

THE MISSIONARY HERALD.

ANNUAL MEETING, THURSDAY, MAY 1.

The sixty-fourth annual meeting was held on Thursday, in the large room, Exeter Hall; the Hon. A. KINNAIRD, M.P., in the chair. The great room was well filled.

The proceedings were commenced with singing, and prayer was offered by Rev. B. Evans of Scarborough.

The CHAIRMAN then said,—My Christian friends, the importance of the subject which draws us together this day is of a magnitude which cannot be over-estimated. We are called to consider eternity, and those who are to spend, as we trust, a never-ending eternity with Christ; and surely that should impress us with the value of souls, if we consider the value only of one soul, rescued from Satan and reclaimed for God, and we learn that there is joy in the presence of angels over that soul. This is not an exaggerated statement; it is not even an inference from Scripture; it is positively and plainly proclaimed in the Word of the living God. And then if we think of the eight hundred millions of souls in whose behalf we are met together, and remember that perhaps some two hundred millions of these souls are our fellow-subjects, surely we may have our hearts drawn towards them. We can scarcely conceive the importance of the subject of missions when we consider these perishing millions; and I say that if the very angels were struck with amazement at the love of God in sending His son to die for us, what must they think of the dreadful apathy of those who, knowing that they had been redeemed, and having even some experimental knowledge of the love of God for them, are so slow to communicate the blessed message of salvation to others? It is on account of this apathy that it is necessary for Christians to gather together, as we do on this day, to stir up one another, and to try and quicken our zeal and warm our hearts in this most blessed cause. Now, it is the privilege of the chairman to have access to the report before it is read to you, and I have often noticed that chairmen have availed themselves of that privilege to cull almost all its interesting parts; so that if I were to adopt that plan, the report of our excellent friend near me might fall with less interest on our ears. I think that our time is far too precious; and I would infinitely prefer being as one of you, listening and learning, and I trust deriving profit from that report. But

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I may congratulate you, and I do most earnestly, that your society was the very earliest organised in the field of missions. That is an inestimable honour put upon you; and I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to the members of this society, that they made India a noble dependency, the brightest jewel, I may say, in the British crown. I am sure no reflecting mind can look upon that vast empire, without seeing that the hand of God has been visible, in giving a small, associated body of gentlemen, to win so important a territory; and we may believe that it was given to us, not merely to add to the wealth of our country, but as a great trust, that we may occupy the field, and through the blessing of God be the means of overspreading it with Christianity. And thank God we can now see the progress of the gospel manifestly in that country. May we not then,—may you not, especially,—look back with gratitude to the fact, that from your society emanated such noble-minded missionaries as Carey, and Marshman, and Ward—who have gained for themselves imperishable renown, and have, if I may use the expression, smoothed the way for the missionary of the present day. I do earnestly hope that your early labours in India will be vigorously followed up. Our Christian brethren there tell us that the harvest, indeed, 'is plenteous, but that the labourers are few; and I trust at this time, when we are approaching a day in which we shall unite together in special thanksgiving to Almighty God, we will earnestly pray that it may please Him to send labourers, especially to that vast field of India. I am thankful to say, with reference to that distinguished nobleman who is about to leave the government of India, that it will ever be to his honour, that his last act was for ever to disconnect the government of India from the abomination of connection with idolatry. I do, also, most cordially congratulate you on the large Christian spirit which has animated your missionaries in India and elsewhere. Whatever may be our little divisions at home, they are not known there. It is a very blessed thing to reflect, that there, at all events, there is a large-hearted brotherly love, which leaps over all the narrow distinctions about mere secondary points, and that there our missionaries, be they of whatever denomination, are acting together as

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one man; and I trust that here, and there, and everywhere, that large-hearted spirit will become still more general; for I believe that it will be a blessed day for the mighty cause when these divisions are no longer thought of, and all act as one united phalanx against the great enemy of mankind.

The Rev. F. TRESTRAIL, the Secretary, read the report, which appeared in the previous *Herald*.

The Rev. ISAAC LORD, of Ipswich, spoke to the following sentiment:—

“That this meeting has heard with thankfulness, from the report now read, of the general prosperity of the Baptist Mission; and would urge on all its friends the need of greater effort to extend its operations, especially in India, where missionaries are so much needed to carry to its benighted tribes and nations the glad tidings of salvation.”

The note which this sentiment calls upon me to strike is not the note of regret, on account of disappointment and failure; it is not the note of sorrow, on account of disasters or calamities that might have fallen upon our missionary field; it is not the note of lamentation, on account of the present position and prospects of our society; but it is the note of praise and of thanksgiving to God, on account of general prosperity. If God has been pleased to give us prosperity, it is most meet and befitting that at the very commencement of a meeting like this we should with lowliest feelings of prostration and liveliest feelings of gratitude render to Him a tribute of praise. Nor should the losses we have sustained at home during the past year diminish that gratitude. We mourn over the loss of their presence and their help; but the manner in which they lived and died should create elements of still deeper thankfulness. They have taught us the inherent goodness of our cause, by their deliberate and intelligent choice of it, and by their persevering attachment to it; they have taught us how to serve it, by their examples of labour and of benevolence; they have taught us the blessedness of so doing, by their peaceful deaths; and being dead they still speak, and the voice comes to us as a voice of mingled admonition and consolation, telling us that whatever our hands may find to do, we must do it with our might, and that “blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.” There is another point in the report, of a very painful kind. It presents an aspect that is dark and distressing; but there is a bright side even to that question. I refer to the lapse of many of our professors in native churches into ungodliness and sin. We must mourn over their lapse into ungodliness; but we rejoice in their expulsion from those churches; it bears testimony to their inherent life and spiritual power; it argues, on their part, a deep reverence to the authority of Jesus Christ and His laws, and a salutary concern for their own moral reputation, when churches are

found flinging away the companionship of the unworthy and unclean; and when they do this in native societies, rather than throw the shield of protection over the heads of those who deserve scriptural and just censure, this certainly ought to establish our confidence and call forth our praise. But this may seem something like extorting matter for praise out of the report, in spite of itself almost; and, therefore, I will go to matters for thankfulness, in reference to which there will not be the appearance either of ingenuity or torture in turning them to this account. Take the single fact, that during the past year, with one solitary exception, the society has not lost by death one of its agents. Now, when we remember the dangers to which our missionaries are exposed, the various liabilities which surround them, the journeys which they have to take, the unhealthy climes in which they have to breathe, and the wearing and exhausting nature of their toils, I think we can see in that single fact a striking illustration of the kindness and the care of the providence of Him in whom we live and move and have our being. Many of our missionaries have been sick, some of them have changed their localities, some have come home in order to recruit their energies; but not one, with the exception named, has been permitted to fall beneath the shaft of the great destroyer. May the same providence preserve them through the present year! Or, if any of them should fall, may they fall with their armour on, shouting victory even in death! Then, again, sir, there is another thing which calls for praise I think, from this assembly, and I refer to the wonderful spirit of unity which has been manifested between missionaries of all societies during the past year. How those differences by which we are distinguished at home must dwindle in the estimate of these missionaries when they confront together the dark and dread realities of paganism! And to discuss those differences how much more like trifling and wasting time it must seem to them than it can to us, when they have to present the simple gospel of Jesus Christ to men and women in moral and spiritual circumstances like those. I have sometimes thought if the spirit of bigotry were not itself a disqualification for the work, that the best thing we could do with a bigoted Christian would be to make a missionary of him, and he would have to be tightly laced, and strongly laced indeed, if the work did not cure him. Many are the benefits which the churches at home have received from the churches abroad; and I believe that it will not be one of the least of those benefits, if these missionaries teach us, among other things, the great lesson that it is possible to come together and consult and co-operate in forming and carrying out plans for missionary purposes, without either being hindered

by or giving up the distinctive principles by which we are distinguished. And, sir, let us therefore see that we have grace enough and charity enough to rejoice in the prosperity of every society, and in the fact that strongholds are demolished, by whatever division of the great army of God's church these strongholds may be overthrown. And then think of the fact, which you have just heard, of brother Saker coming home from Africa, and bringing in his hands a translation of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, beautifully printed and neatly bound; and when we ask by whom the work is done, we are told, by lads in connexion with the missionary establishment. The missionary goes to the country, and reduces the language for the first time into a written form; he makes a grammar, and a dictionary, and a book; and, sir, I think in doing all this he is doing a greater work than the conquest of an empire, and a work that will immortalize his name, while some other names are forgotten. These books are bound by lads in connexion with the establishment, who were a little time since ignorant barbarians. But what are they now? Members of the church of Christ, intelligent artisans, itinerants for preaching the gospel amongst their fellow-countrymen. From my heart, I say, heaven bless the lads, and find them plenty of employment in printing the gospel, and give them abundant success in proclaiming its truths to their fellow-countrymen. Then, sir, there was a reference made to the educational operations of the society. I know this is a ticklish question; I know that great doctors and great men differ about this matter; but, whatever I may say, of course you understand that I am personally responsible for it and not the society. Well, you have been abundantly blessed in your educational operations during the year. Schools have been multiplied, operations have been extended, delightful results have been already brought to pass. I am not surprised to hear that your missionaries find it one of the best ways of getting at the hearts of Indian mothers by beginning with the young ones; it is so in England, and human nature is the same all the world over; if it were not, I should really begin to think that there was some truth in those bold speculations which will have it that God has *not* made of one blood all nations for to dwell upon the face of the earth. And if God has given his smile to educational work, what right have we to draw back from using that machinery? I think, sir, that we have plenty of ground for gratitude to God in connexion with our society during the past year. But my sentiment speaks likewise of a claim, or a call, for more extended effort, in order to enlarge our operations, more especially in the east. Gratitude is a noble passion; but it is a poor thing when it evaporates in words. If, therefore, you feel gratitude on account of what

has been done by the society during the past year, we ask you as a matter of consistency to give a practical illustration of that gratitude by your present and future efforts in its behalf. Look, sir, at the facts of the case. I am told that in Bengal, in the north-west provinces, in Bombay,—the missionaries connected with all the societies will not be found more abundant than would be one missionary for a place like Liverpool, or Manchester, or Glasgow. I am told again that there is a population within the places I have specified, amongst which not a single missionary of any society is found, equal to about the entire population of the British Isles. In the presence of an overwhelming fact like this, I feel as if it would be a grand impertinence to introduce terms of rhetoric, flights of fancy, or figures of speech,—as no more able to help us to an idea of the morally grand, sublime fact itself, than are the shifting shadows to help us to an idea of the everlasting mountains upon which they play. And, sir, in the presence of this fact, what are we doing for India? If the cry of these millions could be articulated and uttered in a tone commensurate with the nature and demand of the case, that cry would pierce and thrill every church in Britain. If the moral condition of these millions could be adequately conceived, the pure conception would horrify our thoughts by day, and trouble our dreams by night; and in the sight of these millions, darkened, sinking, suffering, dying eternally, what are we doing as an expression of our gratitude to apply the remedy,—the *only* remedy that can reach and save them? We be unto us, and we be unto Britain, if we give not to these millions the gospel of Jesus Christ! Why is it that, with all the contributions of the various societies, not £20,000 a-year are subscribed by all our denomination? It is no disgrace, but an honour, that the poor of this world abound in our churches, and that those churches are doing a great deal to support a self-clected and permanent pastorate; but after we have made every fair allowance on these grounds, I think the discrepancy between our contributions and those of our brethren is greater than ought to exist. Think of the antecedents of our society; call to mind the names of Carey, Marshman, and Ward, in the east; of Knibb and Burchell, in the west; of Fuller, Pearce, Sutcliffe, and Ryland, at home; call to mind our numerical strength as baptists of all grades and parties, and recollect that we have been foremost and most strenuous in the advocacy of the principle by which all missionary operations have been mainly carried on—the principle of voluntarism,—and I am amazed that amongst all classes of baptists we cannot reach £20,000 a-year. How is this? I am not here as an accuser of my brethren; it is not because our people are less thoughtful,

or affectionate, or sympathetic, naturally, than others. I believe we are injured and affected by the various peculiarities into which we are divided. I can respect the consciences from which these differences come, and honour them; but look at the consequences. These differences give rise to diversified organizations; these organizations come to look with shyness upon one another; and instead of our all pulling together for the accomplishment of this grand object, we find it impossible to pull together at all in some cases. It would be a glorious thing if every section, if baptists of all grades, in the presence of the one great, commanding, sublime claim of the heathen world, would just make up their minds to leave their differences down below, and unite in one simple, uniform, and grand organization for the purpose of securing the evangelization of the world. And, sir, there is another thing, and I hope I shall not vex anybody,—I really do not mean to do it,—but I believe many of our churches are poisoned and paralyzed by the influence of hyper-Calvinism. They may not deny the claims of the heathen in so many words, but practically it comes to the same thing. Speculating upon the decrees of God, upon the *modus operandi* of the Eternal Spirit, upon the nature and extent of the atonement of Christ, their intellects are bewildered, their judgments are warped, their consciences are damaged, their feelings are deadened; and many of those churches that do contribute, in consequence of these things, do it half-heartedly, and many never do it all. Now, sir, I could find you churches whose members, if a minister were to go from this platform and preach to them the simple truth on this question of responsibility with regard to the people that have not the gospel of Christ, would look at this brother with a sort of puzzled, bewildered expression, as much as to say, "Pray, sir, what new gospel is this?" I should say to such a brother, "No new gospel at all, it is as old as the New Testament, as old as that statement of Jesus, 'Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'" And I would like to say to those brethren affectionately, and not censoriously at all, speculate on the decrees of God if you please, upon the work of the Spirit if you please, upon the nature and extent of the atonement if you please, keeping within the bounds of sobriety and of scripture, but your speculations are not merely useless, they are awfully pernicious, if they weaken your sense of the duty which Christ has himself laid upon your conscience to give the gospel to others, and if they deaden your sympathies with the condition of a lost and ruined world. Then, sir, so far as my observation is concerned, I think that these other societies generally excel us in securing efficient deputations. "Well," some people say, "let us have done with deputations altogether; let

the churches work, let them be independent of foreign aid and of all these periodical excitements;" but I say, in answer to that, "All very beautiful and very good, as the Scotch people would say, in the abstract; but, sir, we must just work with people as we find them." We may be inclined to adopt some such plan as that, if it be necessary, in the millennium; but now we must, like practical folks, bring business habits and practical business sense, into alliance with our religious organization; and we must adopt and carry out that mode of operation which will bring the best and largest results. I do hope, from what we heard yesterday, and from what we shall hear this morning, that we shall be sent away to our respective spheres of life and of labour, with the solemn, earnest and noble resolve, formed in each heart, that during this year, if God shall spare us, we will work more and pray more and give more, in order to support and to extend the operations of a cause which is founded in the blood of the Son of God, and which involves hereafter the destiny of millions and the glory of the Eternal.

The Rev. JAMES ALLEN, missionary from Ceylon, spoke to the next sentiment, which was as follows:—

"That the results which have already followed missionary labours are such as to encourage their further and more diligent prosecution."

He said:—You have already heard that this has been responded to in various parts of the world, and I have to say it is even so in reference to the island of Ceylon, from which I lately came. When the British took possession of that island, not many years ago, they found there none save an insignificant people, without arts, without learning, without commerce, deriving a mere scanty provision from a few rice fields, and given over to superstition and idolatry, debasing in their nature, and destructive in their tendency; but we hope, sir, that Ceylon will rise in the scale of nations under the genial rule of the British, and especially under the exalting and ennobling influence of a pure Christianity. Nay, I may say, she is rising now; for the gospel has found an entrance into that lovely island, and is exerting its influence over a wide extent, and will exert that influence over the whole island eventually, and bring those interesting, yet degraded people up to a level with other nations that have embraced our common Christianity. As yet, however the island is not evangelized; the masses of the people are Buddhists, or, in other words, they are atheists; they are far down in the dark abyss of unbelief, and I sometimes think of them as the very orphans of the universe, for they have no God connected with their system, no father guiding them through this cold and selfish world, to whom they are amenable, and who will one day be their judge; they live emphatically without God

and without hope in the world, and it is utterly in vain that they seek deliverance from the sorrow of successive births. How can they do it, so long as they know not Jesus and his great salvation? There are precepts to be found in the books of Buddhism not much inferior to the precepts of Christianity itself, and those books are preached from at times by the priests of that system; but there is no response from the audience, none go away from such preaching smiting upon their breasts, or broken in their hearts, or deeply humbled in their spirits. None ever ask that mighty question, "Sir, what must I do to be saved?" There are no results; the precepts are in the book, but they are not seen in the lives of the people, nor in the lives of the priests. Buddhism, sir, has not much hold on the minds of the people now; there is no element of religion in it, and no foundation even to build morals upon; we need not wonder, therefore, if immorality abound among them; and it is so. Paul has spoken of the heathen in some passages of the New Testament, and in describing them he has described the Singhalese, save where they have come under the saving influence of the gospel: "Darkness hath covered the land, and gross darkness the people." But amid that darkness we can rest upon some bright and brilliant spots; there are oases, amid that moral desert, that are beautiful and lovely to look upon; and amid all the pollution that there abounds, we can point to some,—it may be, hundreds,—who have been recovered from it. The poor Buddhist knows no atonement, and finds no Saviour; he groans, absolutely groans, beneath the burden of his sin, and yet finds no deliverance; and, cleaving to his system, he becomes a silent being, full of abstract thought, that seeks its own annihilation; and yet it is a fact, that where our missionaries and others have preached the gospel of the grace of God, the people have responded to it,—it has found an echo in their hearts, and in some instances in the hearts even of the priests themselves. That old system now totters to its base, and will soon be swept away by a power that is absolutely irresistible; and temples to the Lord of Hosts will arise, and the regenerated people shall offer praise therein, and worship in spirit and in truth at the divine footstool. But there is a superstition, sir, that has an awful hold upon those people: I mean demon-worship. Demon-worship was known in Ceylon long before Buddhism was proclaimed there, and still sways its awful power over their dark and benighted souls. The Portuguese went there a long time ago, and tried in vain to convert the people from their superstition. They found it absolutely an invincible barrier. The people experienced no difficulty themselves in exchanging the doctrines of Buddhism for those of Christianity, as presented by the priests of the Roman Catholic Church;

or rather, I may say, they found no difficulty in tacking them on to Christianity, just as you stick on the outrigger to a boat with a view to safety. The Dutch, again, came after them, and utterly failed in the conversion of the people; and all that remains of Dutch Christianity, as introduced into that island, is to be found in one little church at Colombo, and in another at Matura, in the south of the island; and even modern protestant missionaries, like ourselves, have had to record from time to time a similar experience, that old superstition has maintained its power over the minds of the people, and the devil-priest has been sent for in the time of distress and calamity. The spell has been too potent, the charm too powerful, to resist; the influence still prevails, and still the devil-priest is summoned when sorrow, or calamity, or distress, invades the dwellings of the people. I think these are powerful obstacles to have to contend against. Again, you must add to these Hindoo idolatry, Mohammedism, and Roman Catholicism in its grossest form, not a whit better than idolatry itself, and only wanting, it may be, a change of name in some places to render it precisely the same. We have ceased to wonder almost at the old cry, "The attempt is useless." We hear it often, but we heed it not. God speaks to us, and we will hearken to his voice and do his bidding, and I think I may say we dare stare all these difficulties in the face, especially if we hear his voice, and feel ourselves moved by that Spirit that none can resist. We can then utter the bold, defiant note, "Who art thou, oh great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." We dare oppose these obstacles in this way; we have opposed them many a time; and our firm conviction is, and we feel it to be founded on eternal truth, that the thing will be done, that Buddhism, Hindoo idolatry, Mohammedism, demon-worship, and all the other abominations, will be utterly swept away before the influence of our own pure and heaven-born Christianity. The time is coming, sir, we believe, when that island will be no longer, as it has been deservedly called, "a pearl-drop from the brow of India," but a pearl in the diadem of the Redeemer-king. It is not half a century yet since the first of modern missionaries took there the gospel which is proclaimed to you. And here I may say that I think the baptists have the honour again of introducing the gospel into that lovely island. They were the pioneers, and they have been followed by the Wesleyans, the Church missionaries, and by the Americans; and the various bodies of these missionaries, working in that island with a view to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, have sought to do it in various ways. They have used the press, and they have taught the young, and preached the gospel publicly and from house to house. We have the press, sir, and we have had it

long; we rejoice in the press, and we hope we shall ever have it. It has been useful to us there; it has given to the people the scriptures in their own mother-tongue, so that they can read now for themselves of the wonderful works of God. It has sent out religious tracts in thousands and tens of thousands through the land, and it has furnished us with school-books for the young; so you see that the press has been useful, and has done a great work in creating a literature, in laying the foundation for intelligent piety, and in creating, I may say, a taste for reading; for the Singhalese are becoming a reading people now, and I hope they will go on in that direction. I suppose I must not say much about the education of the young, as we have just heard that that is a ticklish subject. But whatever I may say, remember again that I am responsible, and nobody else. Of the two, of course I give the preference to the preaching of the gospel, for that is God's great ordinance for the conversion of the sinner to himself; and I believe that whatever may be said about education, and civilization as a consequence, it will always remain true, as recorded upon the pages of that blessed book, "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." When the people are ignorant, sir, they must be educated; and we say, educate them as fast as you can; pour a flood of light into the mind, and make them intelligent. I may add, that it is not impossible to educate the Singhalese. I could cite, if it were necessary, living examples, in confirmation of their ability to rise intellectually, and to scale even the heights of learning and science; and as for the children, they are lovely children, they are so intelligent, they look right through you when you look at them. They are quicker and more apt than your fairer children, up to a certain age, and then they seem to sink; but let us bring them out from these depressing influences, and they will rise, as I have said, and contest the prize for intellectual superiority even with yourselves; they have done it before, and they will do it again. But after all, education, and I mean merely secular education here, about which so much is said now-a-days, will fail, and must ever fail, to meet the case of these interesting and degraded people. They are ignorant, and they must be taught; but we look at them and remember especially that they are ignorant of God, and Jesus, and his great salvation; and our impression is, that the education must be one that will aim at their conversion, before we can meet their case, before they can be brought up to the position they must occupy in order to fulfil rightly the relationship in which they stand to God and to the eternal world. But after all, the preaching of the gospel has been most effectual in rousing the attention of this people, and in

directing their inquiries; and the missionaries you have sent out there have been aware of this, and have regarded the preaching of the gospel as their first and great work; and believing, as they do, that the gospel, in the hands of the Eternal Spirit, is destined to rescue the world from the ruins of the fall, and bring back man to his right position, the position in which God would have him stand, they have proclaimed the gospel, even the unsearchable riches of Christ, and have been instrumental in winning many "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of their sins, and inheritance amongst them that are sanctified by faith in Christ." Now, sir, I can tell you that the poor, benighted, besotted, and dark idolator has had his mind enlightened and has been recovered. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined into his heart, and given him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." With a mind enlightened, and that dark, profound ignorance chased all away, he has seen that an idol is nothing in the world, has cast it "to the moles and to the bats," and has learnt to loathe and absolutely to abhor the thing he did the most revere, before which he bowed himself down, and to which he prayed and said, "Deliver me, for thou art my god." He knows now that spiritual worship alone is acceptable to God, and has yielded the affections of his heart and the obedience of his life to him; he now lives to God and lives to glory, and shall never taste the second death. The Buddhist, sir, has learnt, too, that there is an eternal, self-existent Being, a great Creator, who "made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in there is;" and he has learnt beside this that there is the only Saviour Jesus Christ, whom he now loves, and in whom, though now he sees him not, yet believing, he rejoices "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." And I may say that the very demons have heard his voice as in days of yore, and have fled from him; they have exclaimed, "We know thee whom thou art, the Holy One of God. Art thou come to torment us before the time?" Their votaries have ceased to dance around their altars. Those altars have been thrown down, and sacrifices are not offered thereupon. They have been brought into the liberty of God's children. And lepers, as in days of old, have come to him and made believing application, and been cleansed from their spiritual leprosy; and, as we believe, some of them are even now before the bright and burning throne, and are raising their voices in the song that shall peal along the vaults of heaven for ever, and others are still left behind to speak of all his wondrous works, and of his great mercy and unbounded goodness to them. Nay, the very outcasts have not been passed by; the shunned of all men,

the offscouring of society, those to whom all men pointed, as it were, the finger of scorn, have heard the gospel from the lips of your missionaries, and through grace have believed, and some of them even are amongst the saved. Your missionaries, the servants of the Most High God, have thus shown unto these men the way of salvation; they have done the Lord's work, they have done it in the Lord's way, and the Lord has blessed them. God has wrought with them, and confirmed his word; and the effects are visible. Oh, sir, if you could but see that lovely island, your eye would rest upon some beautiful spots, some little green enclosures, gardens of the Lord, Christian churches, in the towns and in the villages, in the lovely valleys and on the mountain tops, and ministers of Jesus Christ going in and out, and crying everywhere, "Behold, behold the Lamb!" Their words are powerful; they are accompanied with a power that comes right down from heaven. They plant and water; God gives the increase; and the people of the Lord are gathered in. It would be a lovely sight, again, for your eye to rest on some of those schools to which allusion has been made. We do not despise them, we do not put them first; but we have the schools, and we mean to have them, if it may be so. We cannot do without them. We are not schoolmasters, sir; we do not teach in schools; that is not our work; but there are the schools. And when we look at those interesting children, and see them rolling about in the dust and mud, with nothing to do, and think of all their wretchedness and misery, and the depressing influences to which they are subjected, and get these things daguerreotyped, as it were, upon our minds, they must come out again. We cannot keep them there. We speak of them, and the hearts of others respond, filled with compassion and benevolence, and up rise the schools; and God forbid that they should ever be abandoned. But, after all, our great resource is the preaching of the gospel. Now, will you bear with me if I say a word or two about the men you have sent out to that land? We have heard of Ward, and Carey, and others,—God-honoured men. I think we have some in Ceylon, or have had, whom God has honoured, too; and I feel their names ought to be mentioned at times. Forty years ago, or thereabouts, the first of modern missionaries landed on the island, and opened his commission to preach the gospel through the grace of God. I mean Mr. Chater, one of your own missionaries. He went out to Sciamore, and thence to Burmah, and finding no place there for rest, repaired, in the providence of God, to Ceylon, there to unfold the unsearchable riches of Christ to that degraded but interesting people. God honoured that man, and honoured him highly; and his name has come down to us connected

with the planting of the first Christian churches in that island, and the translation of the scriptures into the native tongue, and the first grammar of the language, so that all who have gone after him have had,—as has already been said,—things ready to their hand. Then, after him, came Ebenezer Daniel, known in Ceylon as "the Apostle of Ceylon," sometimes as "the holy man." We hear a great deal now-a-days of the successors of the apostles, and I think if ever there was on this earth a legitimate successor of those fine, noble old apostles, Ebenezer Daniel was the man. Ay, a right apostolic man was he. No ordinary preacher of the gospel, but a man influenced, as I think from all I know about him, by the very principles that nerved those fine old men of old to such deeds of daring and enterprise as they wrought in this world of ours. He preached on all ordinary occasions just as you do here, and sometimes, on most extraordinary occasions, such as you would not, I think, have embraced. Perhaps if I tell you one or two of these extraordinary occasions it may prove interesting to you. One day, when the old man was going to one of our little stations, not far out of Colombo, his road lying between two fine lakes, mindful of his Master's work, and heedless, perhaps, of the steps he took, he fell into the water, and was well nigh drowned. But God's eye was upon him, his care was over him. He got out, and instead of going home as we should have done, perhaps, to change his clothes, seeing a crowd of people there, he took occasion to preach to them the gospel of Jesus Christ. Very likely he pointed to that God in whose hands are all our lives; at all events he "improved the occasion," as your ministers in England are wont to say. Then, again, in Ceylon we have experienced great annoyance sometimes from beggars; but our Ceylon apostle was a wise man; he knew how to get rid of difficulties better than some of us do, and we have learnt a lesson or two from him. These beggars sometimes come in little troops of one, two, or a half-dozen, and stand before your door, and there is no getting them away without giving them alms. But the old gentleman hit on this method: he told them to come on a certain morning of the week, and at the same hour, and to come all together; and when he got them together in his verandah, he "improved the occasion" again, and preached a short sermon to them before distributing his alms. But sometimes, again, you might see his character coming out in a striking light. I remember one occasion, when he and a great functionary of the church of England met together at a bridge of boats, one Sunday, where they were obliged to stay half-an-hour before they could get across. Now Mr. Daniel was full of his missionary work; and finding his way to the old archdeacon, who had, you must

remember, abandoned his church for coffee-planting, considering coffee-planting to be preferable to planting Christian churches, he politely went up to him and said,—“Mr. Archdeacon, Mr. Archdeacon, we are getting into years; Mr. Archdeacon, eternity is before us; are you ready for the great account?” And to see that old man trying to edge away, and the apostle after him, pressing on him the importance of personal religion, and the necessity of preparation for the great tribunal, I say, that was apostolic; and, if any man deserved to be called a successor of the apostles, he was one. Then his benevolence was very great, and he was ever ready to dispense to the poor and the needy. In the time of flood, for instance, when the rice crops were swept away and the frail dwellings of the people, Daniel was the angel of mercy to relieve their wants. Away he went into the fort to collect a few pounds, and then went back to them to distribute to them the necessities of life, and to meet their pressing wants. And for deeds like these he got the name of “the holy man” amongst the natives: and he well deserved it. In this way he preached the gospel on the island for fourteen years, and then died, as was expressed just now, “with the harness on.” In the middle of his last sermon on the constraining love of Christ, he was taken from the pulpit to yield up his spirit to God who gave it; and he rests from his labours. Another man whom God greatly honoured was Jacob Davies. Aye, I loved that man. Five short years was he permitted to labour in that vineyard, and then we closed his eyes in death. Then Dawson, like the apostle John, if ever there was one like him on earth again,—so gentle, so winning, so amiable, so beloved by all! Just two months after we had closed the eyes of Jacob Davies, Dawson, his wife, and children, went on board a ship that has been missing ever since. We have never heard of them, and their bones, we suppose, now lie mouldering in the caverns of the deep. And then a man stood there alone in the missionary field, to bear the burden and heat, and sustain the conflict,—to stand in the high places of the field, sometimes thinking he would faint and die. But God was with him, and his grace sufficient, and his strength equal, to the day; the sun has not smitten him by day, nor the moon by night, and now he is here to plead the good old cause with you. He has left behind him two whites like himself, and twelve or fourteen brethren of a darker hue, all proclaiming the same gospel, everywhere calling on men to repent and turn to God, and believe in Jesus Christ that they may be saved. It is in this way that they work in that far-off land; and it is not without results, as that sentiment propounds: God has honoured their labours; and as the direct results of preaching the gospel, I may say, that congregations have been gathered in

various places, and chapels have been built, and churches formed, and the inhabitants have the means of grace, just as you have; they have the preaching of the gospel by their own native ministers and by the European missionaries, and the ordinances of the New Testament are observed just as we observe them here. And, as far as I know, those who are in the churches walk consistently,—they follow after holiness, and maintain consistency of conduct; and as far as they do this, they are the salt of the land, and amongst its greatest blessings. The preaching of the gospel in that land has not been without success; nor will it be. We never can believe it. As far as the unsearchable riches of Christ have been preached in dependence on God himself for the blessing, his servants have not laboured in vain, or spent their strength for nought. God has wrought with them, and there have been conversions,—not, perhaps, in every instance in which a profession of religion has been made, any more than is the case at home; but there have been sincere conversions to no small extent, and there has been growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In proportion to the means of grace they have, they are not behind their more favoured brethren. Give them equal means, and they will take their stand, side by side with British Christians; give them equal means, and they will exemplify a walk and conversation worthy of imitation to all around. This has been done to a considerable extent. There are three baptist churches in the city of Colombo itself, and there are nine more round about Colombo, planted by your missionaries. There is one in Kandy, one in Matelle, and one at Matura, and others, making altogether fifteen churches of the baptist denomination. These contain hundreds of members; and three of them, at all events two, are independent of your mission,—they cost you nothing—and the third will not be long before it is so. I hope to see that church independent, and not only so, but sending forth its own men to evangelize the island. We need such men, and I ask you, British Christians, to pray to the God of heaven with us, that he would raise them up, and thrust them out, for they are the men that must do the work after all. We cannot do it. They can get at the minds of their brethren; they speak to them in their own native tongue, even as we do, but much better than we ever can; they think as they think, and they can to some extent control their thoughts and win their confidence, as we never can. Therefore we feel that there must be native preachers; and we are glad to tell you that there are some in these churches who go out, as you have heard just now in reference to Africa, to preach the gospel to their fellow-creatures, and God owns their labours. In connexion with the churches there are thirty day-

schools; and about one thousand children are gathered daily, and instructed in those scriptures which are able to make them wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus, and in other things that are likely to make them intelligent and useful members of society. And then add to that the Christianizing, civilizing influence, if I may so speak, that makes itself felt all over these districts, and will spread and spread, until the whole land is imbued with it; and add to these things again a number of villages itinerated regularly by the native missionaries and by the European; and you will see at once that a great number of the people dwelling in these districts have the word of life addressed to them continually, and are exhorted to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on the hope set before them in the gospel. If you will look at these facts, and lay them to heart, I think you will see that we are bound to make strenuous exertions for the spread of the gospel there as well as in other nations of the earth, that we should never cease, that we must never rest nor grow tired or weary, until the kingdoms of this world are won for our Lord and for his Christ. Much has been done there that should encourage us and lead us to an entire and unreserved consecration of ourselves and of all we have to his service and to his glory; but much is yet to be done. There are lengths and breadths of land there, as well as in other heathen countries, where Jesus has not been heard, and where his great salvation is not known. Shall they remain thus? Shall they not have the preacher sent to them, that he may unfold to them the unsearchable riches of Christ, and bring them out of darkness into marvellous light? Will you not help on this good work? Go yourselves and do it, if God should call you from on high thus to do. For I hold we are bound to do his work, whatever it may be. Give your prayers in connexion with it, that his kingdom may come, and that his will may be done. And give, oh, give of your substance, for we need it yet. Nay, give, for God demands it. It is his, and he looks from heaven this morning to see you pour it into his treasury. I do believe, brethren, that in the British churches there is wealth enough to convert the world, if those who held it would only let it go,—if they would only pour it out into the treasury of the Lord. Remember, then, he looks down upon you, and he asks you to pour your gifts into his treasury; and I beseech you in his name to give liberally, not sparingly. Give, oh, give! Connect your riches with the glory of God, and with the advance and spread of his own kingdom!

The collection having been made, the Rev. J. H. Hinton gave out a hymn, and the Rev. Thomas Horton, of Devonport, offered prayer.

The Rev. W. G. LEWIS JUNR., of Westbourne Grove Chapel, spoke to the following sentiment:—

“That, while this meeting feels deep concern at the necessity which has compelled so many brethren to leave their work to seek a renovation of health by a return to this country, it desires to express the sincerest sympathy with them in their affliction, and would regard these events as a reason for renewed effort, and the cultivation of a spirit of more earnest and devout dependence on the guidance and blessing of the Great Head of the Church.”

Among the numerous illustrations of the horrors of war with which we have been recently made familiar, one which was deeply impressive, and sufficiently obvious to affect any mind was the return of our wounded soldiers to their native shores. Something like this, yet more unlike, was referred to in the sentiment to which he had been called upon to speak. The society had of late welcomed some homeward-bound invalids,—soldiers, but soldiers of the cross, their weapons not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. These men went not to slay, but to save; their work had peopled, not graves, but the church; their victories had been followed, not by the widow's shrieks and orphan's tears, but by sorrow over sin, and joy among the angels of God. And whatever the causes of the interruption of their labours, they came to them not with the various mutilations of the battle-field. It has been deputed to me to extend a welcome to these returning warriors. He could have wished the task had been consigned to more fluent lips though none could have undertaken it with a warmer heart. The meeting would, with one accord, join in the sentiments with which the Committee deplored the withdrawal of such labourers from the sphere of their employment. Yet their return was not altogether discouraging. They had been cast aside by affliction that they might become more skillful in the handling of God's Word; and there were some points connected with their return which were even pleasing to contemplate. Such men had oftentimes served to revive the flagging zeal of the churches at home, and oftentimes to publish from platforms the wrongs of persecuted humanity, and awaken British blood to new determinations for the protection of our race. They had come to remind them again and again of the incalculable worth of souls, and not unfrequently had one and another caught their spirit and followed in their steps. The earnest and convincing address of Mr. Allen would increase their attachment to the Society; and while his name was indelibly engraven upon their memories, and would be often repeated in their prayers and handed down to their children, there would be, in all their hearts, after what they had heard, an increased determination to main-

tain the cause in foreign lands. Besides these circumstances of encouragement, they were instructed by the occasional sicknesses of their brethren to look upon both themselves and their brethren abroad as mortal, and to feel that the ranks must be recruited, that they must ever be on the alert to seek men who should go forth to sustain their arms, and labour by their side. India now presented to its labourers an immunity from danger and from injury; these had been reduced to the lowest possible minimum; and the labour was scarcely prejudicial to health, and certainly not injurious to comfort, and peace of mind, and success. It was not, as when their fathers went there, a solitary, unaided, and unlikely enterprise, for the gospel had taken deep root. The Spirit of God had certainly rested not only upon missionaries and heathens, but upon multitudes of British residents. They were not dependent upon the testimony of missionaries for the success of missions in India. The Count Montalembert, precluded from writing upon the politics of his own country, had presented to the world a most beautiful and ingenious disquisition on England's future; and he stated that India presented to the world the most striking example which history afforded of the benefits resulting to the conquered from the conquest; that British rule had, by the aid of British missionaries, accomplished the extinction of idolatrous and savage practices, the abolition of sutteeism and infanticide; and that there was planted already in India the cradle of principles that would ultimately work the renovation of all Asia. I would impress upon the meeting the importance of entertaining a pious trust and confidence in God. It was this which had been the cause of success hitherto. When this enterprise was launched, it met with contempt from the world and lukewarmness from the church. It was not the calibre of the missionaries themselves, nor skilful combinations of their various qualities, their carefully considered policy, or their well advised prudence, nor even of itself their oft repeated prayer which was the secret of their success; but they trusted in God, and God was with them. Let them all seek again the outpouring of the Divine Spirit, that they might be worthy followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises, tiring not in their efforts, needing not unhealthy excitement and feverish agitation to call forth their zeal, but giving from principle,—acting upon sentiments,—clinging to promises,—confiding in God,—and working out their brief but honoured day until the Spirit should be poured forth from on high, the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted as a forest.

The Rev. JOHN STOURITON said:—Every man in his own order. I am quite sure I was not born to be a platform speaker.

Some years ago I made an attempt or two, and was by no means successful, and I very much fear you will witness a failure to-day. There are but two considerations which could have induced me to appear before you this morning. The one is, that for several years I have been requested to speak at the annual meeting of this society, and I now feel that it is a duty to come forward thus publicly and express my fraternal affection; and further, I am encouraged to appear before you because I feel that you will kindly give to a stranger a measure of courtesy which I could not secure perhaps from my own denomination. It appears that your committee have innovated somewhat on the practice of public meetings in providing sentiments instead of resolutions. I hope you will not allow this meeting to evaporate in mere sentimentalism. I suppose that sentiments I feel that you will instead of resolutions, from the very just idea of sentiments being the very roots of resolutions; and if Christian sentiments can but be awakened in the minds of those who come to these meetings, there will be no apprehension whatever but that Christian resolutions will be the result. Christian activity is what we aim at, and it is of the greatest importance that this activity should spring from right motives; and these sentiments, which are brought before you to-day, are just the motive powers by which we trust you will be impelled to Christian effort in connection with the missionary cause. Now, the sentiment put into my hands is as follows. I don't know whether your excellent secretary had any design upon me in supplying me with this sentiment; for if you will carefully notice the language you will see that it is of such a character that I can scarcely make any remarks upon it without touching on that "ticklish subject" to which reference has already been made. The sentiment is—

"That this meeting not only regards the gospel of Christ, especially as proclaimed by the voice of the preacher, as the divinely appointed means of bringing sinners to God, but is thoroughly convinced that it is both the duty and privilege of all Christians to extend it by every means in their power, and especially of British Christians, whose responsibilities are greater, inasmuch as divine providence has pre-eminently favoured this country with freedom, wealth, and commercial connection with all parts of the world."

So I have to say a few words with regard to preaching, and then a few words with regard to "other means" to be employed in connection with preaching. And as to preaching, I am sure we shall be all of one heart and of one mind in this respect, that the subject of Christian preaching is that which is mentioned in this resolution,—the gospel, the pure and simple gospel, as we have it from God,—that gospel which reveals to us the divine Saviour, the only mediator between God and man. And I would distinctly refer this morning to this gospel as

the subject of our ministry, because there have been inimitations in some quarters that both your own denomination and that to which I have the honour to belong, do not exhibit the gospel with all the fulness and freedom with which it ought to be exhibited. I am sure that I am but expressing the sentiments of my brethren when I say, that we do feel before God that we do not preach the gospel as it ought to be preached, but I am quite sure also that they feel with me an earnest determination to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The missionary whom we have heard this morning, is a man, I am sure, of this spirit; and all the missionaries whom you send forth, I doubt not, are men who are simply desirous to exhibit the gospel in all its purity, beauty, and power. There can be no question, whatever, that Jesus Christ assigned to preaching the first place in the order of means; and that position has been justified by the whole history of Christendom. Among the many voices which have been heard in this Babel world of ours, there is no voice that has come with such potency upon the ear of humanity as the voice of the Christian preacher. The voice of the poet, the voice of the statesman, the voice of the philosopher, have spoken, and each voice has awakened echoes in the hearts of men; but no such echoes have those voices awakened as have been produced by the voice of the Christian preacher. Why, sir, the voice of the Christian preacher is really the echo of the voice of Jesus Christ himself. There have been miracles wrought by the voice of the Christian preacher, which may be compared with the miracles of Jesus Christ; for when, in the name of Jesus, we say to the dead in trespasses and sins, "Come forth!" they obey the summons,—when we see the sorrowful, and speak to them in the name of Jesus, their tears are wiped away; and those physical miracles which Jesus Christ wrought when he was upon earth, are but the shadows and types of those spiritual wonders which are now being accomplished whenever the gospel of Jesus Christ is declared with earnestness, fidelity, and affection. The Christian preacher is one, the like of whom is not to be found in connexion with any other form of religion in the world. Pagan priests, Pagan philosophers, are very different from the Christian preacher; and even the Hebrew prophet was but a type of the Christian preacher. Christian preaching is a divine institute, and therefore we have faith in it. It is not in our own skill and power in preaching that we place any confidence; it is in the fact that Jesus Christ has appointed preaching as a means of bringing sinners unto God; and, whatever may be the difference of opinion among your missionaries as to the relation

of schools to preaching, there is, I believe, but one feeling among them as to the importance of adapting their ministry to those whom they address. So much for the preaching; and we are all of one mind respecting it. And now with respect to the school. It strikes me that after all there is a place for the school, inasmuch as our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us to go into all the world and preach the gospel; and, further, to teach all things that he has commanded us. There is a clear distinction between preaching and teaching. Preaching, you know, is the going forth like a herald,—like the man who went to Temple-bar the other day to proclaim peace. We proclaim peace through Jesus Christ; we tell men that a treaty of peace has been ratified, ratified by God in heaven, and which must be ratified in believing souls on earth, and then there is peace between God and man, and between man and God. Preaching is the heralding, the "proclaiming" of the gospel; "teaching" is entering into the various doctrines and duties of Christianity, and carefully inculcating them upon the mind, and putting them in all possible forms, that in this way there may come up an atmosphere of Christian intelligence surrounding the individual, through which he may see things as he otherwise would not see them. We could not see the sun without an atmosphere; and we must have a Christian atmosphere of intelligence, or we shall not see the truths of the gospel as we ought to see them. Take a congregation composed of different classes of persons. I would suppose I am addressing one consisting of the sunny children of Africa, who had been accustomed to roam about the woods, and lounge on the beach, and gaze upon the sky and sea, but who have no religious notions in their minds, except, perhaps, a dim, mysterious notion of an irresistible power, an infinite supreme, somewhere beyond the clouds. I have a congregation of that kind to preach to,—or I have a congregation composed of Hindoos, sharp, clever people, people who have some philosophy in them, and are familiar with the idea of priests and sacrifices,—or I have a congregation composed of those who have been educated in Christian schools, who have been taught to read the holy scriptures, who have in their minds the idea of divine fatherhood, divine kingship, and divine mediation. I preach to all these congregations, suppose successively the same sermon, in the tongue of each, from those very beautiful words, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life;" and I maintain that that sermon will be a perfectly different thing to the third congregation from what it will be to the other two. That sermon, delivered to those who have

previously Christian ideas in their minds, will be the means of bringing out those ideas; whereas, when I preach to the other individuals and talk to them of God, and of his Son, of believing, and of eternal life, I am speaking to them of things which they do not understand, and which will require a great deal of explanation before they can understand them. It seems to me, therefore, that the pulpit and the school must go together. I would not for a moment place the one above the other: I would say that both together they are best. The school will prepare for the pulpit, and be the supplement of the pulpit. Why, I believe that in most cases conversion is wrought through a combination of instrumentalities. There are cases, beautiful cases, in which, by the simple preaching of the gospel, all at once the soul is renewed, and there comes as it were a lightning-flash from heaven that melts and subdues the soul, and then it is poured into the mould of sound doctrines, and transformed into the image of Christ; but more frequently, I apprehend, the process of conversion is of a somewhat different kind; that it is not so much like the casting of metal into a mould and thus producing a statue, as the production of a statue in marble, which is the work of a number of artificers, on which the chisel has to be employed again and again before every lineament and feature of the statue is brought out in all its perfection and beauty. Conversion work, I apprehend, is most commonly gradual, and that the school has a great deal to do with it, as well as the pulpit. From what you have heard this morning, I am sure you must feel that we are engaged in a work over which God brings a blessing. Great good has been done, and much more, we doubt not, will be accomplished. I do, from the bottom of my heart, rejoice in the success which has attended the efforts of this society. And I am sure that the London Missionary Society, which I represent here to-day, also rejoices in the honour which the Great Head of the church has put upon you. There is no jealousy or unholy rivalry between us, for we feel that we are all labouring for a common end. The sentiment which I hold in my hand refers to extending our efforts in the mission-field, and the responsibilities which rest upon us to do so. When we look at the wealth of England the wonder is that so little has been done for foreign missions. There are often very unfair comparisons drawn between what we do for home and for foreign objects. It is forgotten that there are ten times the instrumentalities at home for one that is at work abroad. I cannot judge of the wealth of your people, but I must say that £20,000 does not seem to be quite the sum that should be expected from a rich and respectable denomination like

yours,—and I trust that you will feel to-day the power of those appeals which have been made to you, and that you will greatly increase your efforts during this year. I trust that my brethren in the ministry will go back to their respective flocks with their hearts full of missionary love, zeal, and energy, and that they will do all they possibly can to rouse their people to greater diligence in the missionary cause. England has been raised by God to a high place, in every sense, among the nations of the earth; and this is only that she may be an instrument in his hand to make known the gospel throughout the world, that wherever her commerce goes, there may also go that merchandise which is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold,—that wherever she plants a colony, there she may plant a church, and be a little sanctuary in the countries where she comes. I do trust and pray that every motive urged upon you this morning will find in your hearts a response. I am sure that we cannot spare any motives that are just, and true, and pure; we need to have them all brought to bear on our consciences and hearts; but, oh, let us remember, that amidst the multitude of minor Christian motives that crowd upon us, there is one which rises far, far above every other, which stands with crowned head and sceptred hand,—I mean that regal motive, which if we do not feel its power, we are not Christians; but which, if we do feel its power, will assuredly impel us this morning to do some great thing for Him who died for us:—"The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; that we who live should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again."

EDWARD CORDEROY, Esq., representing the Wesleyan Missionary Society, proposed:—

"That, while the cause of missions has yet to contend with many formidable difficulties, the effectual aid afforded by God in past seasons of anxiety and peril, confirms the hopes which scripture promises inspire, that, in answer to fervent believing prayer, He will ever continue to direct and sustain His servants while carrying on their great work."

Mr. Corderoy said: The sentiment placed in my hands this day asserts that "the cause of Missions has yet to contend with many formidable difficulties;" and no one having any acquaintance with the human heart—with the opposition which the selfishness of man and the malice of the Devil are sure to array against Divine Truth—will hesitate for a moment to acquiesce in this declaration of your Committee.

In whatever quarter we look, we find these difficulties in the way of the progress of the gospel.

In Europe, we find political power, and

the ecclesiastical influence of corrupt Christianity, arrayed against every form of evangelical religion—protestant states rival papal ones in their efforts to extinguish spiritual life! In Africa, we find the fatalism of the Mohammedan, the cruelties of the slave-trading chiefs, the numberless horrors and prejudices of heathendom, still opposing the reception of the gospel of Christ. In South America, we find the papacy and barbarism united against the introduction of a living biblical faith. In Asia, only a few spots are yet glowing with light from heaven—that continent on which man was formed; from the mountains of which God spake; the soil of which Christ trod; on the waters of which the Apostles pursued their early avocations; on which Christian churches were first formed;—yet, in Asia, from Syria to Japan, the masses are either professing a corrupt form of the Christian faith, are followers of the false prophet, disciples of Confucius, worshippers of the million gods of India, or otherwise estranged from the only true God—the Maker, the Monarch, the Saviour of the world. Difficulties formidable, indeed; a mere glance at which would require the whole scope of a discourse, and would be far beyond the limits of a layman's speech.

It has been privately hinted to me that in the field of some of your greatest triumphs as a Missionary Society—the Bengal presidency of British India—there are, at the present moment, great and peculiar difficulties yet to be overcome; and as the public at large are but imperfectly informed on the matter, it may be as well to refer to these this day.

Let me say, at the very outset of my remarks, that I may not be misunderstood, that I hold it to be the duty of every Christian missionary to maintain the authority of the government under which he lives, if he can without violating conscience. He is not sent out to remodel constitutions, but to preach the gospel; not to find fault with the books of civil law, if they to whom he preaches have any, but to give them the bible. If, however, the principles of the bible are found at variance with the government, he is still to preach these principles, not *because* they are opposed to the government, but because they are in the word of God.

Now in Bengal, not only your missionaries, but those of other protestant Missionary Societies, find that a power has been created by the East India Company which is prejudicial to its own interest, deeply injurious to the peasant population, and a great hindrance to the spread of true religion. I allude to the zemindary system, introduced by Lord Cornwallis as the permanent settlement in that presidency of the proprietorship of land, and the mode of raising the necessary government revenue.

Now while no Christian missionary should rebel against any system of government which the people amongst whom he labours choose

to adopt; yet when a most objectionable and oppressive system of administration has been formed by British authority, and is perpetuated by British power, it is not only right, but the bounden duty of the men who have witnessed its working, to come forth and tell the whole catalogue of its evils to the British people; to which they have done in various publications, of which I shall make use in the course of this address.

The proprietorship of the land in India had been, previously to the time of Lord Cornwallis, variously assigned:—

1st. To the reigning sovereign.

2nd. To the ryots, or immediate cultivators of the soil.

3rd. To an intermediate class, called zemindars; this last class were in olden time hereditary superintendents of the land.

When the Mohammedans conquered India, they exercised an indirect authority in the hills and poorer districts through tributary Hindoo chiefs—to them was applied the Persian term “zemindar,” or landholder—probably, as Campbell in his “Modern India” says, “to show they were not sovereign princes, but native subjects exercising a certain authority.”

These tributary chiefs were afterwards swept away, and with them disappeared the Hindoo hereditary district officers. The latter the Moguls were inclined to revive, and they did establish a class of hereditary officers—superintendents of lands—to whom they applied the old term, zemindars. The heir of a deceased zemindar, if well fitted, was generally confirmed as his successor, but was always liable to be deprived for misconduct or disfavour. None of the modern zemindars can boast ancient Hindoo rank.

Lord Cornwallis and many able men about him, felt great difficulty as to the best mode of raising the revenue for the support of the government in India; he introduced in Bengal certain arrangements which were called “the permanent settlement.” Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, tried to trace the title of the zemindars to the land up to the time of Akbar, contemporary of Queen Elizabeth, but he and others finding, in the course of their inquiries, that there were other claimants to the proprietorship of the land, proposed to limit the settlement to the zemindars to ten years. Lord Cornwallis, however, was tired of difficulties, and viewing every English institution with the utmost partiality, thought that a landed aristocracy would be the best thing for India; he insisted that the zemindars either were the actual proprietors of the land, or should be made so forthwith by the creation of an absolute private property to do what they would with, that the government revenue should be fixed and limited in perpetuity, and that government should no more interfere, but should simply retain the right to sell the land for the nonpayment of revenue.

It is due to the directors of the East India Company to say they gave only a qualified assent; but their determined governor-general, immediately on receipt of his despatches, proclaimed the settlement which now holds.

The Honourable Company in their assent expressly reserved to themselves the "right to modify it by any regulations necessary for the protection of the ryots."

Campbell asserts, "that this settlement was really made in ignorance of the country. Even the very first step towards the roughest settlement of modern times—the definition of boundaries—was not taken."

A select committee of the House of Commons condemned the arrangement. High authorities even pronounced it illegal. Sir Thomas Munro, one of the most popular Englishmen who ever lived in India, was decidedly against it.

Now how has this zemindary system worked? What has been the result in Bengal? If good, its fruits should appear.

The Rev. William Arthur, once an Indian missionary, now secretary to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, says:—

"Bengal—our finest, our richest, our metropolitan province—is in such a state, as regards the material condition and moral character of the people, that men of candour and sense raise the question whether they have not deteriorated in our hands."

He adds, "The whole tenor of trustworthy information, and, indeed, of the evidence taken before the two Houses of Parliament, from the most favourable lips, is to the effect that Bengal is in a state of misery, insecurity, and demoralization, which are enough to dishonour the name of a power which has been for half a century its master."

Other authorities confirm this statement. Now how has this state of things been brought about?

The proceedings of a general conference of Bengal protestant missionaries, held in Calcutta last September (1855), afford the reason in two papers read at that conference by the Rev. F. Schurr, of the Church Mission, and the Rev. J. C. Page, of the Baptist Mission.

From these papers we learn that the ryots are entirely in the hands of the zemindar; who, if he be an oppressive landlord, as is most generally the case, reduces the poor peasants to a condition nearly as bad as slavery itself.

If he deals with the ryot direct, he exacts much more than the revenue required by government. The ryot does not object to pay what is lawfully demanded of him; on the contrary, he declares frequently that he is ready to pay two or three times the amount required, if he could pay it direct to a British officer, as under the ryotwary system in Madras, or under the village system in the north-west provinces.

But the zemindar frequently leases portions of his holding to others, who again, in their turn, sublet it, until the poor ryot is ground down by repeated exactions till he can scarcely get salt to his rice. The same sub-letting system prevails in Bengal which prevailed in Ireland a few years since, and inflicted such deep evils on the peasantry there.

Campbell says, "The zemindars prove an unthrifty, rack-renting set of people, and take the uttermost farthing from their under tenants."

The legal power of the zemindar is very great: he can compel the attendance of a ryot—no matter what time of year, or how ever urgent may be his business in relation to his crops—whenever he pleases for a fresh adjustment of rent, or for measuring any land within their respective estates which is liable to measurement. They have oppressive powers in the distraint for rent. The police are also nominated by the zemindars, who see this native force paid; and thus these men, frequently without consciences, became the agents of the zemindar.

But beyond the legal power, there is a *warae* exercised. The zemindar in many districts is magistrate, collector, judge and landlord. All claims are adjusted by him; all manner of charges decided or dismissed by him. The favourite mode of punishment is by *fine*, and this fine the zemindar not only exacts, but keeps. The zemindar strives to keep any transgression of the law secret from European officers, that he may profit by the punishment. But has the ryot not rights as a tenant? Alas! even here the value of his rights consists in his possessing documents to prove his claim; these, however, are rarely given, or so artfully worded that their value is deteriorated. Receipts for rent are difficult to obtain; money is taken on account; interest charged on the balance. Thus arrears of rent, augmented by interest, are constantly kept up, and the poor ryot, once behind hand, is constantly in the zemindar's power.

Then the zemindar claims another character beside that of landlord, magistrate, collector and judge: he claims to have a *religious interest* in the ryot; and this, like all the rest, is turned into a source of revenue. He assumes to be the father and guide of his people! He requires the ryot to profess the same faith as himself; the more his little ugly god is honoured, the more worshippers he can command,—the greater the influence he possesses with the priesthood, the more honour he gets to himself. The zemindar's religion is cheap to him, because he makes it dear to the ryot; the ryots have to pay the expense of any religious festival, for it is at their peril if they refuse or seem reluctant to do so; and if the zemindar in his zeal enters on a pilgrimage, the ryots must repay the money spent.

Then there are *social claims*. When a

birth takes place in the zemindar's house, the ryot must bring his present; when the young one is able to taste rice, the acceptable gift must be repeated. When a betrothal takes place—and this is pretty early in India—the ryot must again manifest his joy by a gift; and when the marriage is consummated, the poor fellow must make another contribution; and when Death at last visits the house of the zemindar—for it sometimes will visit even this great man's dwelling—the ryot must again testify his sorrow by the same means by which he proclaimed his joy—another contribution. In these and many other all but inconceivable ways, the zemindars manage to extort from their ryots the scanty profits of their farms; and all these things come upon the poor fellow till he is driven to the borders of despair, and resigns himself hopelessly to his lot. Even the very disasters that befall the poor ryot are turned to the advantage of the zemindar. When the floods overflow the rice fields, and these waters produce fish, the zemindar taxes the ryot for fishing on his own fields! Still further, for every tank that is dug by the ryot, for every tree he finds it useful or necessary to cut down, some moderate, but most unjust, sum is asked. Is not this oppressive enough! And yet there is more!

The indigo planters will frequently purchase zemindary rights, and make the poor ryot grow indigo on his best ground, to the neglect of his own interest; the planter offers him a certain amount for the cultivation, but this amount is soon exhausted in the bribes he must pay to the various agents of the zemindary planter. Those familiar with the fact say, that the ryot never makes anything of his crop; for if he has too many bundles of indigo, the siscar quietly puts some of them to his own credit.

Fines meet him at every turn: if a bullock strays into the indigo field, the ryot must pay. Once on the hooks of the factory, and his pace to ruin is accelerated. The season for sowing and reaping indigo and rice almost invariably coincide; the ryot will, therefore, frequently lose the proper season for his own crops, while he is forcibly kept in the indigo fields.

It is not meant to be affirmed that all zemindars are equally grasping, cruel, and oppressive, and that all indigo planters are equally unjust; the greatest oppressors of the poor ryot are the agents of these men, fellow-countrymen of the ryots; the most selfish of human hearts seem possessed by the Bengalee.

Yet such powers existing anywhere are sure to be fearfully abused.

What formidable difficulties in the way of Christian missions are presented here!

The constant, grinding, life-exhausting oppression of the poor ryot tends to fatalism. It shuts out hope, leads to indifference to everything above animal gratification, debases

and demoralizes the community. "They look," says Mr. Schurr, "on this life as their hell, and live in utter disregard of a future world."

The zemindary and planting system so impoverish the ryots, that they are unable to send their children even to a charity school; as soon as a boy is five or six years old, he is sent into the fields to tend cattle.

Ryots judge of all Europeans by the planters who come among them simply to make money, and leave the land (their object accomplished) with no more sympathy for it. It is, therefore, difficult to make them believe that the missionary can be disinterested.

As the zemindar profits so largely by fines exacted to conceal crime—by illegal and unjust requirements on other grounds—he may well dread the influence of Christianity on the ryot, for this would at once strike at the root of his ill-gotten gains. His opposition, therefore, is a formidable difficulty.

Now should this system be left alone? Is it right, morally and politically, that it should continue?

High authorities believe the settlement to be an illegal one; that the zemindars had no title to the land.

Campbell says the zemindars are no longer entitled to be considered as hereditary superintendents of the land, "for the proprietary rights have been sold over and over again, and are in no way derivable from any old hereditary source, but are simply transferable, and constantly transferred, properties, like any other chattel."

If, then, it be an illegal settlement, and the ryot, not the zemindar, the real proprietor, ought not the matter to be reviewed? But if it be pleaded, as it may very fairly be, that possession for nearly seventy years must give a legal right, yet, as Campbell has proved, there is no hereditary right, it simply becomes a money question; and shall money be urged against moral claims and religious obligation?

The East India Company, in sanctioning "the permanent settlement," expressly reserved to themselves "the right to modify it by any regulations necessary for the protection of the ryots." Let them be called on so to modify the zemindary system; for surely the ryots need protection.

We ask the Honourable Company to interfere in behalf of its people. Let the zemindars, if necessary, hold the land, but let restrictions be placed on the sub-letting system; let boundaries be defined, and some tenant-right security be furnished; distribute the varied offices held by the zemindar amongst honest men, and let magistrates be found who will administer justice, and let those peasants who embrace Christianity be released from those religious and social claims which the zemindar now makes on them.

Our country is pledged to care for the present population of India; in 1793 the House of Commons passed this resolution:

"That it is the peculiar and bounden duty of this legislature to promote by all just and prudent means the interest and happiness of the British dominions in India; and that for these ends such means ought to be adopted as may gradually tend to their advancement in useful knowledge and their religious and moral improvement."

If this resolution were properly carried out, the zemindary system would be changed.

Our country—rich in intelligence, moral influence, religious resources, and material wealth—is bound to care for India. Never was such a prize given to a nation before. California and Australia have most gold, but cannot equal India in the real elements of wealth. Vast in extent, inexhaustible in resources, teeming with population, and possessing all the materials of power all but the capability of using them, this magnificent country is handed over by Divine Providence to British rule.

It is not by chance that the British sceptre waves over 180 millions in India. The enterprising trader, 250 years ago, was but the pioneer of his race, who, as merchants, warriors, and rulers, have become the governors of the richest inheritance.

What is the end of our rule in India? As designed by Providence, it is the material and moral regeneration of the people; and British supremacy is the means. Our power commenced in trade, was confirmed by war, is sustained by opinion; but can only be made lasting by enlightened government and scriptural religion!

In this point of view, is it not humiliating to think that the East India Company are afraid of showing their religion? They spend £45,000 annually on schools for natives, where literature and science are taught, such as must and do shake the belief of the pupils in Hinduism, and yet from these schools the bible, which alone can give them the true faith, is strictly excluded.

One of the governors of India declared "that until our subjects there shall be assimilated with us by a community of faith, we shall never consider our dominion secure against the effect of external attack or internal commotion;" but the Honourable Company seem afraid of letting the bible be read in its schools, lest this assimilation should progress too rapidly.

The sentiment I have to propose not only speaks of "many formidable difficulties with which Christian missions have yet to contend," but of "the effectual aid afforded by God in past seasons of anxiety and peril," and states that this "confirms the hopes which scripture promises inspire, that in answer to fervent believing prayer He will ever continue to direct and sustain His

servants while carrying on their great work."

The history of the past is a history of difficulty; but of difficulty surmounted, of obstacles overcome; it tells of trial, but it tells of triumph too. The guns on the plateau of the Crimea are silenced, and peace is proclaimed between the nations of Europe; and yet throughout the world we are at war. There is a war of opinion—a contest raging between good and evil—between a biblical faith and a demoniacal superstition; happily there is not for one moment the slightest doubt as to the ultimate result. Warriors will fall in the conflict; and some feeble hands may dishonour the Christian name, and fall too; but the embattled hosts of God's elect will march on conquering and to conquer; "the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

"Courage! your Captain cries,
Who all your toil foreknew;
Toil you shall have, yet toil despise,
He overcame for you.

"The world cannot withstand
Its ancient Conqueror;
The world must fall beneath the hand
Which arms us for the war."

When in Madeira, I rode early one morning, hoping to reach the summit of a certain mountain to gaze upon a magnificent scene, and enjoy the balmy air. I had a servant with me, and we had got up some 2,000 feet, when a thick mist was seen descending upon us, quite obscuring the whole face of the heavens, and I thought that we had no chance left but at once to retrace our steps. But as the cloud came nearer, my guide ran on, penetrating the mist, and calling to me ever and anon, and saying, "Press on, master, press on; there is light beyond." I did press on; in a few minutes the mist was passed, and I gazed upon a scene of transcendent beauty; all was bright and cloudless above; and below lay the almost level mist, concealing the world below, and glistening in the rays of the sun like a field of untrodden snow; there was nothing between us and heaven. I have often thought since there was nothing like "pressing on" in every trial of life, assured that, although the mists of earth may hang around us at certain stages of our journey, there is light beyond. You, the friends of India, have present difficulties, but I would ask you to listen to the voice, which on that occasion came from the untutored Madeira— "press on; there is light beyond," in this world; and by-and-by there shall be the light, all unclouded, of heaven; and rejoicing in that light, we shall be constrained to exclaim, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ."

The Rev. Dr. PATERSON, of Glasgow, concluded the meeting with prayer.