

VIEW FROM THE TOWER. HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

In traveling abroad during the past Summer, one important object was to learn by actual observation something of the present condition and progress of Foreign Mission work, and to this end, had time been at our command, we would have liked to extend our tour a little further across the seas to India. However, we had opportunities in Turkey, Syria, Palestine and Egypt, which may be justly regarded as fair samples of foreign missionary effort and success. And those observations have led to a careful reconsideration of the entire subject of gospel missionary work both from the standpoint of Scripture testimony and from the standpoint of human theory and practice. Our findings upon the subject we submit to our readers.

Foreign Missions, *i.e.*, efforts to reform and proselyte barbarous peoples, have been popular among Christian people since the third century; but, strange as the statement may at first appear to many, we have no record of *such* efforts being made by the Apostles or under their direction during the first century. This, however, was not because the gospel is not free to all – barbarian or Scythian, bond or free – but because the apostles found plenty and more than they could do to spread a knowledge of the gospel among the civilized Jews and Gentiles, and found no time, therefore, for going among the barbarous and uncivilized, though they never passed by the poor, the slaves, or any class manifesting "an ear to hear" the truth. They evidently expected to find and did find more with "ears to hear" among those civilized peoples who had "their senses exercised by reason of use." Having right ideas concerning the work of the Gospel age, their efforts were always expended upon the most hopeful material. No doubt, had the time ever come when all the civilized peoples had been thoroughly

evangelized and indoctrinated, they would have extended their efforts as far as possible – even to the barbarians. But that condition of things was not reached in their day, and some of us believe that it is not reached even yet.

True, the Apostle to the Gentiles went on so-called "missionary journeys" for years, in the cities near the Mediterranean sea, but those were not "Foreign Missions" in the sense that this term is now understood. The peoples whom he visited, so far from being barbarians, were the most civilized and cultured peoples of the world. Nor can it be said that he did this because there were no barbarians; for Africa with its millions was just alongside his home; and some of the islands of the Mediterranean had plenty of uncivilized people or "barbarians," too. Yet the Apostle went past these to the chief cities of the world – to Athens and to Rome, the centers of civilization and education – when he went to preach the gospel.

On the contrary, however, the book of the Acts of the Apostles – a history of the mission work of the first century – although it tells us of Paul's shipwreck upon the island of Melita, **[R1347 : page 4]** inhabited by "barbarians," among whom he was obliged to spend the three winter months, and of how he healed the sick among them, tells us not one word about any missionary effort made among those "barbarians," nor of any converts or church left there when he journeyed onward in the Spring.

It is common at Foreign Missionary meetings in this day to represent the barbarians as stretching out their hands to Christians and saying, "Come over and help us!" as in a dream the Apostle Paul saw a man of Macedonia calling him. And this generally passes for a good parallel illustration, because people forget that Macedonia, instead of being in "darkest Africa," was that region lying northward of Athens and in every way one of the most

civilized states of the world at that time. It was among these intelligent people that the Apostle labored so successfully, establishing the truth among the noble people of Thessalonica to whom he afterward wrote two of his noted epistles. There, too, he founded another congregation among the yet more noble Bereans, and there also another congregation at Philippi, to whom another of his noted epistles was afterward addressed.

The fact that some of the Apostle's converts were "slaves" counts nothing against their intelligence, for the slaves of the rich were often hostages taken in war, and were frequently as well or better educated than their masters. It is plain, then, that the missionary efforts of the apostles were made among the most intelligent of their day, and not among the barbarians.

It may be urged that our Lord's command was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."* But this expression has gradually come to have a very different meaning from what the apostles could have understood it to signify. To them it meant substantially this: I have heretofore confined my own efforts and yours to the Jews, and would not permit you to preach to the Gentiles; but now the Jewish or Law Dispensation is at an end; the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles is broken down; and now, therefore, I instruct you to preach the good tidings without respect to race – to any and every creature who has an ear to hear it.

*These words are omitted by oldest Greek MSS.

That the Apostle Paul so understood our Lord's teaching is proved by his conduct: he preached the gospel to all who would hear him – to the Jew first and also to the Greek – and was "*willing* to preach the gospel" to the people of Rome also, although they were less intelligent than the people of Achaia and Macedonia (Greece). But while such fields for usefulness among intelligent peoples were open, he evidently was *unwilling* to go

on a modern foreign missionary tour amongst degraded barbarians totally unprepared for the "high calling," which alone, Paul knew, was the divine call due to be given during the Gospel age.

Nor would it have been right for the apostles, as wise master-builders, to spend their efforts upon the unfruitful barbaric fields while a more fruitful one lay open. They were bound to remember the other injunctions of the Word – that the gospel is to be preached "to the *meek*" (those ready to be taught) and to "him that hath an ear to hear" – a desire to know God's plan. They knew, too, that the present "high calling," so far from being a call *of the world*, is a call for the purpose of selecting *from* the world a choice "little flock" to be the bride of Christ and his joint-heir in a glorious kingdom, to be established for the blessing of the whole world during an age to follow – the Millennium or thousand years reign of Christ for which he taught us to pray "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Consequently, when once they had presented the subject clearly, if the hearers scoffed, the apostles did not coax or urge and plead with them, but sought for others having "ears to hear," concluding that, for the time at least, such as rejected their message were *unworthy* of the knowledge and the call. See Acts 28:22-31.

In the second and third centuries, when the gospel message became well known in the civilized [R1348 : page 4] parts of the world (Italy and Greece), zealous Christians began to branch out, carrying the gospel to what is now Germany, the people of which were gradually becoming more civilized and intelligent. But it was not until about the fifth century, when the doctrine of the eternal torment of all not believing in Christ had been [R1348 : page 5] generally accepted, that foreign missions among the barbaric races became popular.

This unscriptural doctrine, that all who do not accept of Christ in this present life will be everlastingly tortured, is still the

unholy, inglorious and God-dishonoring basis of activity on behalf of the heathen in the present foreign missionary enterprises.

We are not sorry to see time and money spent upon the poor, ignorant barbarians; but we do sincerely regret that they should be so spent as to add to their superstitious fears. If this money and time were spent in teaching the uncivilized and half-civilized peoples the simple arts of civilized life – how to build, how to sew, how to cook, and how to live comfortably upon their meager incomes, it would be a *good* work; and if in addition they were taught *the truth* regarding the Lord's plan, or even given the Bible unexplained, it would be a still better work. But when little is done except to pervert the gracious promises of the Bible, it would be far better if the heathen were left in their former darkness until the true, pure sunlight of the Millennial Kingdom shall reach and bless them all.

To imagine, however, that all the missionaries or all who give for the support of missions do so because of the belief that the barbarians will all go to eternal torment except such as learn of and accept Christ would be a mistake. Many have clearer heads, and the hearts and hopes of others are better than their heads. A few probably go abroad as missionaries for the glory and novelty of the thing, and because their support there is guaranteed, while here it would be precarious; but the majority, we are glad to believe, go forth with a sincere desire to do good in the name of the Lord. They go because they think it is the best way of serving the Lord. They see the civilized world full of churches and pastors, and hence look beyond for fields of usefulness. They do not consider intelligently enough the doctrines of these churches, and perhaps blindly give assent to the one proposing to send them out, not considering how much of error they go forth to bind upon the heathen, nor that a better work would be to get themselves right with God and his Word, and then to help other members of the

body of Christ at home into the true light and life of entire consecration and holiness.

Likewise with the moneys donated for this cause: While much of the missionary funds is collected in a sectarian spirit, each denomination striving not to be outshone by others; and while a few of the contributors probably give to missions to be seen and approved of men, no doubt the great majority give from noble, good motives – unto the Lord, to do good to fellow creatures – not considering, and in some cases not knowing, how much more necessity there is at home for their every talent in feeding, purifying and clothing the multitudes, both spiritually and temporally.

Present Protestant missionary efforts may be said to date from A.D. 1792, although the Moravians and others in a small way did considerable before that. To say that no good is accomplished by these missions, their pastors and teachers would be an untruth. They are doing good, although in a different way and to a much less degree than is generally presumed. Take, for instance, Syria: were it not for these Protestant missions, the Roman, Greek and Italian Catholic Missions and the Mohammedan and Jewish Missions, the natives would be almost destitute of educational and civilizing advantages. As it is, they are compelled to swallow a certain amount of some of the religions offered them, in order to get a little schooling; and very little of any religion or schooling does them. They are naturally cunning and quick to learn first principles, and want no more. But so far as the real work of the Gospel age is concerned – the finding of the saints, the Lord's jewels – the foreign mission work seems to be a total failure. For that matter, however, there are few such "jewels" found in any field of labor: we merely point out that very few of these jewels are to be found among the "barbarians," except among the missionaries themselves.

We had the opportunity of visiting the chief and oldest Mission Station of Syria, at Beyrout. It is one of the most prosperous Protestant Missions and will consequently afford a good illustration of general mission work. [R1348 : page 6]

When we were there most of the missionaries had gone up to Mt. Lebanon to spend the summer, but we ascertained the following from those in charge. (1) The printing office has become self-supporting or better, and is now separated from the American Mission. (2) Beyrout represents twelve branches of Protestant work – American, English and German, including several denominations. (3) It has a full force of teachers and Doctors of Divinity. (4) Its schools make the principal showing. (5) During 1890 the total number of children under instruction was 15,473; and of these the various Protestant institutions had 3,090; the remainder, 12,383, being under Catholic, Jewish and Mohammedan instruction.

Our conclusion was that the missionaries so engaged there are investing their time and talents to poor advantage, and where harvest is sure to be meager, if indeed under the Lord's scrutiny it amounts to anything in the real mission of the present age – the selection of the "little flock" of saints who, as Christ's Bride, will be his joint-heir in the kingdom to come, whose mission will then be to bless all the families of the earth. But although teachers in the secular schools of the United States are doing a similar mission work with even better prospects of success, because of the better element they labor with, we should and do esteem many of these earnest teachers of the semi-civilized and barbaric children very highly for their works' sake, for their self-denial and devotion to principle, even though those principles be founded upon human traditions and misinformation concerning the Lord's plans for the present and for the coming age. They are laboring in a field almost, if not altogether, barren of fruit such as the Lord is now seeking; and are trying to do before God's time, under great

difficulties, a work which the Lord will accomplish thoroughly very soon. While the Lord no doubt accepts every sacrifice and every good deed done in the name of our Savior, and will give some reward to all such servants, we feel like saying, as we look at the fields of Christendom, white already for harvesting, and see that the harvest is great and the laborers few – Oh! dear, consecrated co-laborers and co-sacrificers, would that you could see the more excellent way of God, and engage in the harvest work of the Gospel age instead of laboring fruitlessly before the time to sow and plant for the work of the next age, before the improved machinery for so doing is ready, and while our Master is saying in this harvest which is to the end the Gospel age, as he said in the harvest or close of the Jewish age: "Go ye also into my vineyard," and "I send you forth to reap." He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto everlasting life. So surely as the harvest work is the Lord's work, that should be the mission and the only mission of all who appreciate the privilege of being co-workers with him. So surely as he is now saying, "Gather together my saints unto me, they that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice," so surely all who desire to serve and obey should engage heartily in that work. So surely as he declares that this is the time for the sealing of his servants in their foreheads (intellectually) with present truth, so surely all who get sealed themselves will desire thus to bless others and to obey their King. However, we must not imagine that all missionaries are saints, and must remember that the harvest-truth is only for the holy and meek, the few, while many who have done "many wonderful works" in Christ's name shall be rejected as unworthy a place in the kingdom. – Matt. 7:21-23.

But, while we would discourage saints from going abroad on such missions, we would not advise the return of foreign missionaries, but, rather, calling to mind the Apostle's words (1 Cor. 7:20), would advise that, after getting sealed in the forehead with an intellectual appreciation of the truth of God's great plan,

they stay abroad and seek the ripe wheat, the humble and fully consecrated saints among the missionaries (or among the native converts, if they find such), and in return *seal* them and gather them into oneness with the Lord and his plan. But be not discouraged if you find few "jewels." – Mal. 3:16-18,1-3.

Our opinions concerning Foreign Mission work were by no means altered by our visit to the headquarters of the American Mission for Turkey, in Constantinople; nor yet by our visit [R1348 : page 7] to the English Church Mission among the Jews in Jerusalem; nor by our visit to the British Syrian Mission in Jerusalem.

We found the Missionaries (such as we met, several having gone to the mountains for the summer) such as are ordinarily met with in the pulpits of the United States and Great Britain. And in Jerusalem we heard a very good discourse in good English from an Episcopal minister. It was delivered in a neat church building, fitted up in good style and with a fine pipe-organ, to an English congregation of about thirty-five persons aside from the choir-boys. For this congregation it required three missionaries to officiate, and the fourth, the bishop, was at Hebron for the summer. [R1349 : page 7]

To us it seemed that those missionaries had missed their calling; for the three seemed to do less than any one of them might have done, had the proper spirit for such work been combined with a proper appreciation of the opportunities at their hand.

To be adapted to work in such a field, or in any field, for that matter, one should first of all have that spirit of the Master which, seeing the multitude in ignorance, is "moved with compassion toward them." As, on our way back to our hotel, we saw poor Jews misled by the Talmud, and poor Arabs misled by the Koran, and poor Greek and Roman and Armenian Catholics misled by their priests, and then thought of these Protestants, more intelligent, but

without either the truth or the spirit of it necessary to bless the others, we felt sad for the moment; but soon we were thanking God that his gracious plan would ere long rectify all these blind mistakes caused by false doctrine.

We would have loved to learn the language and to have spent the remainder of our days *among* those miserable people, helping to uplift them, but remembered that the "harvest" work is much more important, in order that the already called-out Bride of Christ may make *herself ready* for the marriage, and then, under more favorable conditions than the present, and backed by kingdom power, she with her Lord and his spirit may say to those and to all the poor distressed ones of earth – Come to the water of life! – Rev. 19:7; 21:17.

Finding that the natives generally had little respect for either Protestant or Catholic missionaries, we inquired of our guide, himself a Christian, why it was so. He replied, Ah! sir, no wonder: these priests and teachers are too far *above* the people. For instance, fancy, if you can, the Lord Jesus going through the streets of Jerusalem in patriarchal robes, and preceded by two men, one crying, Oh – ah! Oh – ah! (Clear the way!) and the other carrying a whip to enforce prompt obedience. Can you wonder that the people do not respect such religion? And it is the same with bishops of the Church of England as with the others.

Upon inquiring at the hotel the route to the residence of the Rev. Ben. Oriel, whose card, posted in the hotel corridor, indicated that he was the Presbyterian Missionary, we were told the direction to take; but, said our director, he will not be known by that name among the people. Ask for *Habish* and any of the natives can point you to his residence. Before starting we inquired the meaning of *Habish*, and were told, That is Arabic for "turkey-cock:" the gentleman has so pompous an air that the natives know him as *Habish*. Our readers will not wonder that we turned our

steps in another direction, and were pleased to find a native pastor preaching to a congregation of natives – mostly young men connected with the printing and other departments of the mission work.

As we returned through England and the United States, where the money is furnished to support these missions, we said to ourselves, Alas! how strange that while thousands of lives and millions of money are given freely to civilize the heathen and to misinform them concerning the divine character and plan, so little is being done for the ignorant and depraved at home in all the large cities (into which the most degraded classes from all nations are being dumped continually); and how few lives and dollars, comparatively, are consecrated to the grand mission of proclaiming the "gospel of the Kingdom" – "good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people."

Before leaving this subject of mission work we must notice a very emphatic statement by our Lord, as follows – [R1349 : page 8]

**"THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM SHALL BE PREACHED
IN ALL THE WORLD FOR A WITNESS UNTO ALL
NATIONS, AND THEN SHALL THE END COME."
– MATT. 24:14.**

This language is so pointed and so emphatic that it will not do to treat it lightly, as some do who claim that the "gospel of the Kingdom" may be anything else than what its name would indicate. The word *gospel*, here, is emphatic in the Greek, and so is the word *kingdom*. It is not any and every good message, but a special one – This *good* message of *the* Kingdom – which must first be preached before the end of this age.

We ask whether this has yet been done, and reply, No. That which is generally preached under the name *gospel* has little in it

that is really good tidings, and nothing whatever in it about the Kingdom that our Lord promised should be "set up" in the end of the Gospel age, to bless all the families of the earth during the Millennial age.

Catholics and Protestants, although they use our Lord's prayer, saying, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," do not expect such a kingdom, and hence are not preaching it in all or in any of the nations of the world. Roman Catholics claim that their church system is the Kingdom of God, and that this kingdom came or was set up in authority back in the sixth century. And on the strength of this they have for centuries claimed the right to govern the world politically and religiously. Protestants, while rejecting some of Rome's errors, held on to this one in part, and claimed that they and the so-called Christian governments of Europe constitute the Kingdom of God set up in power – they know not exactly when or how. Their error, however, is sufficient to keep them from preaching this gospel of the Kingdom.

Thus this work is still open to be done and can be done by no others than those who know something of these good tidings of the Kingdom.

Brethren and Sisters, the fewer there are to do this work the greater is the opportunity and privilege of those who realize the situation, and desire not only to be at work, but at work doing what our great Chief Reaper has instructed us to do in accordance with his plan and his message.

We are not calling for missionaries to go to foreign fields, where they would have comparatively little opportunity for preaching the Kingdom gospel. We believe that the Lord is blessing and will yet more bless the printed page and use it in this service. Thus you can be at work here in the richer fields, reaping the ripened saints and sealing them with the truth, and at the same

time co-operating in sending forth in the name of the Lord *this* gospel of *the* Kingdom. It is already reaching and blessing some in foreign lands, and they are mostly missionaries who in turn tell the good tidings to others hungry for the soul-satisfying portion of meat in due season.

Let us not be discouraged by the comparative smallness of the number interested or the comparative smallness of the funds at our command, for "Greater is he that is for us than all they that be against us." Our Redeemer and Lord is at the helm, and the work, as he has planned and declared it, will be done. The only question for us is, How great a share in that work may we each have. Labor in the cause of this gospel of the Kingdom will not bring honor among men, but it will bring honor from above and from all the little flock in full sympathy with the divine arrangement.

Let us take fresh courage for 1892, and, girding up the loins of our minds, run patiently the race, looking unto Jesus.

PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM DURING THE PAST SIX YEARS.

The handful of harvest laborers and the money at our disposal seem insignificant in contrast with the hundreds of missionaries and the millions of dollars spent by Catholic and Protestant societies in their support and in publishing abroad the doctrinal errors handed down from [R1349 : page 9] the dark ages, which tend to pervert and subvert the teachings of the Scriptures. And yet such is the zeal which the "present truth" inspires that "A little one is able to chase a thousand, and two to put ten thousand to flight." (Deut. 32:30.) Although few, and untitled, and generally without great worldly learning – in these respects resembling those sent out by our Lord with the Kingdom message at the first advent – the faithful band of harvest workers is busily engaged (some giving all their time and others able to give only a portion

of it) in seeking out the "wheat" class – the sickle of truth which they bear separating "the wheat" from "the tares."

Few know these Colporteurs as the Lord's real representatives, or recognize that dignity which the Lord sees in their humility and self-sacrifice. Missionaries? No, say the world and the nominal Church, *ours* are the missionaries, who go to foreign lands. Yes, says the Lord, these are my missionaries, charged with a grand mission – to "Gather together my saints unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day when I come to make up my jewels."

Ministers? No, say the world and the nominal Church, only ours who wear "clerical" garments and preach from our pulpits are God's ministers. Yes, says the Lord, My servants (ministers) they are because they serve me, dispensing present truth to my household. I have sent forth the message which they bear. He that despiseth them despiseth me, and he that receiveth the sealing in the forehead which I send by them will know the doctrine, that it is of me. "My sheep know my voice."

During the past six years, annual reports of the work have not been made, for the reason that the reports would not have shown up so well as we would have liked, and might have been discouraging rather than encouraging, some years. But the past year has been so favorable, and the responses already received to the suggestion on last leaf of the November TOWER have been **[R1350 : page 9]** so encouraging that we have concluded to report each January hereafter, good or bad. We accordingly report now the *Tower Missionary Work* in spreading the Gospel of the Kingdom for the six years past.

ZION'S WATCH TOWER TRACT SOCIETY
SECRETARY'S REPORT
FROM JAN. 1, 1886, TO DEC. 1, 1891.

EXPENDITURES:

Paid balance, debt, owing January 1st, '86,	\$ 516.17
Expended in publishing and circulating Tracts and sample copies of Z.W. TOWER and in sending TOWER to the Lord's poor,.....	8625.03

	9141.20

RECEIPTS:

From <i>Old Theology Tract</i> subscriptions,...	\$1113.63
From Tract Fund Donations.....	8017.57

	9141.20

It will thus be seen that we started Dec. 1st, '91 with an evenly balanced ledger. But since figures are not apt to come out so exactly, it may be proper to remark that we had expended considerably more than our receipts, which would have shown a debt owing, but five friends of the cause subscribed the balance so as to permit us to start the new fiscal year, beginning December 1st, free from debt.

The results of the above expenditures will be of interest and will, we believe, show a very economical use of the means.

Tracts published and distributed,.....	841,095
Representing – as usually stated – in pages,.	14,874,240
Copies of <i>Zion's Watch Tower</i> aside from those sent to subscribers,.....	395,000

THE DAWN COLPORTEUR WORK.

While this branch of the service is kept separate from the *Tract Society's Work*, and is, as far as possible, run upon a self-supporting basis, it is the purpose to give during the present year the *extra* assistance necessary to enable some to enter this service who manifest an *ability for it* but who need a start, or whose dependent families make needful some extra provision to enable them to continue in the work.

Of all the means in use for preaching the good tidings of the Kingdom, this work yields the most favorable results; and we praise God that he is sending more laborers into this harvest work, and that those already in it give evidence [R1350 : page 10] of being so filled with the spirit of the gospel and so consecrated to its service. The circulation of the MILLENNIAL DAWN in its three volumes during the past twelve months has reached nearly 85,000 copies; and these have been circulated almost exclusively by the Colporteurs – including under this name not only those who give their entire time to this work, but also those of you who are doing what you can in a humble, quiet way about your homes – selling, loaning or giving books to such as have an ear to hear the Truth. While congratulating you all and ourselves upon the results of our united efforts under our dear Master's blessing and guidance, we start upon another year hoping for still greater blessings in his cause and name. The statements on the printed slips in November TOWER of what you hope to be able to do in this cause during the year beginning have been very helpful and encouraging to us; and the kind words accompanying were no less appreciated – assuring us as they did that you are glad to be reminded of the Apostles' advice on the subject, and to be thus assisted in ordering your affairs to the Lord's praise.

[R1353 : page 10]

"THE VOICE IS NIGH THEE."

"Where art thou, Lord?" we sometimes cry
From hearts with pain and anguish riven,
And wonder in our sorrow why
No answer comes from his far Heaven.
Filled with our grief, we do not know
That softly, gently, through our woe,
His voice is whispering tenderly,
"Lo, I that speak to thee am He."

"Where art thou, Lord?" we sometimes say,
As clouds of unbelief and doubt
Sweep darkly o'er our onward way
And crowd his loving presence out.
We shrink back as they draw more near,
And, looking at them, do not hear
His voice still saying lovingly,
"Lo, I that speak to thee am He."

"Where art thou, Lord?" we've sometimes said,
As error, all the wide world through,
Stalks onward with triumphant tread
And crushes down the just and true.
We catch the sound of strife and fear,
But, through the discord, do not hear
That sweet voice sounding steadily,
"Lo, I that speak to thee am He."

"Where art thou, Lord?" we sometimes sigh,
From beds of weariness and pain,
The while his husbandmen go by
To gather in his fields of grain.
And longing with them forth to go,
We miss his gentle accents, low,

That through our pain would constantly
Say, "I that speak to thee am He."

"Where art thou, Lord?" some glorious day
We'll ask upon the heavenly shore,
As 'mid the angel hosts we stray,
Our pilgrim journey safely o'er.
Our hearts will find no resting place
Until before his glorious face
The blessed words to us shall be,
"Lo, I that speak to thee am He." – *Selected*.
