

Christians and Heathens.

It is far more true to say that Christianity exterminates the heathen than that it converts and civilizes them. They are compelled to wear clothes; become no whit more modest, but do become more susceptible to cold and disease. It introduces virtues and vices with which they were before unacquainted. The virtues are hard to acquire, but the vices are easily picked up. Missionary reports are full of assurances of the prevalence of piety and the signal triumphs of divine grace among the converted heathen. But secular travellers tell another tale. Their testimony in India, Africa and Australasia is that a Christianized native is a native spoiled—one who is pretty sure to have acquired Christian vices, while losing simple native virtues. In parts where the Anglo-Saxon can colonize, the natives are being exterminated by disease and drink. The process seems one which it is difficult to avert, but it is nonetheless deplorable. Sir Richard Burton, and many other eminent African travellers, have given their testimony that the evils of the slave trade are not greater than those produced by drink introduced by Christian traders; that Islam, with temperance and the curse of slavery, is not so bad as Christianity with the curse of drunkenness. In China the inhabitants at least ascribe the curse of opium to Christian influence. Wong Chin Foo, the Chinese writer of "Why I Am a Heathen", in the North American Review, said:

"When the English wanted the Chinaman's gold and trade, they said they wanted to open China for missionaries. And opium was the chief—in fact, only—missionary they looked after when they forced the ports open. And this infamous Christian introduction among Chinamen has done more injury, social and moral, in China than all the humanitarian agencies of Christianity could remedy in two hundred years. And on you Christians, and on your greed of gold, we lay the burden of the crime resulting; of tens of millions of honest, useful men and women sent thereby to a premature death after a short, miserable life, besides the physical and moral prostration it entails, even where it does not prematurely kill! And this great national curse was thrust on us at the points of Christian bayonets. And you wonder why we are heathen."

Dr. Robert Needham Cust testifies in the current Asiatic Quarterly Review that the condition of the people of Africa under the discreditable game of grab, carried on at their expense by France, Germany and England, has been such that "the sufferings of Armenia under the Turk are as nothing in comparison." The entire population of one hundred and thirty millions has been injuriously affected. But I must cite Dr. Cust, and let him

take the responsibility of his own words:

"Attila and Genghis Khan could not have done worse than these nominal Christian states. Murder; confiscation, rapine, have been the results. Deception and diplomacy have been the machinery. Lust of land and gold have been the motive power. What a mockery it seems with one hand to stop the deportation of slaves and with the other to introduce millions of casks of acoholic liquors! One missionary reports his landing from a ship with ten thousand gallons of alcohol. Lord Salisbury is credited with the assertion that the settlement of missionaries in a region to which they had come to preach the gospel helped to make up the proof of the occupation of the region, which was required to justify a claim to its sovereignty! Treaties were made by missionaries, scientific explorers, designing speculators, and the chief who put his mark to a treaty knew not what he was doing; the brandy bottle was placed generally by his side, and the pen put in his hand: he often in ignorance assigning the same lands to rival adventurers.

"Throughout there was an utter neglect of the interests of the unhappy population; they were to be saved indeed from deportation across the Atlantic to a country in which men of the same blood have developed into nine millions of freed men (citizens of the United States) in a stage of European culture; they were to remain at home and be slaves there, to see their lands and cattle confiscated, their villages destroyed; their chieftains, like poor Bushiri, hung by the Germans; their women, as in the Cameroons, flogged by the 'most cultured' Europeans, or worse. The missionaries of different denominations and churches flock in, and become a portion of the conquering race; one missionary near lake Nyanza is said to have actually hanged a man—another missionary near Victoria Nyanza to have burned a village—some sections of Christians actually wage war with other sections. Things are done which would seem to be impossible out of Pandemonium, and yet this is complacently described as the advance of civilization and Christianity."

The pretext can no more apply to Central and Northern Africa than to India. We can neither kill out nor replace the dark races in torrid regions. But we can make their lives miserable or help to make them brighter. It is in vain to speak of the benefits of colonization in equatorial regions. But that is no reason they should not have the benefits of civilization. The national conscience needs quickening in this matter. There used to be a British and Foreign Aborigines Protection Society; but I have seen no evidence of its existence for a long time. Races that have for ages elaborated a social polity of their own are being stamped out before even an attempt is made to understand them. Our missionaries go to them with an intolerant faith, claiming exclusive possession of truth, and with a fetich book which warrants the extermination of idolaters. What wonder that the hea-

then are treated as little better than noxious animals? How different it might be if missionaries were simply bent on improving the secular lives of the heathen, instead of preparing them for kingdom come.—[J. M. Wheeler, in Freethinker.

LITTLE TORCHES.

By W. E. Johnson

Sermons to be good, like griddle cakes, must be served while hot.—[The Methodist Recorder.

Yes, and like griddle cakes they must be "greased" so that the average man can swallow them without being choked.

Those who love for what they hope to get are actuated more by passion or the spirit of greed than by love.—[Southwestern Christian Advocate.

Just so! A soul that loves a murderous god for the hope of getting a front seat, harp and halo in the happy land comes directly under that classification.

Christ never argued much with skeptics, but he asked them some pretty knotty questions.—[The Midland.

True, Christ did not argue with the "skeptics", he was a sort of a skeptic himself. All his troubles were with the theologians. He was murdered by godly folks because he was not "orthodox". Christ was the original "infidel".

In the Scriptures the sin of unbelief is invested with peculiar condemning power.—[Christian Work, Nov. 4.

You still have the nerve to insist that "unbelief" in some abstract disputed theological proposition, is a greater offense than train robbery, horse stealing, wife beating or murder. How can you expect a sane man to take stock in any such idiocy?

Brethren, it is alarming. In some congregations I find the elders whose duty it is to feed the flock and who should be an example to the same, living in adultery, and yet the matter passes unnoticed by the church.—[G. W. Williams, in the Gospel Echo.

There now, Mr. Williams, don't get excited. Don't you see that these "elders" are simply following in the footsteps of old dady Abraham, Uncle Lot, David the King, Solomon and other sacred writers and Prophets, favored of God.

Our Neighbor's Religion.

No man can distinguish his own faults and follies half so clearly as he can those of his neighbors. And what is true of men is true of nations also. National prejudices are no less strong than are personal ones. It is not easy to appreciate their strength and their number until we visit other countries and

institute extensive comparisons between them.

Of all national prejudices those of religion are probably the most powerful. The follies which the child of three years is taught to regard as holy, often still cling to the man of thirty. Even when reason denounces them memory pleads their cause. They are associated, perhaps, with our earliest, most joyous recollections. They are hallowed, it may be, by having dropped from the lips of a loved parent or a lost friend. Worthless, nay, even perceived to be worthless, in themselves, they are tolerated, if not cherished, for the sake of the incidental accompaniments, among which we first knew them.

Hence the extreme difficulty of justly judging our own religion. Reason has to combat, not the possessions of the mind alone, but the predilections of the heart. Even when the judgment is convinced, the feelings hold out; and we retain a tenderness towards the grossest fables, because the days when we learned them were the happy days of our youth, and those who taught them were our best and earliest friends.

Connected with any other religion but our own, we have no such associations. Hence the millions who imbibe the religion of their country, for one who is converted, in adult age, to some foreign superstition. Unaided by the easy credulity of infancy, and the magic power of early association, religion is comparatively impotent. Its absurdities are too clearly seen to obtain credence.

We cannot convince ourselves more practically of this than by selecting some foreign religion as a specimen. The blindest among us can see that it is but a convenient bondage to enable the one, or the few, to hold the millions in slavery. The dullest among us can perceive that it has not even common sense or probability, much less infallible wisdom, to recommend it. The examination of a foreign religion, therefore, is very useful. It is one of the most important lessons which history can teach us.—[Investigator.

More Science and Less Bible.

Mrs. R. A. Bell, of Waskom, Texas, sends us her evidence of the civilizing effect of science. The negroes before the Civil War and for some time after it, were very pious, believed in prayers, dreams, and visions, and were the most superstitious people on the face of the earth. But after they had been free a long time, and had acquired some education, she sees that their superstition is wearing away. School books are all scientific, for they teach facts, not religion; thus we see the civilizing of the negroes is the result of science, for they had