

VIEW FROM THE TOWER. MISSION RESULTS IN INDIA.

Our Lord said to the nominal Jewish church, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made ye make him twofold more the child of hell [*gehenna* – the second death] than before." (Matt. 23:15.) The fault on the part of the Jews lay not in the *zeal*, which prompted labor and expense for others (Rom. 10:2), but in the false ideas by which the zeal was inspired, which evidently was in great measure sectarian pride rather than love. The damage done to the Gentiles did not consist in the introduction of immoralities; for the Jews, and the Law of Moses which they took with them, favored morality, and doubtless had thus a good tendency in this respect. The evil consisted in the false ideas which they spread among the Gentiles. They taught that circumcision and the keeping of Moses' law justified to life. They raised their own imperfect lives as standards or illustrations of the demands of the law. By thus raising false standards of righteousness before the Gentiles, and telling them that they could keep the Law and justify themselves by (imperfect) works, they were breaking the very effect the law was designed to have, viz., to show human imperfection and thus point to Christ as the only perfect one, whose *sacrifice* for our sins was all-necessary. They were thus (ignorantly) opposing God and injuring the Gentiles; for, as many of the Gentiles as received their teachings, were in a worse condition, less likely to receive Christ as their Redeemer, than if left in heathen darkness.

We fear that our Master would offer a very similar reproof to much of the missionary effort of our day, done in his name. Even if the moral tone of the heathen people is elevated to some extent, and if education and civilization of manners and customs follow as the good results of missions, it would still be proper to inquire, Is the result favorable to pure Christianity or not? Do the doctrines taught

tend to bring the people into fellowship of spirit with the Master and the [R1072 : page 1] true plan of redemption and salvation, by and through the great Life-giver; or, do they tend to a spirit of fear, and lead to trust in a gloss of morality, as a basis for hope of escape from a vengeful God and a burning hell? Ignoring the question of morals, which may be practiced by infidels as well as by saints, we ask, Is the religious tendency of mission work as now carried on, favorable or unfavorable as a whole?

On this point we have an undesigned answer, given by a Presbyterian missionary, J.C.R. Ewing, D.D., who having spent nine years in mission work in India, is certainly qualified to give an opinion on the general results of mission work there. While on a visit home recently, he delivered a lecture on the subject, before the Y.M.C.A. of this city, from which the following was reported in the local press. He said: –

"India owes more to the direct and indirect influences of Christianity than to any other one thing. It has done much to break down the old idea of material gods, and in its stead set up the idea of a single supreme God, but not the same idea of a God that the people of the West [Europe, etc.] entertain.

Among the 263,000,000 of people in that country there are 10,000,000 young men who speak the English language and who are instructed in the Western ideas that we are taught. The higher caste are thoroughly learned in the literature, the religion and the sciences that are the basis of the education of the people of this country. The old idea of a vengeful God, who must be propitiated by numerous gifts and many prayers has given way to the modern spirit of infidelity. The educated men of the East no longer believe in the gods of their fathers. They have abandoned them forever and replaced them with the teachings of Colonel Robert J. Ingersoll, of Paine, of Voltaire, of Bradlaugh and of every other atheistical and pantheistical teacher. This skeptical age will soon pass away, and the West, just as

it has given India her ideas, will give her the religion of the Christian God, and the people will no more bow down to the God Vishnu, or Corla, the goddess with the necklace of skulls.

The young men of India are well educated, acute observers, intelligent, well posted in all the affairs of other nations besides their own, and though it may seem strange, well acquainted with our Bible. Indeed they know it so well that none but a man thoroughly conversant with its teachings, and the Christian theology, could hope to be able to successfully answer all the objections that they bring forward against it. The popular idea that a missionary sits in the shade of a tree and teaches naked savages who gather around him, is an exploded one. In India the missionary meets intelligent and educated men, and he must be well equipped to influence them. They are, besides being intelligent a fine looking people, amiable, courteous, gentlemanly, and treat all foreigners with the greatest consideration and respect."

Thus, while telling us of his great hopes, this gentleman honestly confesses that missionary influences tend far more toward infidelity than toward Christianity; and that it is the intelligent class who become infidels, and only a few of the ignorant and young that accept of Christ, is to be implied from his statement, as well as from the more direct testimony of other missionaries.

Where is the fault? It is with the doctrines taught, which are neither Scriptural, nor truthful, nor reasonable. The effect of these false teachings is to embitter one class against Christ and every thing connected with his name, and to prejudice and enslave another class by fear, to the service and spread of error. Thus, while perhaps morally elevated, those people are less ready to receive *the truth* than if they had never seen or heard the false gospel.

Nor is the effect very different nearer home. Here too, we see the same bad fruit of false doctrine. As knowledge increases, it is rapidly driving the thinking class into either active infidelity, or passive doubt

and unbelief. The majority of the young people brought into the various sects are merely credulous and deluded unbelievers. Calling themselves Christians, and supposing that they are such, they are really nearly as ignorant of the doctrines, and words, and spirit of Christ, as the heathen. They are really farther from the kingdom of God, by reason of their delusion, than if they were totally ignorant of Christ.

It is far from our thought to intimate that all who are zealously engaged in promulgating the false doctrines referred to, are destitute of the spirit of Christ. Quite the contrary; there are such, who hold on to Christ by faith, notwithstanding the tendencies of false doctrines, handed down from Papacy, to overthrow their faith in God.

To some of those to whom the Lord had said, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made he is twofold more the child of gehenna than yourselves," Peter said, "I wot that ye did it ignorantly, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17.) So now many of God's children who teach falsely, and thus exercise an injurious influence on the world, do it as unintentionally as did Saul before he saw the great light in the way and found that he was opposing the Messiah whose cause he before supposed he was serving.

Mr. Ewing has a hope without foundation, when he believes that the infidelity of India is a step nearer to God and Christ than their former conscientious idolatry. Not so; they have been injured deeply by these false doctrines; just as infidels here are injured. They are farther from Christ and harder than ever to reach. Bible truth can convert an infidel, but sectarianism never. Although the Millennial age shall bring all to a clear comprehension of the truth, these infidels will, we doubt not, be far *slower* to receive the truth than if they were still in heathen darkness. And many of those young and ignorant converts are injured also, they are prejudiced against the truth and in favor of errors to such an extent that it will be more difficult to convert

them to the truth than if left in total ignorance of Christ until the truth in its purity, simplicity and grandeur shall be taken to them.

And when the gospel shall be preached to every creature, during the Millennial age, we have no doubt that many simple, unprejudiced ones, who make no profession of Christianity, will hear and receive the truth much more readily than some who have been Christians in name, but not in deed and in truth. – Matt. 7:22.

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