storm-bound, or when it was impossible to get on because of tribal fights or flooded rivers or other obstacles; and everywhere the lord of the zenana or harem has invited me to accept the hospitality of the women until I could get on farther. I have also seen very much of the women's houses, or rather of the women's tents, among the large nomadic population of Persia. They are everywhere more or less the same, as far as I have seen them. The women's house is absolutely secluded, with a wall around the courtyard and no windows to the front. The women, except those of the lowest classes, can only go out, if they go out at all, in rigidly closed and covered chairs. They know nothing. They cannot read. It is considered a crime to teach a woman to read in many places. They have heard in a few cases, especially in Persia and India, of

* Now called the Committee of Women's Work.

other countries, but it is always as countries inhabited by barbarians.

In a large harem there are women of all ages, from infants up to very old women, and women of all colours. There are the children, the girl children, and the small boys. At six the boys live chiefly in the men's houses. Then there are the legitimate wives, the favourite wife, and the concubines, who have slender rights, and, sad to say, the discarded wives, who have been favourites in their day, and who have passed into being practically the slaves of those who are favourites now. And there are numbers of domestic slaves and old women, who, according to the custom of the East, are supported by their masters. I must add that there is a good deal of kindness shown, and not any of these old slaves, except in Morocco, as far as I could make out, are ever turned out penniless from the owner's door. In many of these zenanas I have seen more than 200 women and children in one house, a great crowd, grossly ignorant, frequently without manners, with intolerable curiosity, and asking the most intolerable and frivolous questions, and then, after their curiosity is gratified, relapsing into that extreme apathy which appears to be the invariable state of the absolutely uneducated. You may say that that is not so very bad, that there are worse things than apathy. There are worse things, and I have seen worse things, to a very large extent, in those houses. I made a list of the women's houses I visited, exclusive of those in China and Corea. In seventy of these, including those of the nomads, in the case of whom one would have thought that a better state of things might exist, I was asked for drugs, which the women believed I possessed, and which they asked for in order to kill the favourite wife, or make her ugly and odious, or to kill her boy if she had one.

I will go no further. It is enough to show what are the passions engendered by a life of this kind. You can imagine the feelings of the discarded wife at seeing court paid to the favourite, the presents she receives, and so on. You can understand how envy, hatred, and murder arise in her heart; she would not be a non-Christian woman if it were not so. And instead of having harmony, love, gentleness, and tenderness one finds, along with the intellect of children of ten years old, the full-grown passions of adults, the evil passions belonging to humanity having attained gigantic stature, having nothing to check them at all. And thus it has been everywhere where I have been. I can only say that I have not seen a single exception to the rule. The system of polygamy, the facility for divorce, the seclusion, the ignorance, the crowds, all combine to produce a condition which may appeal to every woman here.

There is nothing, however, more difficult than the entrance of a lady as a missionary into such an assemblage of women. It requires not only great faith in the power of the Gospel which she carries, and not only the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, but it requires a large stock of what has been well called "the enthusiasm of humanity," the love of women for their own sake, as well as for Christ's sake, repulsive as they may seem to be, and a love which will sustain the worker, not through one day of hopeful novelty, but through weeks and months and years, carrying a Gospel which is not welcomed, teaching it by slow degrees, and seeing here and there ones and twos, and perhaps threes, becoming converted to the Faith. I know of no work which appears to me to involve more personal self-sacrifice than the work of the lady missionary in the women's houses of the East. With the medical missionary it is, of course, different. There is a recognised need.

Sickness comes to these secluded women as it comes to all—sickness, suffering, and agony—agony frequently caused by the ignorant brutality of the native women doctors. And in their agonies the women cry out for the foreign woman of whom they have heard, with her gentle touch and healing. And as the medical woman goes as an invited guest into these houses all honour is paid to her ; she wins love and confidence, and on the top of these she brings in without difficulty the Message of Christ. I do hope that this Association will strive to increase at a rapid rate the number of women doctors in the East—the number of lady medical missionaries—and that there will be many generous, warm-hearted Irishwomen who will give themselves to the long course of medical study, in order that they may carry the blessings of Western healing and the blessings of the Gospel of Christ to these wretched and degraded women.

I should just like, in a very few words, to state what of good I found in these countries ; for I would not say at all that there is not some good. There are some virtues practised by heathens which we would do well to practise to a greater extent ourselves. Among these are kindness to the poor and generosity. There is, generally speaking, among Moslems a kindness and self-denial practised towards those of their own creed which are extremely beautiful. It is not mere alms-giving, but the entertaining in social fashion of their poorer neighbours, and *personally* ministering to their needs. And one of the greatest taunts made by Moslems is that, though our great Teacher has given us a definite rule regarding our entertainments—namely, that we should invite to the feast not our rich acquaintances, but the poor, for they cannot recompense us—we systematically disobey it. The Moslem says, “You have that distinct rule, and you do not keep it, and we do.” And I must

say, with regard to alms-giving and entertaining of the poor, which I have seen on very many occasions, they set a very bright example ; and they also set an example as to the enormous amount of mission work which they carry out. At the El Hazar school in Cairo there are something like 11,000 Moslem students. This Mosque school sends out 500 missionaries every year to every part of North Africa and Asia—even to the borders of China. Propagandist work in the revived Mahomedanism of to-day is one of the great features of their faith. In that, again, we might take example from them, for, as I have mentioned, they say truly that where we send one missionary they send 500. And there are good things done which I have no time to dwell on in every country, even though the teaching and the practices are, on the whole, as dark as night. Even in China, which I think is, on the whole, more repulsive in some of its practices than most countries, there are guilds of benevolence, which do enormous work. There are guilds for lepers, for foundlings, for old people who can no longer support themselves, and who have no relations to support them, and for orphans. There are free ferries and lifeboats stationed along the banks of the Yang-Tse—four of them below and above each of the perilous rapids—supported by the continuous subscriptions of Chinese merchants. And every city, from the largest to the smallest, has its own guilds for the poor and afflicted, its soup kitchens, and its means of providing for the poor in severe winters. One of the noblest missionaries ever sent to China, Mr. David Hill, drew up a paper on the guilds of benevolence in some of the great Chinese cities, and the account he gives is something truly wonderful. One is bound to bring these facts before an audience when one speaks of the intense and all-pervading darkness of heathenism in these lands.

In China, Corea, Persia, and Turkey there is no cannibalism and no atrocities of slave or head hunting, nor are there horrible and immoral rites performed anywhere—there is nothing to shock in the externals of heathen worship except that it is heathen worship. But throughout these countries there prevails in the Government, in all the system of the administration of Government, absolutely shameless corruption. The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint; you can hardly say that there is an exception to the rule. I have met none in Persia, very few in Turkey, and very few in China. Justice has no existence. It is bought and sold like any other commodity, and it is too expensive for the poor to buy. Law is an engine of the grossest oppression. Immorality prevails universally through all classes. There is no trust between man and man. There is no respect for women. There is nothing to condemn wrong-doing or to enforce right-doing. We little know what we owe in these countries to public opinion, permeated throughout by the influences of Christianity. We owe more to it than we can say, and I was deeply impressed with our debt to it when I was in those countries. There is no public opinion, either national or local, to condemn wrong-doing and sustain a man in right-doing. The want of it is appalling, and there is nothing to create it. We must remember that, for the public opinion which does so much for us, we are indebted altogether to Christian teaching; and where there is no Christian teaching there is no enlightened public opinion. Then there are the enslaving and universal superstitions on which I have no time to dwell, but which are horrible to a degree, and which enslave the whole of the population without exception. Conscience has no existence. There is nothing to which you can bring home wrong-doing in people who are wholly corrupt. There is no shame even in the found-out

lie. Here, however low people are, there is a dislike to have a lie found out. There there is none. A lie is nothing; there is no truth between man and man anywhere. Conscience is deposed and destroyed! You may ask, What can revivify in these races the conscience that has been lost? Can anything but Christianity do it? There is no resurrection power in heathenism. It is only the Gospel of Christ, only Christian teaching, that can reproduce the lost conscience, and can cause a resurrection unto life of these millions and millions of people. The good of the early teaching has dropped out of all these systems, and little but the evil remains. I should very much like to be able to bring forward more of good than I have done. I have mentioned the chief things which I witnessed myself as good in these nations. On the whole, they sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, while the light has shone upon us and has guided our feet into the way of peace. The light has not risen on their darkness—the work remains to be done.

The magnitude of the task which lies before the Christian Church is an awful consideration. It appears to lie most markedly before the Churches of Great Britain, Ireland, and America to convert the heathen world to Christ. We must not, however, be discouraged, though we remember that of the 1,050 millions of non-Christians, and 800 millions who have never heard of the Lord Jesus Christ, nearly 300 millions are our own fellow-subjects. To them, first and foremost, we have an awful responsibility. But everywhere, wherever Christ is unknown, His Church has the responsibility of making Him known. And it is the work to which the Church is called in the century on which we have entered. In thinking of this colossal undertaking to which the Church is called we must remember that it consists not only

of conquest but re-conquest. One of the saddest things I saw in my Asiatic journeys was whole tracts of country which had once given martyrs to the Church, but in which "the son of the bondwoman" has completely triumphed over "the son of the free," so much so that where Christianity once prevailed, from the Pillars of Hercules to the frontier of China, there is scarcely a witness to Christ except the small persecuted remnant of the Nestorian Church and the Armenians. To re-conquer Central Asia and Northern Africa is one of the greatest tasks before the Church, and re-conquest is much harder than conquest; for wherever Mahomedanism prevails, and has got a hold over the nations, there is much more to be fought and overcome than where there are only the simpler faiths and such fetish worship as Christianity contends with and overcomes in Africa.

This is the task to which each one of us is called, whether at home or abroad. I think it was the Bishop of Lincoln who summed up the duty of every Christian in connection with missions in these words: "Go; let go; help go." The first duty of "go" we may dismiss in a few words. Those who think that they are called to go have to be very careful to consider whether they are the right people to go. I have seen many failures among missionaries, and especially among missionary women—ladies who have offered themselves to go to the heathen in the enthusiasm of a great meeting, and who found, when they got out, that that enthusiasm waned, and who were powerless before the actual circumstances of their work. It needs much; not the enthusiasm of a day or of an hour, but the steady work of a lifetime. It needs not only the love of Christ, but "the enthusiasm of humanity," to make a successful missionary. A failure on the great mission field is a most deplorable thing. There may be mothers who are keeping their

daughters back from going when the daughters have had it in their minds for years to go. To them the "let go" applies. But the "help go" applies to every one of us. We can all pray. People often express themselves as if prayer were the smallest part of the whole undertaking. It seems to me the largest, if we have any belief in the efficacy of prayer. And there is no person so poor, no invalid so feeble, who cannot pray—who cannot pray that the Lord will send forth labourers into the mission field; who cannot pray for a rich blessing on them when they are there; who cannot remember the missionaries and the mission stations in their prayers, and plead with God earnestly for them. We need something of the spirit which found vent in the words: "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain!" or in the words, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes because of the wicked who forsake Thy law;" or of that page blotted by tears on which the Apostle Paul wrote of those who were "enemies of the Cross of Christ." If we had more of such feelings, and more of that earnest desire that these people should not die in their darkness and ignorance, our prayers would be very different from what they are, and we should not be content with a minute or two now and then of pleading to God for their salvation and the spread of His Gospel, but with "strong crying and tears" we should spend hours, even nights, in that agonising prayer which might bring down abundant blessing.

Then there is the giving. We can all give; we can all help in various ways. I notice in the sheet put forward by the Women's Mission Association there are certain things mentioned—personal labour in the mission field, yearly subscriptions, organising work, becoming associates, and circulating information

about missions. I have no doubt that there are many here that take in missionary periodicals, and probably those that are mentioned here, which are *Church Work Among Women** and *The Grain of Mustard Seed*.* Somehow it often seems that people read them and keep what they read very snugly to themselves. There is often a great want felt of subjects for conversation, while here we have ready to hand subjects which are interesting, and which we could make attractive, and which undoubtedly would be more interesting to the people that we are trying to talk to than the miserable drag-chat which we often talk. But we do not do it. Then there are people who go to missionary meetings. I have no doubt that there are many such in this large audience, and they hear most remarkable things told of conversions among heathens, and of great sacrifices made for the sake of Jesus Christ, and of much endurance of persecution. Are these things not worth telling? Are we to keep them locked up in ourselves? Are we not to tell them and try to interest others in them? Cannot young people do it? Cannot young people, who read and hear these things, interest their young friends in this greatest of God's works? Are we not bound to do it? Are we tongue-tied? I think the reason of our not speaking is that these things are known to have reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, and we are shy of showing any interest in Him—that there is a certain connection between these things and religion, and we are accustomed to lock up religion in our own bosoms. But I think we ought to get over the feeling all the same, and that we ought to try to make these subjects interesting to our friends; and it is certainly one way of "helping go"—to increase the area of this interest, to increase the number of those who will pray, of those who will give.

* These magazines are now incorporated into "The Mission Field."

I should be sorry in such an audience as this to beg ; I never beg anywhere for money ; but I should be false to my convictions if I did not mention that in the few months I have been at home from my last three years' journey I have seen a most remarkable increase of luxury in this country. I am not speaking of Ireland, for I do not know it ; I hope some day to know it better ; but of my own country. I see that things which were once regarded as luxuries, and were regarded as luxuries even when I went abroad four years ago, are now looked upon as necessities ; that the standard of living has risen, that the expenditure on things regarded as necessary has risen, and that everywhere people are spending more on the decoration of life than they did four years ago. This appears to me to be a sad thing. I think that the extraordinary expenditure on luxury has been significant in other countries of their decay. I think all who think differently should protest against it by their lives. But we all fall into it somehow or other. We spend a little more on this or on that than we used to do. I don't know why we do not see it. If I might venture to make a suggestion—though, doubtless, there are many here who know the subject better than I do—I would suggest to all who own the Lord Jesus Christ as their Master that there should be a re-arrangement of expenditure and giving ; that we should not give out of our superfluity ; that we should carefully examine our incomes, and see what we ought to spend on ourselves and what we ought to spend in promoting the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that we should make this re-arrangement of our expenditure on our knees, and at the foot of the Cross, as under those Eyes which closed in death for our redemption. Then we should make no mistakes in our expenditure, and we should not have to grieve, when our last hour comes, over

the much we have spent on self and over the little we have spent on Christ's cause. I think we are bound to do this in the light of our increased knowledge of the sins and miseries of the heathen world—the knowledge brought home to us by the infinite number of missionary publications, and by the books and the words of travellers; I do not mean of Christian travellers only, but of travellers who tell us in plain language what the customs and habits of the heathen peoples are. We know more, and, doubtless, this greatly increases our responsibility. We need to cultivate far more largely the grace of self-denial, which, if made too much of at times, is made too little of now. We have ever to bear in mind the one perfect example set before us by the Lord Jesus Christ, whose life, from the caravanserai at Bethlehem to the cross at Calvary, on which He offered Himself without spot to God for our redemption, was one career of complete and, to us, incomprehensible self-denial. Do we not now hear His voice ringing down through ages of luxury and selfishness, declaring, with no uncertain sound, that the measure of our love to our brethren must be nothing less than the measure of His own?

We are looking forward to the final triumph of Christianity. We believe that the son of the bondwoman shall not always triumph over the son of the free, that the idols shall be utterly abolished, that the great philosophical systems shall be pulled down, that the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and that in all their wide dominions there shall be no more curse, because there shall be no more sin. What are we individually doing to hasten this glorious Coronation Day?

My time is now spent, but I would say, with regard to our expenditure, that I think the safe rule

is—"How much owest thou to my Lord?" If we ask that we can make no mistakes; and, instead of sending one or two missionaries here and there to the heathen, we shall be sending men and women out, consecrated by the Holy Ghost, in hundreds, and even in thousands.

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