





ROBERT MOFFAT THE AFRICAN MISSIONARY

LIFE AND LABOURS  
OF  
ROBERT MOFFAT, D.D.,  
MISSIONARY IN SOUTH AFRICA,  
WITH  
*ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS ON CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN  
AFRICA AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.*

BY  
REV. WILLIAM WALTERS,

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WILLIAM B. EERDMANS

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100, NASSAU ST., N.Y.



## Preface.

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**C**HRISTIAN Foreign Missions, on the scale and in the manner in which they are now carried forward by the Church of Christ, are characteristic of the nineteenth century. Among the men sent out to preach the Gospel to the heathen are some of the greatest and best of the age, and some of the most eminent benefactors of the race. A true missionary is one of the world's highest nobles. The Rev. Griffith John, who has been for above a quarter of a century teaching Christianity in China, said the other day: "I look upon the missionary work as the noblest work under heaven; and I look upon the position of the missionary, though he be the humblest, as the highest and noblest in the world." That is a correct estimate of missionary work and character.

Robert Moffat, whose life has been sketched in the following pages, occupies a place in the front rank of the missionary band. His history is a marvellous illustration of the grandeur and power of goodness, and his labours are full of proof of the saving efficacy and civilising effects of the Gospel

of Jesus Christ. He still lives among us, having retired from his more active toils to enjoy in his old days the happy recollections of his past useful life, and to look forward with all the pleasures of a "good hope" to his heavenly reward.

It has been thought well to add two chapters—one on African Missions generally, and another on missions throughout the world—as calculated to increase the usefulness of the book and promote the cause to which Dr. Moffat has devoted his life.

The writer is indebted to many sources for the varied information he has been enabled to collect and present in this volume. While gratefully acknowledging his obligations to all, he would make special mention of "Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa," by Robert Moffat; "Ten Years North of the Orange River," by Rev. John Mackenzie; and the "Printed Proceedings of the General Conference on Foreign Missions," held in London in October 1878.

WILLIAM WALTERS.

TYNEMOUTH, *March 1882.*





## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### GENERAL SURVEY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

**B**EFORE the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, He commanded His apostles, and through them all His followers in every age, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. The mission of the church is to evangelise the world. This great work committed by Christ to His disciples has been strangely delayed. For the first three centuries it was prosecuted with vigour; the Gospel was carried into Armenia, Iberia, Arabia, Persia, and even India, in the East; into Ethiopia and other parts of Africa; into Gaul and Britain in the West. But this primitive zeal in propagating the Gospel declined as Christianity became corrupted, and as the church was converted into a vast hierarchical organisation, and eventually allied itself with the civil power. Even after its action was encumbered by this alliance, and its spirit vitiated, and its life all but destroyed, its self-propagating power still shewed itself, and from the midst even of the corrupted church light was sent forth whenever a new region was discovered that was without it. The numerical strength and the area of Christendom continued to increase.

The downfall of the Roman Empire brought Christianity and civilisation into contact with the tribes of the North, and several of the German nations became Christian. Even during the dark ages nominal Christianity continued to spread, chiefly in the North of Europe; occasionally, as in Russia in the eleventh century, it was inaugurated as the religion of the State. Here and there the pure Gospel was kept alive; now and then a sincere and devoted missionary would go forth and labour in the spirit of primitive times, but this long period witnessed mainly but the enlargement of the nominal church and the extension of an ecclesiastical corporation, by no means the thorough evangelisation of the world, much less the conversion of mankind to the faith and practice of the Gospel.

The sixteenth century was the age of reformation: its powerful agitations were confined within the pale of Christendom; its work was renovation, not aggression, although the Romish Church, weakened in many parts of Europe, embarked in various projects of hierarchical ambition in pagan lands. Ignatius Loyala stands pre-eminent as a model of missionary zeal. The seventeenth century witnessed occasional incipient missionary movements among the Dutch, the Swiss, the Swedes, the British, and the inhabitants of the North American colonies. The last century gave birth to numerous missionary associations, and reduced to system the work of evangelising the world, then distinctly recognised as a Christian duty. The present century has carried out that system with increased zeal and energy, and on an enlarged scale; has multiplied benevolent associations and the means of prosecuting the work of missions, and has established that work in the hearts of Christians as the great enterprise of the Church. Since apostolic times no age has been so distinguished for evangelistic effort as that in which we live. Not to speak of the home labours of the churches of Christendom, there are now in existence in Great Britain,

America, on the continent of Europe, and in other parts of the world, upwards of seventy missionary societies, having for their special object the conversion of the world to God. These societies occupy upwards of twelve hundred stations, employ about twelve thousand agents of all kinds, and are supported by an income of above one million pounds sterling. Through their instrumentality the Gospel is preached all over the earth—in crowded cities, in the wilderness and desolate places, where population is scant and small, and in the islands far off on the sea.

India has six hundred missionaries, who, with their three hundred native companions, are abundant in labours—preaching in the vernacular, broad systems of education, extensive literatures in many tongues, humane efforts in famines, pestilences, and pain—all are employed, steadily and in faith, to make known the good news of Christ's saving love. Good churches, with no despicable number of converts, have been gathered, are growing, and are proving themselves worthy of all esteem. But the thorough leavening of India with Gospel truth is the principal feature of the great work carried on for the enlightenment of its people, and the effect of it is wonderful and widespread. Special advance has been made in recent years in female education in India. The Ladies' Society for Female Education in the East—the pioneer amongst women—after its long and useful career, still occupies the foremost place in this important branch of Christian work. But the Zenana missions of many American and English societies, and lady missionaries devoted to this service, have greatly multiplied in recent years, while wide and effectual doors into the homes of Hindu society are ever opening in larger numbers.

The growth of the various missions of the principal societies is exceedingly interesting and encouraging. Beginning with the Baptists, who were earliest in the field, we find that from 1850 to the present time their converts in all

the missions of the Baptist societies of England and America, in India, Ceylon, and Burmah, have increased from about thirty thousand to upwards of ninety thousand; those of the Basle missions of Germany have multiplied from a thousand to upwards of six thousand; those of the Wesleyan Methodist missions of England and America from seven thousand to upwards of twelve thousand; those of the American Board from three thousand to thirteen thousand; those of the Lutheran Church, belonging to five societies, from four thousand to upwards of forty thousand; those of the Presbyterians of Scotland, England, Ireland, and America, from nine hundred to ten thousand; those of the London Missionary Society from twenty thousand to forty-eight thousand; and those in connection with the Church of England from sixty-one thousand to one hundred and sixty-four thousand.

A steady growth is displayed in all directions. The indirect influence of Christianity in India is as remarkable as the baptism of converts and the formation of Christian communities. The great progress in the enlightenment of the people; the general awakening of thought throughout the entire country; the wonderful transformation native society is undergoing; the yearning after something better than a religion with its myriads of gods can give; the eager desire for a holier and purer faith manifest in many directions—these changes cannot adequately be accounted for except by the spread of Christian principles, which are enlarging the minds, stimulating the conscience, and quickening the religious sense of the people. These are facts which admit of no question or doubt. The steady increase on a high ratio of Christian converts is a matter of statistics, of careful counting, from which there is no appeal. The moral growth of the nation, and the radical changes for the better which are taking place in native society throughout the length and breadth of India, are, as

evidences of improvement and progress, verities from which again no appeal is possible.

Fifty years ago not a Protestant missionary was living within the bounds of the Chinese Empire, though a few were training themselves and gaining experience in its outlying colonies, waiting for the opportunity of entering it, which they were convinced must come. Since then, by various steps, nine provinces of the empire have been occupied by settled missionary stations, and at most important points—the twelve treaty ports—some forty societies have placed bands of missionaries, by whose constant efforts their populations have been brought under careful instruction. As the Chinese themselves maintain schools and desire the education of their children, the direct preaching of the Gospel in the vernacular tongues is the most prominent feature in these evangelistic labours. Under this plan, systematically carried out in fixed places by many workers, English and native, some seventy thousand sermons are preached in China in the course of each single year.

The Scriptures, too, are supplied in ample numbers. No country has so large and so good a supply of sound Christian literature. Itinerancies are numerous, and in recent years the other nine provinces of the empire have been traversed, and in part occupied, by missionaries chiefly of the Inland Mission. Widespread instruction—the leavening of the mass—has been a needful and most important step in these great missions. But God has blessed them also with true converts. Thirteen thousand communicants, in a community of some forty thousand Chinese Christians, are an earnest of the future and a great present gain, and the formation of strong, self-reliant churches, and the increase of native ministers and missionaries, are guarantees that that future will be of the noblest kind. The painful famine in China a few years ago was not without its compensating blessings. The kindness of foreigners produced a profound impression

upon high and low, and thousands of Chinese have, as the result, come nearer to Christ's people to ask about the religion from whence such benevolence springs.

The Rev. W. F. Stevenson, who a year or two ago visited China and closely examined the character of mission work in that country, bears the following testimony to the sincerity of the converts and the stability of the native churches. After speaking of the wonderful results of Christian labour in that land, he says:—"It would be a profound mistake to suppose that such results as I have pointed out are transitory, that the impressions made are shallow, or that those who join the Christian Church are of so indifferent a character that Christianity has been little more to them than a bribe. In a country like China it costs too much for a man to become a Christian to make the advantage that the Protestant missionary can offer him worth having, for that at the most is a salary so small that he would be hard pressed indeed if he could not earn more at his own calling, while it is burdened with a social ostracism and contempt that are bitterly felt; and as for the great bulk of the Christians, they continue in their calling—artizans, farmers, tradesmen, whatever it may be—and with a difficulty in making their livelihood that they never had before.

"The native Christians are often men that have not only taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods, but hazarded their lives for the Gospel. 'They could cut off our heads,' some grave men said to me, 'but they cannot behead Christ.' I found in Amoy an elder of a native church, diligent in Christian work, and earning his living by carving olive stones into the exquisite bracelets that ladies wear; that man had been the best carver of idols in the city. I met a theological tutor, a man of the highest education and culture. He had gone into a barber's shop one day, and this barber makes it a point to speak a word to his cus-

tomers for Christ; so he spoke to him of the Gospel, and dwelt upon the judgment-day, and what he said became the turning-point in that man's life. I have listened to many native sermons, and though there was the serious disadvantage of hearing only through an interpreter, who would kindly whisper sentence by sentence into my ear, yet I have never heard more impressive sermons than some of these were—full of admirable imagery, which was used to illustrate evangelical doctrine; and among the preachers there are men of an originality and eloquence that enables them to sway their audiences as famous preachers sway them here.

“There are noble-minded and nobly-living women there also in all the churches, and I cannot forbear mentioning one whom I met. She came as a patient to a missionary hospital, and as every helper about that hospital is a Christian, it was not long till she heard of Christ, and though she could not bear at first to hear a name that she associated with evil, yet, when after a few months she could leave the institution cured, she was also baptised. For some years her husband closed his house against her, but her unwearied patience and faith prevailed; and first he, and then her son, then other relatives were baptised, until she had led eleven of her kindred to Christ. I have found nowhere in Christian lands men and women of a higher type than I met in China, of a finer spiritual experience, of a higher spiritual tone, or a nobler spiritual life. Where missions shew such fruit they are beyond the impeachment of producing shallow and transitory impressions, and I came away with the conviction that there are in the native churches in China not only the elements of stability, but of that steadfast and irresistible revolution that will carry over the whole empire to the new faith.”

The first Protestant missionaries to Japan were commissioned by American societies, and reached the shores of

that empire in 1859 and 1860. At that time there was not one native of Japan residing in the country, so far as can be ascertained, who knew or imagined that "being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"—not one who believed in Christ as his Saviour. The missionaries found, however, a very different state of society from that which they expected. They found the people, women as well as men, generally able to read and write. Everybody, girls and boys of all classes, had received a fair education. The people were intellectually bright and quick, eager to learn, inquisitive, and readily apprehending new truths and novel facts. The mass of the people are Buddhists. Among all classes there is a high regard for the moral teachings of Confucius and Mencius. There are about fifty missionaries in Japan, representing various societies in this country and in America. Connected with these missions there are about thirty Christian schools for girls and boys, and these institutions are very popular. The holy Scriptures have been translated into Japanese, and thousands of copies distributed to a large extent by sale. The Japanese Christians are very active and zealous, and unusually independent and self-reliant. They accept foreign aid reluctantly, and only because they must. They do not spare themselves in endeavours to extend the knowledge of the truth. An unusually large proportion of the male members of the churches engage in preaching the truth as opportunities present themselves. The amount of Christian literature is as yet limited.

Some tracts have been published, and a monthly newspaper is in circulation. Defences of Christianity from the pens of native Christians, and from men intellectually favourable to Christianity but not connected with the churches, have also been written. No one can tell the future, but the indications at present are that the Church of Christ will have a rapid and vigorous growth amongst

the people of Japan. We may reasonably expect that, if the churches of Christian lands are faithful, the native membership in a generation will embrace tens of thousands of souls.

Christian missions in Burmah began with the late Dr. Judson. He and those who joined him devoted all their time and labour for many years to the evangelisation of the Burmese. Their labours succeeded to a hopeful and encouraging degree, but the chief enlargement of their work was to be in another direction. It was God's plan to call a race who in times past were not a people. The Karens are scattered over all parts of Burmah, and are also found in Upper Siam and Western China. They are generally regarded as belonging to the Caucasian race, though nothing is certainly known concerning their origin. Their name simply signifies *wild men*. They are distinct from the Burmans, and in physical and mental qualities they are inferior to them. They are a subject people, and for generations have been cruelly oppressed by the Burmans. Like other wild men, they are wandering and migratory in their habits, and they generally build their villages at points remote from large Burman communities, that they may escape the cruel exactions which would be otherwise made upon them. Even when the Burmans do not enslave them, they compel them to till their fields and to perform all kinds of menial service. It may be partly from the desire to escape these oppressions that they have fallen into the nomadic life which they pursue.

It would not be correct to say that this interesting people had no religion, but they presented the remarkable spectacle of a people without a priesthood or any established forms of worship. They possessed the knowledge of many revealed truths, which it is supposed must have been derived from the Hebrew Scriptures, or from the same Divine source. They believed that there is one God ; that man was created

in a state of innocence, and fell through transgression at the instigation of a malignant spirit; that the soul is immortal; and that there is a state of future rewards and punishments. Coupled with these fundamental beliefs, there were certain singular national traditions which were carefully transmitted from generation to generation. They were taught that their fathers were the objects of the Divine favour, but that they had forgotten God, and wandered from Him, that they had thus lost the knowledge of His ways, and that all their woes and oppressions were the consequences of the hidings of the Divine face from them. They also had old prophecies of a better day. White teachers were to appear in the fulness of time, who would bring a book which would restore the lost knowledge of God, and through the truth and guidance thus obtained they would again be blessed with His presence and favour.

It was amongst this people that the Gospel was to succeed in a manner almost miraculous. Mr. Boardman baptised at Tavoy a servant of his whom he had redeemed from slavery, and who had given hopeful signs of conversion. He was a Karen, and his name was Ko-Thah-Byu. Though he was not converted till past middle life, and was without culture, he proved one of the most successful preachers of modern times. He knew little more than that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, that He had saved him, and that He will save all that believe in His name. He was the first apostle among his people. He went from village to village and from province to province preaching the Word, the Lord working with him mightily. The people were prepared by the presence of the Spirit as well as by the tendencies of their traditions. Multitudes everywhere turned to the Lord. The American missionaries in connection with the native preachers followed up the work.

The result of all this and of subsequent labours is that hundreds of Christian churches have been formed, and are

served by an efficient body of native pastors and teachers. The number of Karen churches on 1st January 1877 was four hundred and seven. Seventy-one of these churches were served by ordained preachers, the others were under the care of missionaries or of unordained preachers. Two-thirds of these churches maintain Christian schools, in which between four and five thousand children and youths are under instruction. The Karen villages now dotting the surface of British Burmah, whether Christian or heathen, may be counted among the natural results of Karen evangelisation; for the security and prosperity of the Christian settlements have not been without their influence on vast numbers who have not yet received the Gospel. Multitudes are sharers in the temporal benefits of Christianity who have not entered into the blessings of the spiritual life.

The present condition of Christian missions in Polynesia is such as to call forth the liveliest gratitude to God. In that part of the world, including Hawaii, the seven great groups of islands best known to Englishmen have become nominally Christian. In these and their attached groups some four hundred thousand converts, including ninety thousand communicants, have been brought into the Church of Christ. These are largely under the instruction of native pastors paid by themselves. Four aggressive missions are now at work in Western Polynesia, one chief element of which is the strong force which they contain of native missionaries. In most of the older missions Christianity has become a power for good over the people generally. Public morality has become benefited by it. The political, social, and domestic life of the people has to a greater or less extent received a more healthy moral tone. It is generally considered to be respectable to conform, at least outwardly, to the observances of religion. The Sabbath is usually strictly observed. Nearly all the people make a practice of attending public worship at least once on the

Lord's day. Family worship is almost universally observed. Nearly all the people are able to read, and indeed they do read God's word, which they possess in their own languages.

A most interesting mission field is Madagascar. The Jesuits had a mission there in the seventeenth century, and have had influence, more or less, over portions of the island for nearly two hundred years past; but their mission has not produced any permanent effect on the country, and this may be easily accounted for by the fact that they never gave the people the Word of God. They gave them the Lord's Prayer, the *Hail Mary*, the Ten Commandments—with the second, of course, left out—and short portions of the Bible, but they never gave them so much as a single book either of the Old or New Testament.

Protestant missions date from 1820, and the work may be divided into three periods—that of planting the Gospel, that of persecution, and that of progress. The first of these lasted sixteen years, the second twenty-five years, and the last now twenty years. The men who began the work laid the foundations upon which present labourers have been building for several years past. They did a noble work: they reduced the language to writing; they gave the people their own tongue in a written form; they translated and printed the whole Word of God; they gave the people an educational system, provided them with a considerable literature, and taught them many of the useful arts of civilised life. Their labours laid that firm foundation which resisted for twenty-five years all that a heathen queen could do to root religion out of the land. The results are patent to any intelligent and honest traveller who may pass through the country. There are undeniable facts to shew that Christianity is now exerting a real influence upon the social life of the people. It is introducing civilisation and opening up commerce in a way unmistakable to

those who know what the country was a few years ago, and can contrast it with its position at the present time. In 1863 there was not a single European house of business in the capital. Now there are a number of them, and trade is extending largely along the eastern coast. With regard to the clothing, dwellings, and other matters affecting social life, there has been a wonderful advance during the last twelve years.

The tone of morals, too, is greatly improved. The people were very immoral, and are so still where the Gospel is not known. Chastity and purity were almost unknown things; but now, in the central province of Imerina, polygamy may be said to have disappeared. The merciful influence of the Gospel is seen in the abolition of cruel customs and laws. By the old code of laws in force during the time of the persecuting queen, a great number of offences were punished by death, and the wife and family of a delinquent were reduced to slavery. That has all passed away. The law by which soldiers were burned alive for running away in battle is also now a thing of the past. Thus the loving and beneficent influence of the Gospel is doing away with the old cruel habits of the people. Christianity is spreading through a great portion of the country, and it can only be a matter of time for the whole island to be brought to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

About a thousand miles north of New Zealand lie the group of islands called the New Hebrides, extending about three hundred miles from south-east to north-west. Here there is an important mission supported by the Free Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Churches of Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. It has been one of the most difficult mission fields in the South Seas. One great difficulty is the low and degraded state of the natives, all the cruelties and all the abominations of heathenism were found rampant among them; they were ignorant and superstitious in the

extreme, with an unwavering faith in the power of witchcraft. Another difficulty arises from the unhealthiness of the climate. Fever and ague prevail on nearly all the islands. White men and natives of other groups are alike subject to it. In every swamp, in every valley, and in every thicket lurks the invisible, mysterious malaria. A third difficulty is the number of languages. There are not fewer than twenty different languages spoken in the group, every one as different from all the rest as English is from Gaelic, or as Latin is from Greek. And a fourth difficulty is the operation of an unsanctified commerce. The islands are now in danger of being deluged with intoxicating drinks. Referring to the way in which these difficulties have been met, one of the missionaries says:—"We have ascertained to a great extent the laws of health, and can thus ward off a great amount of preventible sickness. We have mastered among us, somewhat fully, nine of the languages, and can thus make known to the natives in their own tongues the way of salvation. The sandal-wood trade is over, and the liquor traffic, though not suppressed, is greatly modified; and to meet the evils of the *foreign* knaves, as the natives call alcoholic drinks, all our twelve missionaries are total abstainers."

The large island of New Guinea is now creating a considerable amount of interest in the commercial and scientific worlds; and both from its size and from its proximity to Australia—from which it is only separated by Torres Straits—and from its probable mineral wealth, it must come to occupy an important place in the consideration of all men. To the Christian philanthropist, above all, it is a country of great interest. The population of New Guinea is composed of an immense number of races, among whom the London Missionary Society have within the last ten years begun evangelising labour. Mr. Lawes, one of the leaders in this work, thus describes the field:—"Our mission extends from

Ule Island to the eastern extremity of New Guinea ; and even there we have an immense admixture of races, though all of them I believe, from their appearance, from their customs, and from their condition and languages, belong to the Malayo Polynesian family. We have a great number of sub-divisions among them. When I tell you that I know of twenty-five different languages spoken on the three hundred miles of coast with which I am acquainted, you will form some idea of how New Guinea is split up and divided. We find the people in a primitive state, which we almost fancy in this nineteenth century had become totally extinct. We find there the old lake villages, and there is still the stone age in full operation. I know of no vessel, implement, tool, or weapon made of metal which they employ. It is the stone age yet, and everything else agrees with this.

“Morally, we find what we should expect—viz., the people low and degraded, but by no means so much so as those we have had to do with in some other parts of the world where they are now Christians. Liars, thieves, and murderers they are ; but it is not the existence of these things that causes one so much surprise as the utter absence of anything like what may be called a tone of public opinion by which these vices could be at all stigmatised or the evil-doer be disgraced. They would unblushingly bring back the goods they have stolen from you, and offer them for sale, without even an atom of shame. Religiously, the darkness is darkness which can be felt but cannot be described.”

Of the methods the missionaries employ to alter this state of things, Mr. Lawes thus speaks :—“I have had personally sufficient experience during eleven years’ residence on Savage Island, in the South Pacific, to know where we ought to begin. Men who never tried the experiment may believe in civilising agencies. But we who have tried them may be pardoned if we decline to try the experiment over

again. The very agencies that are depended upon we find to be fruitless. Clothe the natives, and they do not know how to use clothes. I have given them a good Birmingham hatchet, and had it returned rather than they would give up their stone ones. If there is no hope for them without civilisation and civilising agencies, then the salvation of New Guinea I believe to be hopeless. But my experience amongst tribes and races such as these warrants me in believing strongly that with them also the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. In the early days of a mission like that of New Guinea, very little dependence can be placed on oral teaching. I believe strongly, more strongly now than ever, in the power of a consistent Christian life."

Let us pass from New Guinea to the West Indies. The population of the twelve following islands and their dependencies — viz., Jamaica, the Bahamas, the Virgin Isles, Antigua, Montserrat, Barbadoes, St. Vincent's, Grenada, Tobago, Trinidad, and Dominica, amounts to something above one million. The first settlers in the chief of these islands were members of the Church of England, and that form of the Christian faith was established in them. Its spiritual labours were, however, mainly confined to the Europeans or planters, and only in rare cases was any attempt made to instruct the slave either in secular knowledge or in Christianity. The Moravians were the first religious body to visit the West Indies in 1734, and in the island of St. Thomas they commenced their self-denying efforts to give the oppressed negro the comfort of the words of eternal life. In 1778 the Wesleyans opened their very successful labours in the West Indies in Antigua, and in 1814 the Baptist Missionary Society sent its first missionary to Jamaica. If much had not been done by the Church of England towards the evangelising of the slaves, it must be remembered that the malign genius of the system of slavery

was adverse to the attempt. In fact, whatever Christian agencies existed, they were of the most meagre sort. Only here and there did a planter or a converted free negro put forth any efforts to bring the slaves under Christian instruction.

Utterly neglected, without the opportunity or the means of learning, the negroes for the most part practised the fetishism of their native land, and were sunk in the most degrading lusts and superstitions. Marriage was scarcely known amongst them. The constant sales of the slave-stock of the estates broke up every family tie that had been formed. Concubinage with all its evils became the normal practice of the people, and its mischief invaded the home of their better-instructed masters. Then came the struggle for freedom. It was long and severe, but ended at length in emancipation. The munificent gift of twenty millions sterling by the British Parliament set every slave free. With freedom came the fullest opportunity for the play of moral and Christian agencies, devoted to the social and religious elevation of the emancipated people.

Since emancipation, the West Indian Colonies have experienced great fluctuations; nevertheless there has been great progress. Education has been largely promoted, especially so in Jamaica. This is greatly owing to the hearty co-operation of the missionaries. On this point we may take the remarks of the inspector of schools in Jamaica as generally applicable throughout the British West Indies. He says the Government system "has enlisted the sympathy and hearty co-operation of the most influential men of the community—viz., the ministers of all the religious societies in the island. To their valuable assistance as school-managers must be attributed in a great measure the success that has attended the carrying out of the system." Since emancipation, too, the means of public worship have very largely increased. From reliable sources, it appears that fully one quarter of the

population may be regarded as regular frequenters of the means of grace supplied by the various denominations. It is not possible to estimate with accuracy how many of the hearers of the Gospel are actually in full communion with the churches. It may, however, be safely affirmed that at least eighty-five thousand individuals observe the great eucharistic ordinance of the Christian Church.

We must not omit from this sketch the efforts of American Christians in the Ottoman Empire. When the attention of American Christians was first turned to the Ottoman Empire as a field for missionary effort, it included, with its tributary provinces, portions of three continents. It combined the greatest variety of soil and climate; it stretched across the highways of the world's commerce, and embraced in its wide domain the earliest seats of civilisation and the scenes of greatest interest recorded in secular and sacred history. It presented to the world a most remarkable conglomerate of races, languages, and religions, without sympathy one with another, all subject to an unenlightened and often barbarous despotism. It had a population in all estimated at thirty-five millions, of whom about twelve millions were known as Christian descendants for the most part of those who, in the early days of the Church, had accepted the Gospel. Degenerated, degraded, sunk in ignorance and superstition, they were yet holding fast to the Christian name, to which, though with little sense of its spiritual import, they had clung through centuries of oppression. It was to this empire, the head and front of the Mahommedan world, long the deadly and unrelenting foe of the Gospel of Christ, that the American Board sent their first missionaries nearly sixty years ago.

Ever since its first establishment this mission has continued to grow and prosper. It is now represented by one hundred and thirty-two devoted men and women from the churches and best institutions of learning in America; by

over five hundred native preachers and teachers in active service ; by ninety-two churches, with a membership of over five thousand ; by twenty higher institutions of learning—colleges, seminaries, and boarding-schools—with an attendance of over eight hundred youth of both sexes ; by three hundred common schools, with an attendance of over eleven thousand ; by two hundred and eighty-five places of worship scattered as so many light-centres through the land, from the Balkans to the Bosphorus, and from the Bosphorus to the Tigris, where Sabbath after Sabbath over twenty-five thousand men and women are gathered to listen to the Gospel message ; by the Scriptures, in the various languages of the people, now distributed by tens of thousands of copies ; and a Christian literature, from Sabbath-school lesson papers up to elaborate volumes on the evidences of religion and the history of the Church—all now confirmed by the living examples of the power of the Gospel. These are the moral forces now brought into the field, the heritage of the patient labours and prayers of American Christians of the past sixty years.

Then there is the Indian Archipelago. There are at present about fifty Dutch missionaries at work belonging to eight different societies, and scattered almost over the whole archipelago—on Sumatra, Java, Bali, Celebes, Almaheira, and some smaller islands. In the Minnahassa, forming a part of the Island of Celebes, of a population of about one hundred and fourteen thousand, upwards of eighty thousand are converts to the Christian faith, or form, as children, parts of Christian families. Heathenism has in consequence lost there its signification and its influence. No less than two hundred congregations are under the care of the missionaries and of twenty-two native evangelists ; and there are a hundred and twenty-five schools, the teachers of which are at the same time catechists. In consequence, civilisation has reached a comparatively high degree. The schools and

churches are regularly visited by children and adults decently dressed; and it is a delight to see how order and prosperity reign everywhere. From an ignorant, superstitious, abject population, divided by hostilities and feuds, they have grown into a nation, feeling that they have the same interest, that they are sons and daughters of the same country, many of them sons and daughters of the Most High God. Family life has a new aspect; husband and wife no longer leaving each other for the slightest reason, live together in harmony and care for their children. Whereas formerly numerous families lived together in large barracks built upon high poles, difficult of access for fear of the attacks of neighbouring tribes, now every family lives in its own cottage, neatly built, open to any visitor, where the missionary is received with decency and delight.

There are many other smaller fields of missionary labour, every one presenting its own peculiar features of interest and importance. Among the Indian tribes of North America, once thought so dull and hopeless, whether on the North-West Coast, scattered over the broad plains of Manitoba, or settled on the Reserves of the United States, many thousands of converts have been gathered, and in some of these tribes there are no heathen left. There are missionaries among the Afghans, in Ceylon, in Greenland, in Patagonia—almost every country of the habitable globe. They are wonderfully and wisely located; they are settled at the most important points in the wider realms open to their efforts. They are exerting a moral influence—are making spiritual impressions, and are breaking down the ancient heathen religions with a power infinitely greater than the churches which maintain them are at all aware. One fact of supreme moment must be stated here, and should be borne in mind, that in connection with all this Christian effort the holy Scriptures are at the present time printed and read in two hundred and twenty-six

modern languages, and that from the importance of many of those tongues, such as English and German, French and Russ, Bengali and Chinese, those Scriptures have now become available to three-fourths of the population of the globe.

We see from the foregoing sketch of Christian missions throughout the world that there has been progress—rapid, great, encouraging progress. And yet the evangelising of the world, rightly viewed, is to be looked upon rather as a work which has been and yet is retarded, than as a work progressing rapidly toward completion—as a work which ought long since to have been done, but which has been and yet is unworthily delayed. How strange that after eighteen hundred years, with the known will of Christ that His Gospel should be everywhere proclaimed, and with the facilities afforded in every age for doing that work, it should still be true, that the world—the great preponderating mass of mankind—still lieth in wickedness. To use the words of John Foster: “Christianity, after labouring for eighteen centuries, is at the present hour known, and even nominally acknowledged, by very greatly the minority of the race, the mighty mass remaining prostrate under the infernal dominion of which countless generations of their ancestors have been the slaves and victims—a deplorable majority of the people in the Christian nations strangers to the vital power of Christianity, and a large proportion directly hostile to it, while its progress in the work of conversion, in even the most favoured part of the world, is distanced by the progressive increase of the population.”

When we consider the earnestness of Christ's command, the largeness of His promise, the wisdom and munificence of His arrangements, and the intensity of His desires in respect to the conversion of the world, we can find a solution of the painful mystery of its delay only in some hindrance on the part of those who are commissioned to fulfil the mighty plan.

The kingdom of Christ has been retarded in various ways by the social and political condition of the world. And yet Christianity would have proved itself ere this to be the great reforming power in the political and the social institutions of men, had not its influence been crippled and arrested by some other cause than those institutions themselves. The full power of Christianity in opposition to all false systems of religion, of government, and of social organisation, has not yet been proved; for the condition of the exercise of that power—namely, a lively Christian faith, imparting vitality and efficiency to the appointed instrument of the work, has not been fulfilled on the part of the Church.

There are several fundamental facts involved in the missionary enterprise in respect to which there is a large amount of scepticism in the Church. There is scepticism with respect to the actual condition of the heathen world. That the heathen are for the most part in a state of deep moral and social degradation is beginning to be generally understood. Their true condition was long hidden from Christian people. Mere secular travellers gave us entertaining accounts of the manners and customs of different nations, with occasional outlines of their philosophical tenets or their religious belief, and sketches of their sacred places and institutions and modes of worship; but they seldom described the general state of morals, or held up to reprobation their prevailing vices and crimes. Commercial residents in heathen lands generally visit them for a single object—the purpose of gain; they seldom contemplate a permanent residence; they commonly acquire but a superficial knowledge of the language, the literature, the religion and the morals of the country. It was not till Christian missionaries went among the heathen that the moral state of the world became truly known. That state is one not merely of degradation, but also of guilt. Only in proportion as we believe this shall we earnestly seek to save the heathen. There is scepticism in some minds

as to God's purpose to have the world evangelised and converted to Himself. Admitting that the heathen are in a state of guilt and condemnation, and on that account are proper objects for Christian sympathy and effort, it is still questioned by some whether the plan of redemption in its final results comprehends the conversion of the world at large. Scepticism in respect to missionary work is further developed in doubts and queries as to the proper time for attempting to evangelise the world. Some contend that the world must be civilised before we attempt to spread the Gospel, and others that Christ's second advent must precede such an event. Then there is another topic in connection with the missionary enterprise, respecting which there is not a little scepticism in the Church, that is the practicability of evangelising the world at all by any known instrumentalities.

Such scepticism paralyses the arm of the church. If one is in doubt whether the heathen would really be benefited by the Gospel—if he does not feel that they are in perishing need of it—of course he will do little or nothing to send it to them. If one is in doubt whether God really intends to accomplish the conversion of the world to Himself, whether it is His will that the Gospel should be everywhere propagated, of course he will scarcely make an attempt to evangelise the world. If one is in doubt whether this is the time for engaging in this work, he will not engage in it heartily, if at all. If one has little confidence in the present means, he will act with little energy or keep aloof from such impracticable schemes. Thus the work is crippled on every hand by unbelief. Unbelief, besides restraining the energies of the Church, incapacitates those who indulge it for appreciating the work of the Lord, and for rendering Him the glory which is His due. Viewed as a check upon Christian activity, unbelief is without doubt one of the great hindrances to the missionary work.

Such unbelief is unreasonable and wicked. Look at the

course of providence in relation to the missionary enterprise, especially of recent years. In no period of the history of Christianity has the providence of God been more marked than of late years in its bearing on the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. What facilities we have for communication with all parts of the world, and with what security missionaries can now labour in almost any part of the globe! How has the British Empire, like the Roman Empire of old, made a highway among the nations and across the seas for the advance of Christianity! How large a portion of the globe appears to be placed by Providence at the disposal of Christendom! God is indicating to His people their duty, and also His readiness to do mighty works by their instrumentality. What is needed and what is warranted, so that the Gospel may be preached "in the regions beyond," is an increase of faith. And this increase of faith all Christians should seek to obtain.

One wise and important method for strengthening faith in missionary operations is to make ourselves familiar with them. Read the letters and statements of missionaries; the Reports of missionary societies; the lives of such men as John Williams, Adoniram Judson, William Burns, Robert Moffat; or if there be an objection to missionary literature as one-sided and partial, then we might take the testimony of competent independent witnesses—such as that given by Commander Hood in his "Cruise of H.M.S. *Fawn*." Speaking of what he saw in the Samoan group of islands, he says that the "rigid observance of Sunday presents a rather humiliating contrast with its profanation in more favoured regions. Our amusements were suddenly suspended by hearing the master of the house commence singing the evening hymn, in which most of the assembly, taking their books out of their waistcloths, joined; and we removing our hats also, added our voices to the best of our ability, hymn-books being handed to us. The psalm finished,

our host made a long extempore prayer, the Lord's prayer concluding the service. It certainly was a striking scene—half-a-dozen unarmed Englishmen sitting here in the midst of a crowd of half-naked islanders, and receiving a lesson of this kind from people so lately designated 'ferocious savages.'

Take again the testimony of Mr. Thompson, who, during his eight years' residence at the Cape of Good Hope, travelled much in the interior, and who was neither a missionary nor connected with any missionary society. He says:—"Having now visited the whole of the missionary stations in Southern Africa, it may not be improper to express in a few words the opinion I have formed regarding them. I may safely affirm that, at every missionary station I have visited, instruction in the arts of civilised life, and in the knowledge of pure and practical religion, go hand-in-hand. It is true that among the more savage tribes of Bushmen, Korannas, and Bechuanas the progress of the missions has hitherto been exceedingly slow and circumscribed. But persons who have visited these tribes, and are best qualified to appreciate the difficulties to be surmounted in instructing and civilising them, will, if they are not led away by prejudice, be far more disposed to admire the exemplary fortitude, patience, and perseverance of the missionaries than to speak of them with contempt and contumely.

"These devoted men are found in the remotest deserts, accompanying the wild and wandering savages from place to place, destitute of almost every comfort, and at times without even the necessaries of life. Some of them have, without murmuring, spent their whole lives in such service. Let those who consider missions as idle or unavailing visit Gnadenthal, Bethelsdorp, Theopolis, the Caffre Stations, Griqua Town, Kamiesberg, etc.; let them view what *has* been effected at these institutions for tribes of the nations,

oppressed, neglected, or despised by every other class of men of Christian name; and if they do not find all accomplished which the world had perhaps too sanguinely anticipated, let them fairly weigh the obstacles that have been encountered before they venture to pronounce an unfavourable decision.

“For my own part, utterly unconnected as I am with missionaries or missionary societies of any description, I cannot in candour and justice withhold from them my humble meed of applause for their labours in Southern Africa. They have without question been in this country not only the devoted teachers of our holy religion to the heathen tribes, but also the indefatigable pioneers of discovery and civilisation. Nor is their character unappreciated by the natives. Averse as they still are in many places to receive a religion, the doctrines of which are too pure and benevolent to be congenial to hearts depraved by selfish and vindictive passions, they are yet everywhere friendly to the missionaries, eagerly invite them to reside in their territories, and consult them in all their emergencies. Such is the impression which the disinterestedness, patience, and kindness of the missionaries have, after long years of labour and difficulty, decidedly made even upon the wildest and fiercest of the South African tribes with whom they have come in contact; and this favourable impression, where more has not been achieved, is of itself a most important step towards full and ultimate success.”

Take the testimony of four Governors of India. Lord Napier says:—“The progress of Christianity is slow, but it is undeniable. Every year sees the area and the number slightly increase. The advance of Christianity has at all times been marked by occasional fitful and spasmodic movements in India. The present period is one of moderate progression, but it does not include the expectation of rapid and contagious expansions such as were witnessed in the

sixteenth century in Malabar and Madina, in the last century in Tanjore, and more recently among the Shanars of the South. In conclusion, I must express my deep sense of the importance of missions as a general civilising agency in the south of India. Imagine all these establishments suddenly removed, how great would be the vacancy! Would not the Government lose valuable auxiliaries? The weakness of European agency in this country is a frequent matter of wonder and complaint; but how much weaker would this element of good appear if the mission was obliterated from the scene." "In many places," says Sir Donald Macleod, "an impression prevails that the missions have not produced results adequate to the efforts which have been made; but there is no real foundation for this impression, and those who hold such opinions know but little of the reality." This is the testimony of Sir Bartle Frere:—"I speak simply as to matters of experience and observation, and not of opinion—just as a Roman prefect might have reported to Trajan or the Antonines; and I assure you that, whatever you may be told to the contrary, the teaching of Christianity among one hundred and sixty millions of civilised, industrious Hindoos and Mahommedans in India is effecting changes, moral, social, and political, which for extent and rapidity of effect are far more extraordinary than anything you or your fathers have witnessed in modern Europe." Lastly, there is the testimony of Lord Lawrence, Viceroy and Governor-General:—"I believe," he says, "notwithstanding all that the English people have done to benefit India, the missionaries have done more than all agencies combined."

Christian people should make themselves familiar with testimonies such as these, and then when men whose worldly interests, or whose habits of life, cause them to look with an unfriendly eye on the missions of the Church, or men who have never troubled to inform themselves concerning them,

seek to shake their faith in their usefulness, or to restrain their efforts in their promotion, that faith will be found firm as an immovable rock.

Faith in Christian missions may be strengthened by considering the universal adaptation of Christianity to the state and needs of mankind. It is suited to man as man in all parts of the world. There is nothing local in its nature or requirements. It is not circumscribed by any geographical limits. Its ideas may be expressed in all languages. It can exist under all forms of government. It will accord with all systems of sound philosophy. Its converts exist in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. In its entire harmony with the condition, needs, character, instincts, aspirations, and capabilities of our common humanity, who can fail to see that it is God's provision for the world?

Faith in Christian missions is, moreover, to be strengthened by considering the commission of Christ to His church—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." This commission remains imperative in all its original force. Whatever may be the result of the proclamation of the Gospel, though not one to whom it is preached should accept it, the command of Christ Jesus binds His followers to make it known. Duty calls, and it is at our peril we neglect the call. He who speaks to us speaks with authority. He has a right to order us to any service He may require, and by our profession of discipleship we are held to implicit obedience. Obedience to Christ's command is rendered dear to us by gratitude. He who speaks is our Redeemer. We are not our own, for He has bought us with a price—even the price of His own blood. Standing by our Lord's side on Olivet as He issues His great commission, we remember Bethlehem and Nazareth—we have Gethsemane and Calvary before our eyes; and while His words come to us as a royal edict, they also come as the last request of our dearest friend. Obedience to Christ's com-

mand is in a special manner devolved upon British Christians. Our physical and mental qualities, our national training for centuries past, the immense and ever increasing wealth in our possession, the character of our political and religious institutions, the vast territories we own and the many millions of people over whom we exercise rule, our commercial relationships with all the nations of the earth, and our missionary history and experience for the last hundred years—all are designed by God to fit us to carry out the purposes of His mercy to a perishing world.

Christians should strengthen their faith in missionary work by the recollection of the declared purpose and promise of God. It is His purpose that the Gospel should be preached to all nations. He indicates this purpose by prophecy—by such predictions as declare that the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord—as the waters cover the sea; that it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it; that the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

An increase of faith in missionary operations will ensure their more rapid growth and success. It will do this in several ways. There will be deeper compassion for the heathen—a truer sympathy with them in their wretched condition. Spiritual wretchedness—the loss and misery of the soul without God and goodness, under the power and exposed to the penalty of sin, is worse than anything else a man can endure. And if we look at this miserable state of man without Christ—having no hope and without God in the world—if we look at it till the sight becomes clear to us in all its truth and reality, then the salvation of these lost ones will become our heart's great desire.

With an increase of faith there will be a rising up of

men to preach the Gospel to the heathen, sufficient supply of funds to send them forth, and an increase of earnest prayer for the blessing of God to give success to the work. With all this there will be the seeking out of new fields for effort. Many parts of the world, as we have already seen, are occupied. In India, in China, in Japan, on the coasts of Africa, and in the interior, in various parts of America, in Australasia, in the islands of the sea, east and west, north and south, the missionaries of the cross are to be found. But large tracts of the earth remain unvisited. With an increase of faith these will be occupied too. The various sections of the Church will search them out, and divide them among themselves, as waste places of the earth to be reclaimed and cultivated, till they blossom and bear fruits of righteousness like the garden of the Lord; and this will go on till there shall not be a tribe of mankind to whom the Gospel shall be an unknown sound. Then shall God's way be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations.





DRAGON TREE



LOCUST



BANANA TREE



MUSHROOM SHAPED  
HILLS OF THE WHITE ANT



AFRICAN BULL FROG