

Stages of the Missionary Work.

There are usually at least four distinct stages in the progress of the Gospel, whenever it is introduced to a new community. The first is strictly that of **INTRODUCTION**;—in which the missionary or the native preacher simply becomes located at a point not previously occupied, and prepares there, as an unaided and isolated man, to communicate the truth to others and to endeavor to enlist their interest in it. The second may be called the stage of **ESTABLISHMENT**;—when a small body of learners and friends has gathered around the teacher; when his right to instruct in the principles of Christianity has become either formally or tacitly recognised by the authorities; when he has got his general system of operations arranged, and his machinery in operation; when, in a word, as a permanent resident he has completed his preparations, has begun to teach, and has formed a nucleus of hearers who shall finally become helpers. Then comes the **third stage**, or what may be called the period of **ACTIVE INSTRUCTION**. Those with whom the missionary comes familiarly into contact are sedulously indoctrinated by him in the Christian system; they are taught indeed in *all* the departments of truth related to that—history, geography, astronomy, even mental philosophy, the languages and the mathematics. Schools are formed for the instruction of others. Preaching services become regular and frequent. Books or tracts are prepared, printed, and circulated among the people, to commend Christianity and to expose the absurdity of the existing systems. Knowledge is diffused; in respect to the political ideas and institutions, the habits of life, the general modes of thought which prevail in Christian communities; in respect especially to the history, the claims, and the nature of the Bible. And so by degrees a great mass of information, previously unthought of, is pressed into the popular mind. A wide circle of persons become acquainted more or less fully with the claims and character of the Scriptures, with the nature of Christianity, and with the truths it teaches concerning God, the Future, and the way of salvation. The bands of ancient systems are loosened from the mind; and a great number are brought into a state of inquiry and uncertainty, and partial enlightenment. A few, perhaps, come to the clear embrace of the Gospel, and find in it their hope and life.

Then comes the fourth period; the period *i. e.* of **GENERAL CONVERSION**; when the Spirit of God is poured out upon the minds and hearts thus partially illuminated; when the truth comes home to the soul in its personal pressure upon the conscience and the heart; when one convinced of sin or joyful in Christ, awakens or animates another, until great numbers—in whom the process of silent preparation has long been going on—become at once Christians in heart, the friends of the Saviour, the heirs of Heaven. A multitude is born as it were in a day. And so is the work, for the time and in that community, consummated; and the missionary either departs to go through the same general process at another point which has opened before him, or he remains to carry forward the work of evangelization through substantially the same latter stages in other classes of the same community.

If the churches and their ministers would bear in mind these obvious facts, they would never be discouraged because instant or continuous revivals are not reported; because little visible progress seems sometimes to be made. They would see that the great work of spreading the Gospel through the World is really and rapidly although so silently progressing; is progressing at points almost innumerable.—They would feel that wherever the work of instruction is going on, there is ground for encouragement; that wherever the smallest circle has been interested in the truth, there is reason for rejoicing; nay, that wherever a missionary or a native preacher has entered a new locality and begun to operate therein, it is reason for gratitude and increased effort; for the final outcome of that germ shall be the gathering of souls into the Saviour's kingdom. There are intermediate stages to be passed through before the end is reached; but the power of God's Truth, and the promise of His Spirit, and the courses of His Providence, make its final attainment as certain as the sunrise; and the previous stages are just such as should have been anticipated.—*N. Y. Independent.*

MACAULAY'S ENGLAND.—The sale of Mr. Macaulay's work had reached, it is said the enormous number of 14,000 copies.

God's Testimony against Sin.

1. By the execution of every individual of all the millions that perished in the flood: by the overwhelming of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone from heaven; by the plagues of Egypt; by the sentence of death against the Canaanites; by the destruction of the Jewish nation and the fearful miseries brought upon Jerusalem in its first capture; and by the still more dreadful woes it suffered in its last destruction; God testified against the sins that caused them. Each of these events was God's testimony against specific sins, made by the execution of the multitude of persons that perished in it.

The public execution of *one* person is a solemn and impressive testimony of the State against the sin that made it necessary. How unutterably solemn and impressive, then, is the testimony borne against sin by the execution of all those millions.

2. By all the weariness of labour ever felt; by all the torments of guilt and shame in all ages past; by all the pains of sickness ever endured; by all the terrors of death suffered, from the fall of Abel to this hour; God has given testimony to every soul of man against sin. By these all, He has been saying to men and still says, "*Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.*"

3. By all the torments of anger, envy, and malice; by all the miseries of discontent, disappointment and fear; by all the griefs caused by ingratitude, unfaithfulness, and neighborhood and family quarrels; by all the ruin of character, happiness, and property, and the deaths of millions, of the victims of intemperance and lewdness; and by all the horrors of war, or the bloody field, and in the desolated homes of the *thousands of millions* that it has destroyed; God bears, and long has borne, witness against the sins that caused them.

4. By every throb of pain; and every sigh of sorrow; and every tear of grief; and every groan of agony; and every shriek of anguish; that has been felt, and seen, and heard on earth; He has raised high the voice of His testimony against sin, and thundered in the ears of men, "*Oh, do not that abominable thing that I hate.*"

5. By all the sacrifice that Jesus made; by all the contempt He bore; by all the insults He endured; by all the pains He suffered; by every drop of that bloody sweat, and every stroke of that fearful scourging; by all the agonies of the crucifixion, and all the horrors of soul that came upon Him then; God bears testimony against "the sins that made Him die."

6. By every command in His Word forbidding it, and every threatening of punishment for it; by all the dread wailings and gnashing of teeth announced by Christ; by the torments of the fire that is never quenched, and the dreadfulness of the worm that never dies; by all the fearfulness of everlasting punishment in the "fire prepared for the devil and his angels;" God declares His solemn, earnest, and eternal testimony against sin.

Could all the sounds of woe that sin has caused already, be united in one remonstrance against it, how would it thunder in our ears and appal our hearts!

Reader, is it not enough? Has not God testified sufficiently against sin? If all those testimonies are not sufficient to deter men from it, what of testimony, what that God *could* say or do, without destroying their free agency, would deter them from it? If others heed it not, hear it for yourself. Consider it well. Note, that with the united power of all this testimony, He is virtually saying to you "*Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.*"

Observe that he has said of some, "As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient." Unwillingness to remember God, if you long indulge it, will move Him to give you over to a reprobate mind and you may do things that you now abhor. Alienation from God is the root of sins and miseries. Your only safety is in keeping up an habitual remembrance and acknowledgement of Him.—*N. Y. Observer.*

The Achievements of Science and Literature.

COMPARED WITH THOSE OF MISSIONS.

The Rev. James Hill, truly and beautifully said, at the late anniversary of the London Missionary Society:—

We have frequently heard much of what can be done by science and literature to raise a noble and a fine people. We admit it to the

friends of science—we admit that there is a power about it; and we say to them, You ought to be our friends, for we are your friends: we are aiming to carry out your objects by means much more powerful than your own, or any you have at hand. It is one thing to sit down and draw a beautiful picture of science, and it is another to bring it to bear on the minds of a horde of savages. It is easy for a man to sit down in his study and draw the picture; but where is that man, that philosopher, that literary man, who is willing to leave his home, and his country, and his kindred, to reside amongst savages, in order to raise them from the state of degradation and ignorance in which they are, and make them a civilized people? Point us out the man who has ever done it. Where is the philosopher or the literary man who has acted like our own Moffatt—(Applause)—who has spent a quarter of a century teaching the heathen, and raising them up to civilization? Where is the tribe, or the clan, or the nation, that they have redeemed from their wandering habits, or have induced to give up their dependence upon the chase—where the tribe, or clan, or nation, which they have brought to social order, happiness, and peace? Show us your triumphs, so that we may know your God—tell us the things you have done, that we may be dismayed. But yours is nothing and is not. Now, travel with us to the fields of Christian missions. We it is who, in many of those islands, have put a stop to the offering of human sacrifice—we it is who in many of these islands have put a stop to the cruelties of desolating war—we it is who have rescued infants from the destroyer—we it is who have introduced learning, and many useful arts, among the savage nations—it is we who have caught the fleeting sound of a merely spoken language and have given it form, and the embodiment of a written language. We introduced the printing press, that mighty moral agent of advancement; we introduced the Bible, the fountain of all sublime thought, the very source of all true morality—that repository from which alone we can derive the truest facts of the truest history. What did all this but the efforts, the noble efforts of the Missionaries, who carried the Gospel of the Lord Jesus into all lands? Therefore we say to the friends of science, You ought to be our friends, because we are yours.

The Influence of Man on his Fellow Man.

When we come to examine the constitution of society we shall find ourselves surrounded by an atmosphere of influence in which every element is in constant vigorous action and reaction. Here man speaks, and eloquence is born; he sings, and poetry melts and entrances; he desires, and art becomes his handmaid; he defines and resolves, and law reigns; he reasons, and philosophy ascends her throne; he unites his will with the will of his fellow men, and a world of his own appears. Here every word projects an influence and acquires a history. Every action draws after it a train of influence. Every individual is a center constantly radiating streams of influence. From the first moment of his active existence his character goes on daily and hourly streaming with more than electric fluid—with a subtle, penetrating element of moral influence. A power this which operates involuntarily; for, though he can choose in any given instance what he will do, yet, having done it, he cannot choose what influence it shall have. It operates universally, never terminating on himself, but, extending to all within his circle, emanates from each of these again as from a fresh circle, and is thus transmitted on in silent but certain effect to the outermost circle of social existence. It is indestructible; not a particle is ever lost, but the whole of it taken up into the general system, is always in operation somewhere. And the influence which thus blends and binds him up with his race, invisible and impalpable as it is, is yet the mightiest element of society.—*Harri's Man Primeval.*

Christ as a Preacher.

He spake as never man spake. I wish that all preachers would study less Blair's Belles Letters and Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric; less mechanical prescriptions and rules for making, what they always do make, most mechanical sermons; but that they would study more our Lord's sermons. How exceedingly simple, yet how sublime! words so plain that a child can understand them—thoughts so deep that an archangel's mind cannot fathom them. He spoke in the most childlike

terms, and yet never in childish terms. There was no turgid straining of language, no bombastic metaphors, like poppies in a corn-field, no swollen words and blazing similes; all was simple, direct, pure. In every Sabbath-school children can listen to, and be delighted with, and comprehend the beautiful parables of Jesus; and yet wherever you meet with a true philosopher, wearied with his flight through the universe in search of truth, you will find one who feels that he can pillow his head and sooth his heart by reading the simple and eloquent words of the Lord Jesus. Our Lord was not only an example of the perfect believer, but he was also an example of the perfect preacher. And I do believe, though men do not naturally like the Gospel—while the human heart, before it is sanctified, is enmity to the Gospel—that wherever a Christian minister will just speak God's truth in the simple language in which it should be spoken, he will not be without thirsty hearts and anxious souls to listen to him. A great many sermons, I fear, (without passing judgement upon others) are like the play of summer lightning far up in the clouds, while all is dark below. The meaning of preaching is not to make an eloquent exhibition before you, but to make a heart-stirring, conscience converting appeal to you. What a minister is to do is not to please his people, but to speak to the heart and consciences of his people. Let him care little if there be sometimes a crooked sentence or an awkward metaphor, and sometimes a plain saying that displeases the critically fastidious taste of editors. I do not mind if I have displeased some cultivated taste, some accomplished *literateur*, if I can be the means of awakening some conscience, and giving peace to some wounded spirit, and the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.—*Rev. Dr. Cumming.*

STATISTICS OF THE SOUL.

I would to God statistics could be taken from within men as well as without. We can count their myriad numbers, record their ages, mark down, where they live, register their stocks and count their sales. We know what seas receive their ships, and whither they send from fertile shores the vast productions. But who has yet taken register of morning hopes, and traced them to their evening exit? Who has noticed the mind's distraction, the alert fear, the wronged conscience, the chafed temper, the burning stream of avarice, driving on the grinding machinery? Who has shown the daily strokes by which the onward graver has traced those hieroglyphics on the forehead which need no Champollin to decipher? We know what man is on the outside—in his noise and mad whirl: but only God knows what a man is within. Six thousand annual suns have lighted the path of human desire to the eye of God. The registration of six thousand years of trial after happiness lies in the recording books of Heaven. On earth history records and grossly here and there a feature of the landscape; but in Heaven we see the secret history; not temples, but the vanity of the builder and groan of the labourers; not the throne, but the heart of the restless occupant; not ships and shops, but the rise and result of these goading desires that employed them;—not the palace and the mansion, but the dull plethora, walking in feverish desire, relapsing through craving gnawing ennui to gloomy unrest. Looking upon the passage of the human heart through life, God breaks forth and gives the secret of his own joy to man. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Ah! the chronometer has hitherto been wound up backwards. No wonder it kept on time.—*H. W. Beecher.*

Rome with and without the Pope.

Rome bids fair to retain to the last that marvellous quality by which her history has been characterized all along. The fables of early times have become realities in our day, and the latter end of this city promises to be more remarkable even than its beginning.—What a singular drama is that in which she has figured so conspicuously of late! No page of her wonderful annals is more wonderful, or, indeed, fraught with an interest of so high a kind, as is her history during the past month. A terrible storm has been lowering over her, but an unseen hand has restrained its fury, just as it seemed on the point to burst out, and sweep the devoted city from the face of the earth. Every day has appeared as if it were the last that Rome was destined to behold; but still she survives, and every day with