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Poetry.

"HIMSELF HATH DONE IT"

ISAIAH 38: 16.

"Himself hath done it" all! O, how those words
Should hush to silence every murmuring
thought.
"Himself hath done it"—He who loves me
best—
He who my soul with His own blood hath
bought.
"Himself hath done it." Can it then be sought
Than full of wisdom—full of tender love?
Not one unneeded sorrow will He send,
To teach this wandering heart no more to
rove.
"Himself hath done it." Yes, although se-
vere
May seem the stroke, and bitter the cup,
'Tis His own hand that holds it; and I know
He'll give me grace to drink it meekly up.
"Himself hath done it." O, no arm but His
Could e'er sustain beneath earth's dreary
load.
But while I know He doeth all things well,
My heart His loving kindness questions not.
"Himself hath done it." He who searched
me through,
Sees how I cling to earth's ensnaring ties,
And so He breaks each reed on which my soul
Too much for happiness and joy relies.
"Himself hath done it." He who would have
me see
What broken cisterns human friends must
prove;
That I may turn and quench my burning
thirst
At His own fount of everlasting love.
"Himself hath done it." Then I fain would
say—
Thy will in all things ever more be done;
Even though that will remove whom best I
love.
While Jesus lives I cannot be alone.
"Himself hath done it." Precious, precious
words!
Himself—my Father, Savior, Brother,
Friend!
Whose faithfulness no variation knows—
Who, having loved me, loves me to the
end.
And when, in His eternal presence blest,
I as His fact my crown, immortal cast.
I'll gladly own, with all His ransomed saints,
"Himself hath done it" all from first to
last!
—Congregationalist.

Religious.

DR. WARREN ON MISSION- ARY WORK.

[Dr. J. G. Warren, who has for a number of years held the office of Corresponding Secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union has commenced a series of papers on the question, "How is the work of evangelization among the nations to be accomplished? In other words, How are we Baptists going to do our share of it?" The first of these papers appears in the *Watchman & Reflector* of May 27th on "Our Burman Missions."

This paper opens up a somewhat new phase in the Mission work of the Union, and has an introductory note with the startling caption "The Failure of our Missions in Burmah."

As our own Foreign Missionary work in Burmah has hitherto been more or less in connection with the Union, our readers will be interested to know what Dr. W. says on this subject, especially as his views are the result of very mature thought; and he should be regarded as an authority in such matters. We therefore copy this his first article entire.

The accompanying note says, he, Dr. W., wrote this paper a year ago and laid it aside thinking probably it would be an advance in which but few would sympathize with him. But thinks it is now time it should appear. It would seem very opportune that this expression of opinion, so full of suggestion, should appear just now that we are making our "new departure." It will afford material for serious reflection.—ED.]

OUR BURMAN MISSIONS.

While released from duty at these Rooms it has been my constant aim to throw off care, and as far as possible avoid the most common sources of information on mission subjects. For months together I did not see the *Seelagazine* or *Macedonian*, nor did the weekly papers of the denomination then come under my notice. My

growing difficulty for some time past has been too much thinking, especially at night, and I was determined to cut off food for reflection. I found it, however, difficult to arrest at once the operations of a machine that had been long in motion, and had acquired such a degree of velocity. The general aspects of the undertaking have been often present to my mind, and many times have I found myself pondering questions relating to its future management and final success. These thoughts have, in the main, had reference to Burmah, the field longest occupied by the Missionary Union.

1. It is now more than half a century, to speak exactly, fifty-seven years, since the Executive Committee was organized, and during all these years, that Committee has annually made out a list of appropriations, covering expenditures in every department, to the last dollar and the last cent. The details have been many, minute and complete;—so much for salary of the missionary; so much for personal expenses, as travel and medical bills; so much for house-building and repairs; so much for native helpers, chapels, school-houses, teachers, books, etc.; so much for printing-houses, presses, materials, and all other matters connected with the book making department. To a thoughtful mind the question arises, how long is this practice to be continued? Is it indispensable to a wise and vigorous prosecution of the enterprise? If a limit to its continuance is to be sought, by what means may you hope to reach it? Under its continuance and rigid application, will the missions be likely to attain to the state of self-dependence and support? Has not the time come when steps should be taken to modify this practice, and shift the burden of responsibility to other hands?

2. During all this history of successful missionary work, marked as it is by thousands of converts, by hundreds of churches and native preachers, by half a score of local associations, supplemented recently by a general association for missionary purposes, it is not known that one of your missionaries has received any part of his support from the people for whose benefit he labors, converts or others. It is not known that any of them have signified to the people for whose good they have labored their readiness to accept offerings for the sustenance of themselves and families, or sought to open the way for the incoming of such offerings. So far as is known, no missionary of the Union has placed himself before the people as one worthy to receive, or who ought, in justice, to receive from them, either wholly or in part, the means of his subsistence.

They have, indeed, inculcated lessons of benevolence in respect to other persons; have explained and enforced the duty of churches to erect houses of worship, support native pastors, provide a suitable education for their children, and aid in preaching the Gospel to the heathen around them. But they have refrained from placing themselves, and this is the point I make, they have refrained from placing themselves in the attitude of dependents, worthy and honorable indeed, yet dependents and recipients. Year by year the salary of each man has been drawn to the full from the Treasury of the Union.

I call attention to this fact, not because I think injustice has been done to the Mission Treasury, or those who contribute its funds. The contract made with the missionaries has been met, and no more. Simple justice as between man and man has been done. I bring it forward, not because these men have not, from defects either in motive or not, deserved all they have received. Men of purer intentions, higher aims, more noble and enduring achievements, have seldom lived. If ever workmen were worthy of their hire, these are. They never can be remunerated in money for their exhausting toils and sacrifices.

Still, the fact referred to deserves

careful consideration in reference to its bearing on the question of final success. If this practice is adhered to, will the churches of Burmah ever reach the point of independence? Will the Christian religion gain there, by your agency, a permanent footing? Shall we not be shut up to the necessity of supplying and supporting this class of laborers for fifty or a hundred years to come? Another question, is it not possible that all along we have departed from the plain precept and example of those men who planted Christianity in Palestine and the adjacent regions? Is it not further possible that the managers of missions more than twenty years ago mistook the significance of certain insubordinate movements, as they were deemed, made by some of the missionaries, and that instead of attempting to retain them in the ranks, it had been wiser to allow them freedom of movement, with freedom to gather their support from whatever quarter they might find available, including the people among whom they labored?

3. The third fact to which I would call attention is the existence in Burmah of a general missionary organization, under the name of the Burmah Baptist Missionary Convention. This body is a voluntary association, composed of American missionaries and delegates from native churches. It has been carried on for several years, and, though its formation was regarded by some of the more cautious brethren as a doubtful experiment, its practical workings have vindicated its value and placed it in universal favor. Its last anniversary is spoken of as the most encouraging of all, and here can be

noticed the changes that preceded the formation of this Society. During the first forty years of your history, the missionaries at each station, whether few or many, were organized into what was known as a mission, a body with set rules and regulations, duly appointed officers, and stated meetings for the transaction of business. Its decisions were determined by a majority vote, and were held to be binding on the members. Its deliberations developed more or less diversity of opinion, resulting, in some instances, in a practical rending of the body. Minorities declined to yield to the decision of majorities, and herein was found one cause of the debate and dissension which agitated the public mind twenty years ago. In the reconstruction which followed, these local missions were swept away, and each missionary, instead of being left in the hands of his brethren, even to a limited degree, was made directly and solely responsible to the Executive Committee in Boston.

Under this arrangement things went on for several years, each laborer cultivating his own field in his own way, and with little counsel or co-operation from his brethren. The tendencies too plainly were in the direction of an undesirable isolation, with a corresponding contraction of plans and aims. A need was felt for something that should bring the workmen into closer connection, and combine their energies in a common undertaking, while it should draw out and develop the elements of strength lying dormant in the native Christians. In a favored moment the idea of a general Missionary Society was conceived, whose decisions, nominally binding on none, would be more likely to commend themselves to the judgment and consciences of the members than were those of the small local bodies of the earlier times.

4. In this enumeration I must not forget to mention the fact that Burmah

is a province under British rule, at least all that part of it at present occupied by your mission stations. This being the case, we shall expect to find English people residing there; military and civil officers, merchants and business men, soldiers, mechanics and artisans. These will be found in growing numbers, especially in the seaport towns, and along the navigable streams. As the country becomes better known, its products will be sought, commerce will increase, the wires of the telegraph will run in various directions, to be accompanied by railroads connecting the coast with the interior; all of which will stimulate emigration and swell the number of English residents. With them will go, as an inevitable result, that form of Christianity sanctioned by the government,—the Anglican church, with its altars, priests, bishops, forms of worship, educational and other appliances for the elevation and Christianization of the native population. I do not propose to discuss the merit of these appliances as compared with those which you employ; but simply call attention to the fact that the English Episcopalians are at work in Burmah, and to say in addition, that Burmah being a British Province, they have as good a right to be there as have the Baptists of the United States, and that the tendencies of the times lead us to expect they will increase, both in number and effectiveness, the agencies they employ, and that should we, at once, with a view of pre-occupying the ground, increase our force a hundred fold, that fact would only stimulate them to increase theirs in like ratio. They will surely follow where we go, before and break the escape their presence and their influence, and it remains for us to go forward and do our work with all the energy God shall bestow, leaving the results with Him.

5. A fifth consideration, worthy of distinct mention, relates to the proper sphere of a missionary organization like yours. Its appropriate avocation is that of a pioneer, not a permanent occupant; one who enters and remains for a limited time, doing a specific work, preparatory for those who may come after or be reared on the spot. It is yours to fell the forest, open the ground, cast in the seed, erect the log-cabin, and then push on to a new location. To my mind, this is your appropriate sphere, and one you are in constant danger of disregarding. The tendencies are in the direction of permanent occupancy. In my deliberate judgment, you have already been too long in Burmah, and if you remain there much longer, you will do it to the peril both of the work of Christ in that land, and of yourselves as an organization. The time has come when the Executive Committee is called upon to inquire by what means they may, not cast off the children God has given them, but rather, in the shortest time and the most effective manner, set them on their feet and enable them by the free and full exercise of their powers to develop a sturdy manhood. With this question I call on you to grapple, as the next great problem of missionary polity that claims attention.

As practical measures having this end in view I would suggest,—

1. That you adopt the plan of appropriating, in the aggregate, funds to be used in Burmah, placing them to the credit of the Burmah Baptist Missionary Convention, and devolving on that body the duty of distribution, requiring only an annual statement of the disposition made of them. I would begin at once in a limited way, and having thus tested the practicability of the plan, I would advance step by step till the entire appropriation shall go forward in that form.

2. That the missionaries be requested to consider the subject of receiving their support in part or wholly, from the people among whom they labor, also to take measures to test the disposition of the converts and others on this point. I would ask them to place

themselves in this respect in some such relation to the churches as pastors hold in this country. This I would do, not primarily as a measure to relieve the home department of a burden, but chiefly, I might almost say, solely, for the influence it would have in setting forward the work of evangelization, and putting the whole undertaking on a self-supporting basis; a consummation of prime importance in the estimation of every missionary.

3. That measures be entered upon to place the management of the Printing-Press, the Theological Seminary and the contemplated Collegiate Institute, under the control of the Burmah Convention, that body to appoint Committees or Boards of Trust, to carry out its directions. This plan supposes endowments for the educational department, and a limited fund for printing. The real estate and the permanent funds might be retained for a time by the Union, but should, as soon as practicable, be transferred to the Convention or to Trustees appointed by that body in concurrence with the Executive Committee.

4. That the missionaries be encouraged to secure, in a greater degree than heretofore, the assistance of the local associations in keeping up compounds, mission-houses, school-houses, etc., at the several stations, with the understanding that the entire property shall be made over to them, the local associations, whenever they evince capacity to manage it efficiently. The articles of transfer might, as a prudential measure, contain a clause limiting the uses to be made of it, also stipulating that in case of diversion from such uses the whole should revert to the Missionary Union.

5. That the details of management from the Missionary Union to the Convention in Burmah, and place you in a relation to the work of evangelization in that country similar to what you now hold to Germany, Sweden, Denmark, etc. The same plan I would have extended in due time to Assam, Telooogo, Siam and China, as those several missions develop and mature.

J. G. WARREN, Cor. Sec.
Missionary Rooms, Boston,
August, 1875.

CHURCH FINANCE.

Not liking the system of free seats, and wishing to avoid the evil of high pew rents, the Washington-street Baptist Church of Lynn, Mass., which has lately put up one of the finest houses in the country, has adopted something of a new plan which has yet to be tested by experience. One of its members describes it in the *Watchman and Reflector* as follows: "When we came together to consider the best interests of the church, we determined that it should never be shut to any of God's people who might desire to worship here. The plan of free seats was discussed. Many objections to this appeared. We then thought of making each alternate pew free. This, too, was rejected. The thought of placing a mere nominal price on the pews, and raising the balance needed for the support of worship by subscriptions, did not meet approval. Finally, we united on this plan. We place no price on the seats. To any one desiring to worship with us, we say, 'Select any unoccupied pew in the house which pleases you, then decide how much you feel able and think it your duty to pay for the support of worship, and that shall be your rent.' Thus the one to whom God has given ability to pay 100 dollars, and he whose restricted means allow him to pay but 1 dollar, sit together as neighbors, and none except the collector knows the poor from the rich. As God's treasures, we propose to accept 'according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.' Every man's self-respect is regarded, and all meet together as equals in God's house. We claim