

to bid you welcome to this seventy-first anniversary of our honoured Missionary Society. In that welcome let me especially include those ministers and members of other sections of the Christian Church who come amongst us to-day to give us their countenance and help, and to bid us God speed in the name of the Lord. I trust that both we and they will find this morning our mutual joy, as we have often found before, in the truth of the inspired sentiment, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity." Turning for a moment from those who are here, may we pay the tribute of a passing word to the memory of those who are not—who since our last anniversary have gone to swell the ranks of a more imposing assembly and to fulfil the duties of a more perfect service than ours? "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," and this blessedness is theirs. On the field itself I believe that during the past year two brethren have fallen—the one a missionary, and the other a teacher. Upon that field may they have many successors—men who shall be consecrated in heart and life, in body, soul, and spirit, to Him of whom the whole family of believers is named. I think when you hear an abstract of the report read you will agree with me that, considering all things, we have reason to be grateful to God for the position of the society at this time. At the close of a year so eventful—and may we hope in some respects so exceptional?—it would not have been surprising if the vessel had stranded on the barren shore of a disastrous deficit. Happily, though she has touched the ground, a little kindly help will float her again. May this meeting be powerful in its results upon our religious associations at home and especially upon those abroad! May it send forth the breath of a new life upon the distant and wasting East—upon our revived churches in the West, and not less upon the shores of unhappy Africa. And though this society has not planted its missions in the north, yet we have brethren in the northern parts of Europe—many I believe of the same practice as well as of the same faith. All these, may this meeting encourage, and so may the joy of Jerusalem be heard over all the earth. (Cheers)

Sir S. M. Peto read an abstract of the account, from which it appeared that the receipts were, for general purposes, 20,777L; for special stations, 2,658L; for Serampore College, 262L; for translations, 13,152L; for widows and orphans, 1,517L; which with some smaller sums for other objects make a total of 27,189L 3s. The expenditure altogether had been 32,073L. They had on hand a balance last year of 3,707L 14s. 7L, so that the actual deficiency this year was 1,176L 10s. 5d. Some kind friends of the society, feeling that it was undesirable that they should commence the year in debt, had sent to the treasurer about 600L, and the actual deficit was now only 548L.

The Rev. John Sale, of Calcutta, in moving the first resolution, said this resolution calls upon us to express gratitude, and that for three things. The first is for the general prosperity of all our societies, and, of course, our own included, in the great work of extending the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are asked to rejoice in what God has done for us and for others—to rejoice in what God has done for our brethren of the Church Mission in Tinnevely, in the farthest south of India—to rejoice with our noble brethren of the Moravian Mission in what God has done for them over the Himalayas, in Tibet—and to rejoice with our brethren of all societies in what God has done in bringing out at last some glorious results, out of that long, patient, monotonous toil in our educational institutions, in which the finest men of all our societies have been long engaged. We are called upon to rejoice in the glorious triumphs of Christian principle, and of the cause of Christ, which have blessed the labours of our brethren of the London Missionary Society in Madagascar. I now stand before you perhaps for the last time—the last time if I am spared in health—for many a long day, and therefore I think I ought to say a word about this great matter of bringing India to Christ. I have told you that there is a great waking up of the native mind in India, which is illustrated by the great extension of the progress of literature. It is seen also in that great society for the worship of the one God—that great society of Deists—which is spreading its ramifications over Bengal. We are called to send out intelligent men as brethren, to endeavour to lead them in meekness and gentleness to Christ. Our best native Christians are men who were members of the society. Another cheering sign is the desire which is manifested among the young men for the education of the women, thus ennobling them to some extent with their own views and feelings.

We want to establish in Bengal a home something like what we have in England, when we boastingly say an Englishman's house is his castle. We want to have that home secured from the intrusion either of the officers of Government or the agents of the Zemindars without some just cause is shown in a court of justice. We require that a man should have freedom to labour in what way he pleases, and to have a fair day's wages for that fair day's labour which he gives. We require that a man should be at liberty to cultivate his ground, to reap his crop, and keep it. It seems simple enough, and yet there is tremendous difficulty in achieving that result. Oppression, on the one hand, and failure of justice on the other—the want of any efficient system of police and of any tolerable roads or means of communication—make it almost impossible for a man to cultivate his ground in peace, to take his crop to market when he has grown it, or to establish himself in any kind of freedom at home. I will read a few words from a letter I have received from Mr. Page, of Barisal, to show to the meeting the difficulties

which, at this moment, he has to contend with. It is very remarkable that I should have received this letter from him, after a long silence, just previous to the holding of this meeting. Mr. Page says—"We have had many baptisms—122 in all, I believe. Our Christian community is 3,338. We have got (meaning Christianity has got) into Roten Baboo's estate." That was the estate of a princely Zemindar, who, just before I left India, died in all the sanctity of the Church, after having lived a life of terrible tyranny amongst his poor peasantry. "Many cases have followed, involving me in expense and care and trouble; and the new Christians in endless bother. I have summoned Roten Baboo's heirs as witnesses, to their utter dismay. The Bandhahner Rail has seized our people, colluded with a young Bengal Morrisist at Mudanfel, and really I am all on fire when I think of what the poor Christians have suffered. But no help or sympathy comes from any part of India. I have to fight it out. With God's help I will.

The Rev. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham, said: My Christian friends, I always feel some hesitation in rising to address a missionary meeting at the close of a speech by a missionary. There is a reality in all that is said by one who has personally confronted the crimes and the miseries of heathenism which can never belong to what is said about missions by a minister at home. You are aware how hard a task it was for Dr. Carey and his brethren to find footing in India at all to push out the work on which their hearts were set, and I dare say some of you remembered when you saw the Danish flag waving over nearly every steep in the land, and in the streets of all our great cities and towns not long ago, that it was under that flag that your missionaries had once to take refuge. It had wanted any additional reason for giving a hearty welcome to the Danish Princess, we should have found that additional reason in the remembrance of the service which her country's flag had rendered to us. That great difficulty has to a very large extent been overcome, and it appears from the report that there are then no less than 31,000 communicants in connection with the various churches of India. The words come very lightly from our tongue, but, oh, how much of patient labour, of wearisome solicitude, of persevering and fervent prayer on the part of our missionary brethren; did those 31,000 converts represent! Try to think what kind of a change has passed over every one of these immortal souls. We have 31,000 connected with our churches beyond, and every one of them, as we trust, has been penetrated with those same anxieties about sin, with that same sorrow for having offended God, with that same desire to live a better and a nobler life, by which our hearts were agitated long ago; only all these anxieties were intensified by the strange and terrible perils which would have to be encountered if they were suffered to issue in a profession of Christian faith. Every one of those converts has been made a partaker of a Divine nature, dwells in a tabernacle of light, has seen the grace of God, has heard His voice, grasps His hand now, and hopes by-and-by, having fought the good fight that we are fighting, to join the spirits of the just made perfect. There is something to rejoice in in these individual conversions multiplied 31,000 times. But while we rejoice over the change that has passed over the individuals thus rapidly enumerated, let us not forget, that while we deal with them in that mass, Christ has dealt with them one by one. Every one as he came to Christ was received by Him with a separate pulse of Divine joy. Christ listened one by one to every one as they came confessing sin, and speaking to Him of that cross on which He died, for the transgressions of mankind. Every one of the 31,000 was received by Him, as I believe, with a profounder satisfaction than that with which He welcomes the majesty of that highest Archangel who bows before His throne. And when every one of these 31,000 shall at last pass into the mansions which He is preparing for them, I believe His face will be lit up with a diviner satisfaction than that with which it was radiant when He looked upon the sun and stars in that morning of Creation, and upon that world He had made for us. Let us not then, brethren, be at all disheartened by the magnitude of the work that still remains to be done, but rather rejoice in what has been already accomplished. The Church has been pretty thoroughly persuaded now, that the evangelisation of mankind is her duty. The government has yielded very largely to the influence which the Church has brought to bear upon it, and we should not forget that an incidental advantage to us has arisen from the very resistance and antagonism which the Government offered us so long. The natives of India must now be fully persuaded that we do not intend to overthrow their religion or to establish our own by the authority of political power or by the prestige of imperial supremacy. It has been difficult to get into their minds the belief that the ruling race was resolved to leave the religion that it professed to its own unaided power in winning the affection and faith of the people. All the claims of this great portion of our empire have surely been wonderfully intensified by the blood and heroism by which it was preserved for us when it was imperilled not many years ago; and now we ought to spare no prayer, no wealth, no men that may be required, in order to carry the work to its ultimate completion and triumph. We ought to pray with intense fervour. We ought to call out the very flower and chivalry of our Christian youth to engage personally in this illustrious service. If I might be permitted, though belonging to another denomination of the Christian Church, to utter my thought, I cannot help saying that I do not believe that the present revenue of your society adequately represents what the churches of the Baptist order might do for this great cause. I cannot see why

the 14,000L a year that you receive in regular contributions for general purposes might not be multiplied very easily three-fold; and let me say that this is not to be done, as I take it, by speeches, no matter how elegant, in this hall, nor by sermons, no matter how impressively delivered elsewhere. I suppose that there are many lay gentlemen in this hall this morning representing Baptist churches scattered all over the kingdom; and let me say to them that the work after all lies mainly in their hands. Do you, lay gentlemen, determine that the local organisations connected with the society shall be worked more vigorously and more regularly than ever—that missionary sermons shall be preached and missionary collections shall be made with relentless punctuality and regularity, no matter in the midst of what local demand. May the churches that you have planted in heathen lands so adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour by purity, by integrity, by holiness in every form, that even their enemies shall be compelled to admit that this Christian faith of ours is a Divine gift for the human race—that it cancels animosities and exalts the life of man in this world, as well as promises him a blessed immortality.

The Rev. J. H. Millard said: It is not a pleasant duty, but it is one from which true Englishmen are seldom known to shrink, to look at the difficulties and dangers of their position steadily in the face. The income of the society during the last year is 5,000L less than it was the year before; less, instead of more, to the extent of one sixth of the entire income of the society.—This is surely a fact worthy of our most serious reflection, and I hope that the judicious advice tendered by the last speaker will be faithfully acted upon by us all. So far as the decrease in the society's income was caused by the Lancashire distress, I cannot say that we have great reason to deplore it. About 1,000L, or scarcely that, is the amount of diminution in the society's income to be ascribed to that cause; and the Lancashire distress, like most of the visitations of our Heavenly Father in His providence, will, I doubt not, prove the parent of great and multiplied blessings. Has it not given birth to a spirit of philanthropy of a more mighty and sovereign power than was ever heard of before? Has it not awakened emotions of pity, of charity, and of brotherly love, which it was well worth any trial and any amount of suffering to have created in the heart of this nation? If the Baptist churches have failed, during the past year, to give so much by a thousand pounds to the Missionary Society, it is so far a cause of regret; but they have contributed six times that amount—nay, I think I shall not exaggerate if I say ten times that amount, to the alleviation of the distress of our suffering brethren in the North. And the fountains of Christian benevolence which have thus been opened will assuredly not be sealed again. We have learnt how much more blessed it is to give than to receive; and when the unhappy occasion for this charity shall have passed away, our gifts will continue to flow as liberally as before, although in other channels, and the Missionary Society, which for the time has suffered loss, will rejoice in a greatly augmented revenue.

I long for the time, as I look abroad upon the earth, and see how the Anglo Saxon race is spreading from clime to clime,—how, with that mighty and irresistible energy which belongs to it, it has assumed the ruling power in most parts of the world,—I long for the time when there shall be complete union amongst the English Baptists, and they shall be able to raise the shout that shall be heard from Pole to Pole—a shout as I think, so much their own—"The Bible, the Bible, alone"; when error in all its forms shall turn pale and die—when the throne of iniquity shall be overturned, and when the empire of darkness shall be destroyed. And as I look back to the past history of this society, as my remembrance directs me, and see the great success which God has caused to rest upon its labours, and how wonderfully He has guided it by the hand of His providence from the commencement to the present day, I cannot suppose that I am indulging in fanatical hopes. Is not the hand of God wonderfully manifested in the first direction of this society as to the field it should occupy? It was not to India that our missionaries turned their steps in the first instance. They had thought of the South Sea Islands; but God led them in His providence to Indian soil, and led them, as I think, without their own knowledge, up to the very fortress and stronghold of Asiatic superstition, into the very heart of the Eastern world, the Italy of Asia, the asylum of Asiatic art, the home of Asiatic ingenious manufactures, the birthplace and cradle of Asiatic philosophy and religion—that was the spot to which God directed the feet of our fathers in order that they might be the instrument in His hand to shake the power of heathenism in its strongest hold. And we have not laboured there without success. The handful of corn scattered on the top of the mountain has already brought forth a harvest. As you have heard, there are no fewer than 30,000 converts to be found in India alone; while in Jamaica still more cheering results have been witnessed for 25,000 converts are there to be found in connection with the Baptist churches alone. And looking to the islands of the South Seas there may be seen changes of the most marvellous description—savages of the lowest type having become civilised and Christian. And be sure of this, that the Gospel has yet greater triumphs in store. I have said that when our fathers went to India it was to storm the fortress of the atheism of the East. But they little understood that this was the very fortress which, when it should be taken, would become to them the citadel from whence Christianity should command the East. But such I believe it is to be. That fortress soon poured forth upon them its terrible fires. It was a solemn period for them

I think it was a solemn moment with the angels in heaven—when they saw our apostolic army first entering on Indian soil; they knew it was the signal for the commencement of a conflict which could only terminate in the destruction of Asiatic superstition. Fearful were the fires that were poured forth upon our fathers' heads, but they stood bravely in the position which they had taken up. It was a fearful day when that fleet of iron-clads entered the harbor of Charleston a few weeks ago. Silently, a little behind, the ships stole over the harbor bar, between the fortresses which on either side were prepared to open upon them their batteries of 300 guns. Around the harbour three miles of batteries—cannon on every sand-hill—every mouth prepared to belch forth its thunders upon the devoted ships! The battle which raged there for thirty minutes, was a fearful struggle. When one of the iron-clads sank, and when the walls of one massive fortress were rent asunder, the terrible solemnity of the scene was heightened, as the action proceeded. India, Sir, is our Charleston, our Sebastopol, for there the fire of the enemy was concentrated upon our fathers, who stood the shock with heroic bravery. We do not wonder that the iron-clads withdrew from Charleston harbour, acknowledging their humiliating defeat. But our iron-clads never do withdraw. They can perish at their post, but they cannot abandon it. Carey did not abandon it; Marshmen did not abandon it; the brave men who had taken up position under the walls of the enemy felt they were to conquer or to die, and in the arms of victory many of them have fallen. Shall there not be a band of successors to follow in their steps? Are there not heroic and ardent hearts amongst the young men of England at the present day? Are there not those who emulate the spirit of our forefathers, those who may be said to have inhaled the spirit of our fathers repaired—the spirit of a Carey, a Marshman, a Martin, a Brainard? Is their spirit quenched within us, their degenerate descendants? God forbid: let the youths of England devote themselves to this missionary work—let them come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. And the Lord Himself is preparing the way. Do we not see on all hands how He is opening pathways, if we are but prepared to take possession of the land. He is breaking up the fallow ground on every side; it is for us to go and scatter in the seed, which we have hitherto scattered with too sparing a hand. What mean these convulsions of the nations on every side? What mean these changes of dynasty—these shrieks from Poland—the moans of Russia—the groans that come across the Atlantic? What do these things mean. That God Himself, with His own hand, is shaking the nations, preparing a highway for the triumphal chariot of His Son!

After another speech, the Secretary announced that 520L had been contributed since the commencement of the meeting towards the reported deficiency. The meeting then closed.

Original Sketch.

For the Christian Messenger.

Excelsior, or higher, still higher.

(Concluded.)

CHAPTER 5.

"The tide of time has wandered on,
And rolled o'er birthdays many a year,"

since we last looked upon Minnie Weston just entering life with all its wealth of pleasure spread out before her. A bright sky of promise seemed above her; and this world appeared but as a path-way of flowers—of roses without thorns—of joy without grief—of happiness without alloy; but now the heavy hand of time has left its impress upon the once fair brow, and the once youthful locks are thickly interlined with silver.

Wealth had opened its broad and pleasant avenues to her—its pomps and vanities had dazzled her heart, and in them she had willingly strayed.

Time has passed on taking year after year with him into eternity. Years of worldly happiness they were; and Minnie had almost forgotten that the happiness she possessed was not the true and lasting joy until trials and troubles had come round her and she was called to drink the cup of sorrow to the very dregs. She had passed through the deep waters of adversity; yet that had not quite gone over her; she had only been purified from earthly dross, leaving the pure gold making her rich for eternity. She had suffered woe, she had wept for sin, and now she stood white and pure before the everlasting gates purified and fitted for heaven. In the midst of her trouble she ever seemed to hear a voice saying, "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee." It had seemed as a star suddenly shining through a dark sky, and at last worn and weary of earth and earthly things she looked "Higher, still higher," far above the cares of this world and found the only true and lasting happiness in heaven.

She had known much of pleasure—much of happiness; but alas! much of pain and much of sorrow. Now she could look upon the trials and afflictions through which she had passed as com-