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I. SOME PERILS OF MISSIONARY LIFE.¹

I suppose we all recognize that missionaries are the cream of Christians. They may say with Paul, in the whole length and breadth of his meaning, that unto them the grace has been given to preach unto the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. iii., 8). They are the bold and faithful spirits who bear the banner of the cross courageously to the front. We who abide at home, hope that we are at home by the will of God and to his glory; but we cannot withhold our admiration from those whom God has chosen to form the advance-guard of his conquering host. We recognize that these "picked men" are the *elite* of the army of the cross. Their bearing justifies this recognition. There is no body of men in the world of equal numbers who so thoroughly meet the trust reposed in them and the lofty sentiments entertained towards them by their fellow Christians.

So exalted is our well-founded appreciation of the character of missionaries in general that it comes with something of a shock to us to discover, as we are now and then led to discover, that even missionaries are, nevertheless, men, and are sometimes liable to the temptations, and shall

¹An address to a **body** of prospective missionaries.

we not even say, the failings? that are common to men. In the difficult situations in which they have been placed, they have exhibited, in general, a wisdom, a faithfulness, a power of adaptation, a devotion, which seems almost superhuman, and which can be accounted for only as the fulfilment of the promise with which the Lord accompanied their marching orders—that he would be with them to the end of the world. But in the midst of this general marvellous success, we find just enough of short-comings to warn us that there are dangers attending the work of the missionary which it is requisite to face and to guard against. I do not here speak of such dangers as that of spiritual pride, which may be thought to lie very close to a calling which is recognized among us as one which in an especial manner undertakes the work of God and may lay particular claim to his smile, and which may be peculiarly near to men who are everywhere esteemed, and may haply come to esteem themselves, as the *elite* of Christians. I am bound to testify that I have seen very little of anything resembling spiritual pride among missionaries, though doubtless it here and there exists, as how could it fail to exist? The dangers I wish to speak of are not those which spring from the very essence of the calling, but rather such as attend the work missionaries are called on to do, and such as show themselves in the manner of its prosecution. Here, too, the greatest danger is that we may fancy there is no danger. To be forewarned is to be partially, at least, forearmed; at all events it places it in our power to forearm ourselves.

Let us spring at once *in medias res* and mention at the beginning the supremest danger which can attend a missionary in his work—the danger that he who has gone forth to convert the heathen may find himself rather being converted by the heathen. The idea is monstrous, you may think. But the danger is an actual and a real one, and its working is not unillustrated by sad examples. It is no doubt

exceedingly rare that a missionary is so fully converted to heathendom that he lays aside his Christian profession and adopts in its entirety the religion of those whom he was set to convert, though even this is not absolutely unexampled. Dr. A. J. Behrends, for instance, in his little volume of missionary addresses delivered on the Graves' foundation at Syracuse University ("The World for Christ," p. 102), tells of a classmate of his own to whom even this occurred. He says :

"I had a classmate in the Theological Seminary who, thirty years ago, went as a missionary to China. He abandoned his calling and his faith, became a Mandarin of the 'third button,' and for many years has been associated with the Chinese legation in the courts of Europe. He writes of the 'iced champagne' which he drinks when the heat of summer is oppressive, and talks flippantly of the 'so-called' Holy Land and of the 'historic cross of the carpenter philosopher,' which annoys him at every step from Munich to St. Petersburg. He has developed into a Confucianist."

It much more frequently happens, however, that the impact of the heathen mind upon his thought has led the missionary only to modify his belief until he has laid aside the fundamentals of Christianity, or even now and then, under the ethical influences of his surroundings, has made shipwreck of faith in a practical sense and adopted the ethical views and fallen into the debased modes of life of his community. All this, of course, unhappily occurs to the pastor at home exceedingly frequently, despite the conserving energies of the society in which home pastors are immersed. The forces of the world impinging upon them, and reinforced, it may be, by native tendencies of thought and feeling, draw them away from their adopted lines of thought and gradually assimilate them to worldly views and modes of life. That it happens comparatively rarely among the missionaries in the far severer strain to which they are subjected, isolated as they are from the Christian community, and surrounded by a society the very grain of which is heathen, is only another proof that they are the *elite* of Christendom. But it does happen occasionally among them, too.

A classical example of a missionary becoming thus the convert, or at least the pervert, of his catechumens, is supplied by the famous Bishop Colenso, the pioneer of the present outbreak of rationalistic Biblical criticism in England. Bishop Colenso was bred in the evangelical faith of the Low-Church party of the Church of England, and had received in his youth the essentials of the faith as held by that body of nobly-witnessing Christians, though certainly in a somewhat traditional way. When he went to Natal as a missionary, however, he had never given that deep and careful study to the elements of his faith which alone would guarantee their stability. It happened thus that his mind was first thoroughly awakened to the difficulties of his religion through the questions and objections of the "intelligent Zulu," to whom he sought to teach it. Under these objections he gave way, first discarding the fundamentals of evangelical religion, and then his belief in the Bible as the infallible Word of God; and thus became the protagonist of critical rationalism on English ground. Here is his own account of the final stage of his perversion :

"Since I have had charge of this Diocese, I have been closely occupied in the study of the Zulu tongue, and in translating the Scriptures into it. . . . In this work I have been aided by intelligent natives, . . . so as not only to avail myself of their criticisms, but to appreciate fully their objections and difficulties. Thus, however, it has happened that I have been brought again face to face with questions which caused me some uneasiness in former days, but with respect to which I was then enabled to satisfy my mind sufficiently for practical purposes, and I had fondly hoped to have laid the ghosts of them at last forever. Engrossed with parochial and other work in England, I did what, probably, many other clergymen have done under similar circumstances—I contented myself with silencing, by means of the specious explanations, which are given in most commentaries, the ordinary objections against the historical character of the early portions of the Old Testament, and settled down into a willing acquiescence in the general truth of the narratives, whatever difficulties may still hang about particular parts of it. . . . Here, however, as I have said, amidst my work in this land, I have been brought face to face with the very questions which I then put by. . . . I have had a simple-minded, but intelligent, native—one with the docility of a child, but the reasoning powers of ma-

ture age—look up and ask, 'Is all that true?' I dared not, as a servant of the God of Truth, urge my brother man to believe that which I did not myself believe, which I knew to be untrue, as a matter-of-fact, historical narrative. I gave him, however, such a reply as satisfied him for the time, without throwing any discredit upon the general veracity of the Bible history. But I was thus driven—against my will at first, I may truly say—to search more deeply into these questions. And now I tremble at the result of my inquiries." [The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined. By the Right Rev. John William Colenso, D. D., &c. New York, 1863. Pp. 4-7.]

The circumstances of this wonderful conversion to disbelief in the Christian Scriptures are no doubt capable of being looked at from two points of view—according as our attention is engrossed with the high and noble honesty of heart which considered not the humbleness of the questioner, or with the previous neglect of duty which left the questioned the prey of the first restless spirit which should attack him. Bishop Colenso's sympathetic biographer, Sir G. W. Cox, contemplates it from the first point of view, and this is his account of it :

"There can be but little doubt, rather there is none, that the choice of Mr. Colenso for missionary work in a heathen land, was a blessing not only to the heathen to whom he was sent, but to his countrymen, to the cause of truth, to the Church of England, and to the Church of God. Up to this time, his moral sense and spiritual instincts lacked free play; and, had he remained in England, those circumstances probably would never have arisen, which were made the means of evoking the marvellous strength of character evinced in the great battle of his life. It was just that appeal of the honest heart which was needed to call into action the slumbering fires. That appeal, and his instantaneous obedience to that appeal, were sneered at as stupid, childish and contemptible; but the questions of the 'intelligent Zulu' became for him questions like those which led Luther to nail his theses on the church door at Wittenberg, and enabled him to break with the force of a Samson the theological and traditional withes by which he had thus far been bound." [The Life of John William Colenso, D. D., Bishop of Natal. By the Rev. Sir George W. Cox, Bart., M. A., &c. London. 1888. Pp. 50. Vol. I.]

Our own Dr. W. H. Green, in his trenchant review of Bishop Colenso's first book on the Pentateuch, contemplates it from the other point of view, and this is the way he puts it :

"The difficulty is in the whole attitude which he occupies. He has

picked out a few superficial difficulties in the sacred record, not now adduced for the first time, nor first discovered by himself. They seem, however, to have recently dawned upon his view. He was aware, long before, of certain difficulties in the scriptural account of the creation and deluge; and instead of satisfactorily and thoroughly investigating these, he was content, he tells us, to push them off, or thrust them aside, satisfying himself with the moral lessons, and trusting vaguely, and, as he owns, not very honestly, (p. 4) that there was some way of explaining them (pp. 4, 5). The other difficulties, which have since oppressed him, he then had no notion of; in fact, so late as the time when he published or prepared his Commentary on the Romans, (p. 215) he had no idea of ever holding his present views. As there is nothing brought out in his book which unbelievers had not flaunted and believing expositors set themselves to explain long since, we are left to suppose that his theological training as a minister and a bishop, and his preparation as a commentator, could not have been very exact or thorough. . . . His mission to the Zulus, however, fortunately or unfortunately, as the case may be, broke the spell. He went out to teach the Zulus Christianity, and now at length he is obliged to study the Bible on which that religion is based."—[The Pentateuch, Vindicated from the Aspersions of Bishop Colenso. By William Henry Green, &c. New York. 1863. Pp. 112].

I have been thus lengthy in exhibiting the fundamental elements of the case of Bishop Colenso, because I desired to bring out the source from which the danger to which he succumbed arose. Clearly its roots were set in this: he became a teacher before he was himself taught. The remedy is that missionaries should not fancy that a zeal for God and a love for Christ is all the furnishing they need to enable them to win the world to Christ; if they do, they may haply find themselves like Bishop Colenso, rather won to the world. Those who expect to go forth as missionaries can read themselves the lesson. As certainly as men go, mentally unprepared for their task and its dangers, so certainly will they expose themselves to unnecessary peril and their work to unnecessary likelihood of failure.

It is the same lesson that is read us by the somewhat parallel case of Francis W. Newman, whose autobiography detailing the changes in his belief, published under the title of "Phases of Faith," created quite a sensation half a century ago. He was the brother of John Henry Newman, equally

or more highly gifted, and, like him and Colenso, was bred in the evangelical faith. It is perfectly evident, however, to the reader of his own account of his religious life, that he never gave that labor and thought to the faith which he professed which were its due, and by which alone it could be firmly anchored in his soul. In one of the phases of his faith he joined Mr. Groves (in 1830) in his mission at Bagdad, and it is plain that he was led to give up the doctrine of the Trinity—one of the earlier stages of his drift away from the truth—by the pressure of Mohammedan objection. He felt uneasy from the first, as with his foundations in Christian thinking, one fancies he well might feel uneasy, whenever the thought crossed his mind: "What if we, like Henry Martyn, were charged with Polytheism by Mohammedans, and were forced to defend ourselves by explaining in detail our doctrine of the Trinity" (p. 32). Then he discovered that religion was not the peculiarity of Christianity. There is a vividly drawn scene in a carpenter's shop in Aleppo which, one feels, must have had a significant place in his development.

"While at Aleppo," he tells us, "I one day got into a religious discussion with a Mohammedan carpenter, which left on me a lasting impression. Among other matters, I was peculiarly desirous of disabusing him of the current notion of his people, that our Gospels are spurious narratives, of late date. I found great difficulty of expression, but the man listened to me with much attention, and I was encouraged to exert myself. He waited patiently till I had done, and then spoke to the following effect: 'I will tell you, sir, how the case stands. God has given you English a great many good gifts. You make fine ships, and sharp pen-knives, and good cloth and cotton; you have rich nobles and brave soldiers; you write and print many learned books (dictionaries and grammars); all this is of God. But there is one thing that God has withheld from you and has revealed to us, and that is, the knowledge of the true religion, by which one may be saved.' When he had thus ignored my argument (which was probably unintelligible to him) and delivered his simple protest, I was silenced, and at the same time amused. But the more I thought it over the more instruction I saw in the case." [Phases of Faith. By Francis William Newman, &c. London. 1870. P. 52].

The instruction he got out of the case was that, as the possession of a deep religious experience was not depend-

ent on the possession of any one form of religious teaching, therefore all forms of religious teaching are alike useless or worse, and the religion of the individual's own consciousness is the only true religion. He was in other words converted to heathenism by the discovery that man has universally a religious nature.

Something of the same kind seems to have happened to Mr. James Macdonald, a missionary of the Free Church of Scotland, to Africa, and author of a readable book called "Light in Africa." He has more recently published a more pretentious and really very instructive volume called "Religion and Myth" (London, 1893), from which it appears that he has been deeply moved by the discovery that even the lowest savages may have a religious consciousness, exercise religious faith, and enjoy religious certitude. By this discovery he has been led, theoretically at least—let us hope it is wholly unassimilated theory with him—to confound all religions together as being higher or lower stages of the development of man's religious capacities and insight, dependent not on objective revelation but on growing intelligence and the progressive working of human thought upon religious material. Pressed to its legitimate meaning this is pure naturalism, elevated heathenism. Here is the conception of the origin of Christianity to which Mr. Macdonald has been brought: Religion began in reverence for a human king, to whom men looked for good, issuing in the conception that the king controlled natural forces; then from habit they still looked to the king for help after he had died, and hence arose a doctrine of souls; thence sprang a conception of personal and separate divinities, slowly gravitating towards the idea of one Supreme God; after awhile the conception arose that this one Supreme God became incarnate in time, by the substitution of the idea of a single incarnation revealing the will of God for the multitude of prophets—from rain-doctors up—who claim to hold converse with the unseen. Students of the literature of the

subject will easily recognize this sketch. To us it seems that instead of converting the Africans to Christianity, Mr. Macdonald has himself been converted to a form of scientific heathenism.

The lesson of all these instances is obviously the same. The missionary is not prepared for his work until he has been forced to face all those problems raised by modern criticism and by modern thought—problems of comparative religion, of critical analysis, of philosophical unbelief; has faced them at home, worked through them, and mastered them. Unprepared by this mental discipline, he goes forth at his peril. There is danger in the foreign field for a man who has been too indolent at home to meet the difficulties of unbelief prevalent at home, fairly and squarely, and reason himself through them. He may quiet the doubts that rise in his own soul, but the heathen are not amenable to his lazy Peace! peace!—they will press these doubts upon him. If he parries them, they will justly despise him and he loses all fruit of his work. If he entertains them he is unprepared to deal with them, and—well, some men have lost their faith by that road. We would better prepare ourselves earnestly before we go.

If we fancy that so extreme a peril as that we have been picturing must be rare, let us glance at an analogous danger which necessarily attends all mission work, and which is at bottom only a less acute form of the same evil we have been discussing, though it often grows out of a different root—the danger namely that in striving to commend Christianity to the heathen and to remove their stubborn and abounding difficulties in accepting it we really accommodate Christianity to heathen thought—in a word we simply explain Christianity away. This too is an evil which is by no means confined to missionaries. It may properly be called the deepest danger of pastoral life. Few of us escape it altogether. It is the root of the concessive habit of stating truth, which is the bane of all Christian society. It

is distressingly easy to fall into it, as a measure of charity—seeking to be all things to all men that we may gain the more. But what is it in effect but corrupting the truth? It is as if an army set to protect the frontier against an invading host, should suddenly wheel and place itself, with flags flying and bands playing, and drum majors in full regalia performing, in front of the opposing ranks, and proudly lead them over the land—evidently conquering because now leading! This concessive habit is in other words only an expedient by which we can make it seem as if we had gained others to our side, when we have really placed ourselves at their side. It saves appearances at the cost of realities. It is therefore as I say, only a less acute and obvious form of conversion from Christianity wherever it shows itself—among pastors or among missionaries. For it does show itself occasionally even among those select warriors of the cross, the missionaries. I have met more than one missionary from Mohammedan lands, for example, who had learned to state the doctrine of the Trinity, “so genially and so winningly,” (as they expressed it) that it roused little or no opposition in the Mohammedan mind. And when I heard how they stated it, I did not wonder; they had so stated it as to leave the idea of the Trinity out—much as Dr. James Morris Whiton, in his recent attempts to show how Unitarians and Trinitarians can unite on a common formula, certainly succeeds in providing an explanation of the Trinity to which no Unitarian should object. You may see his efforts in a recent paper in “The New World,” and in his little book called *Gloria Patri*. The trouble is you look in vain in the explanations for a Trinity.

Without pausing to illustrate this very common danger, let us glance next at another danger attending the missionary in his work, analogous to this, from its opposite side. The method of conversion by concession is really, at bottom, an attempt to deceive men into a profession of Christianity; to make them believe that Christianity is not

what it appears to be, and does not involve in its profession all that it seems; that it is much "easier to take" than men have been accustomed to think. Now there is another way of attempting to deceive men into professing Christianity which sometimes presents temptations to missionaries, especially those working among the simpler and less advanced races. We are accustomed to think of dubious miracles as the specialty of the more corrupt ages and localities of Romanism. It may behoove us to have a care, lest we fall victims to what may differ from appeals to dubious miracles by a very narrow ethical line indeed. There is a distinct temptation confronting the missionary at times to make use of his superior intelligence or superior acquirements to impress the ignorant with the divine character of his religion; a distinct temptation to over-reach his less well-informed brother men by an exhibition of the marvels which learning and science have put within his reach, as if these marvels were something more than proofs of advanced science, and were somewhat of the nature of signs from heaven of the justness of his claims and the validity of his apostleship; sometimes at least a willingness to permit the heathen to deceive themselves as to the purport of what to them are marvels. Take a passage like the following, from one of the noblest, purest, most Christ-like missionaries which the Church has yet produced. I should be far from criticising the motives or methods of such a man of God. I should not like to be understood as suggesting that the limit of the permissible were passed in this particular incident. But are they not at least so nearly approached that the incident may stand as a warning to us of how easy it may become, in somewhat like situations, to pass beyond the limits and attempt to deceive men into accepting the truth? I quote from one of the most thrilling narratives of missionary work our day has produced:

"But I must here record the story of the Sinking of the Well, which

broke the back of heathenism on Aniwa. Being a flat coral island with no hills to attract the clouds, rain is scarce there as compared with the adjoining mountainous islands; and even when it does fall heavily, with tropical profusion, it disappears . . . through the light soil and porous rock, and drains itself directly into the sea . . . At certain seasons the natives drank very unwholesome water. . . . My household felt sadly the want of fresh water. I prepared two large casks to be filled when the rain came. But when we attempted to do so at the water hole near the village, the natives forbade us, fearing that our large casks would carry all the water away, and leave none for them with their so much smaller cocoanut bottles. The public water-hole was on the ground of two Sacred Men, who claimed the power of emptying and filling it by rain at will. The superstitious natives gave them presents to bring the rain. If it came soon, they took all the credit for it. If not, they demanded larger gifts to satisfy their gods. Even our Aneityumese teachers said to me, when I protested that surely they could not believe such things:

"It is hard to know, Missi. The water does come and go quickly. If you paid them well, they might bring the rain and let us fill our casks!"

I told them that, as followers of Jehovah, we must despise all heathen mummeries, and trust in him and in the laws of his creation to help us.

Aniwa having, therefore, no permanent supply of fresh water, in spring, or stream, or lake, I resolved, by the help of God, to sink a well, near the Mission premises, hoping that a wisdom, higher than my own, would guide me to the source of some blessed spring. . . . One morning I said to the old Chief and his fellow Chief, both now earnestly inquiring about the religion of Jehovah and of Jesus:

'I am going to sink a deep well down into the earth, to see if our God will send us fresh water up from below.'

They looked at me with astonishment [and spoke] in a sort of sympathy approaching pity. . . .

I started upon my hazardous job. . . . The old Chief and his best men . . . remonstrated with me very gravely . . . I toiled on from day to day, my heart almost sinking sometimes with the sinking of the well, till we reached a depth of about thirty feet. And the phrase, 'living water,' 'living water,' kept chiming through my soul like music from God, as I dug and hammered away. At this depth the earth and coral began to be soaked with damp. I felt that we were nearing water. My soul had a faith that God would open a spring for us; but side by side with this faith, was a strange terror that the water would be salt. . . . One evening I said to the old Chief:

'I think that Jehovah God will give us water to-morrow from that hole!'

The Chief said, 'No, Missi.' . . . I still answered, 'Come tomorrow. I hope and believe that Jehovah God will send you the rain

up through the earth.' At the moment I knew I was risking much, and probably incurring sorrowful consequences, had no water been given....

Next morning, I went down again at daybreak and sank a narrow hole in the centre about two feet deep. The perspiration broke over me with uncontrollable excitement, and I trembled through every limb, when the water rushed up and began to fill the hole. Muddy though it was, I eagerly tasted it, and the little 'tinny' dropped from my hand with sheer joy. . . . It was water! It was fresh water! It was living water from Jehovah's well. . . . The Chiefs had assembled with their men, near by. They waited on in eager expectancy. It was a rehearsal, in a small way, of the Israelites coming round, while Moses struck the rock and called for water. By and by, when I had praised the Lord, and my excitement was a little calmed, the mud being also greatly settled, I filled a jug which I had taken down empty in the sight of them all, and ascending to the top, called for them to come and see the rain which Jehovah God had given us through the well. They closed around me in haste and gazed on it in superstitious fear. The old Chief shook it to see if it would spill, and then touched it to see if it felt like water. At last he tasted it, and rolling it in his mouth with joy, for a moment, he swallowed it, and shouted, 'Rain! Rain! Yes it is rain! But how did you get it?' I repeated, 'Jehovah my God gave it out of his own earth in answer to our labors and prayers. Go and see it springing up for yourselves.'"¹

Graphically told, is it not? The scene is brought vividly before us. What I ask is, if you would have been, in such a situation, superior to the temptation—I do not say of announcing the well as a miracle from God—but of permitting those poor superstitious folk to take it for a miracle. But surely, surely, the proclaimers of the gospel of truth must not in even so slight a degree sink to the level of those medicine men, who, "if the rain comes, take all the credit for it."

Oddly enough in that stirring romance of missionary adventures which Mr. Rider Haggard has given us, he makes his missionary hero first catch the attention of the people by an incident precisely similar in its import with this which Dr. Paton describes. The Rev. Thomas Owen has given himself with entire faith and devotion to an exceedingly hazardous piece of missionary work. The chief med-

¹John G. Paton, &c. An Autobiography. Edited by his brother. Second part. London. 1890. pp. 176-8.

icine man of the tribe among which he is laboring has prepared for him a fatal trap; having administered a deadly poison to the king for which there is but one antidote, he contrives that all of Owen's credit and his life itself shall be staked upon his power to recover the monarch. Owen, meanwhile, has become possessed (in a supernatural way, as Mr. Haggard would have us think,) of the secret of the poison and its antidote, and has taken care to provide himself with the latter. Called to the king's side in the presence of all the people, he prepares the curing draught, and "this done, he clasped his hands, and, lifting his eyes to Heaven, he prayed aloud in the language of the Amasuka. 'O God,' he prayed, "upon whose business I am here, grant, I beseech Thee, that by Thy Grace power may be given to me to work this miracle in the face these people, to the end that I may win them to cease their iniquities, to believe Thee, the only true God, and to save their souls alive. Amen.'" So he administered the draught and reaped the natural effect.¹ Can we condemn the novelist for so representing the practices of missionaries, when missionaries so represent their own practices? But the oddest thing is yet to say. Mr. Rider Haggard feels the unworthiness of the part he has made his missionary to play. He does not betray consciousness of it here, indeed. But later in the story he makes him refuse to avail himself of a like transaction. "But I say that I will not use it," are the words that he puts in his mouth. "Are we witch-doctors, that we should take refuge in tricks? No, let faith be our shield; and if it fail us, then let us die."¹ It is strange to turn to Mr. Haggard for a lesson in missionary morals. But as we read his pages and blush to think that authentic missionary annals may justify him in attributing deceit of this grave kind to a missionary, we may rejoice that missionary faithfulness has also suggested to him that a good missionary would

¹The Wizard. By H. Rider Haggard. New York and London, 1896. P. 77.

¹Dilto. P. 119.

refuse such a temptation ; and in any event we may learn that missionaries must not be like the witch-doctors, and take refuge in tricks.

And is there not yet another form of moral danger to which the missionary may be exposed, suggested to us here—a danger lest in his zeal for propogating Christianity, he may be misled into the use of doubtful means of obtaining access to the heathen ? Those who are acquainted with heathen lands, or even those who have a tolerable knowledge of missionary history, will understand at once what an ever present temptation stands before the messenger of glad tidings to obtain an opportunity to make them known by some act of *finesse*, which may all too easily pass into an act of deceit. Sometimes the country is closed to the open proclamation of the Gospel, and the temptation arises to obtain access to its population under color of some other profession. One may at least go as teacher or physician, and while pretending to impart only secular learning, convey also that knowledge which is unto salvation ; while pretending to no more than heal the body, minister, also, to the diseases of the soul. There is no one of us, doubtless, who would contend that the messenger of Christ is bound by human law in matters of this kind ; it is for us, too, in this late day, to say with all boldness, "We must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29). But we must see to it that we do obey God, and must not cast aside his great law of truth, in order to carry the truth to others. The point is not whether we shall boldly proclaim the Gospel in the face of all adverse force, or quietly propagate it in defiance of all adverse human enactments ; but the point is whether we shall teach it under color of doing something else, under an implied or even express promise not to teach it. A missionary, we will say, has long tried to gain entrance into a land closed to the Gospel ; an offer comes to him to take charge of a Royal University, we will say, with the express provision that if he takes charge of it

he obligates himself not to make his position a means of Christian propagandism. Ought he to accept such an offer? That is *prima facie* itself a serious question. How far does it involve an open renunciation of his Christian duty? But the point now is, if he does accept it, can he permit himself still to teach Christianity? A more subtle form of the same danger faces multitudes of missionaries. Take the case of Korea a few years ago :

"It should be premised here," says Mr. George W. Gilmore, in his bright work on "Korea From Its Capital" (Presbyterian Board. 1893. p. 294), "that every one of the ministers from the United States to the Court of Korea has construed the treaty between the two countries to mean that the work of teaching and preaching Christianity is not allowed. It provides that men may live in the capital for the purpose of studying the language, and it is under cover of this provision that missionaries are now resident in the country."

That is an ominous and disagreeable word : "Under cover of." And the narrative runs on to point out that the first Presbyterian missionary to Korea "was not known at first as a missionary," but "went ostensibly to practice his profession as a physician;" that his standing as a missionary was unknown even to the United States minister, under whom he served as physician to the American legation; that it was by his "shrewdness" and the "discretion" of his immediate successors that a beginning of Christian missions was made—and so on. I have no intention of passing a condemnation on these brethren. One would better, before doing such a thing as that, examine all the circumstances on the ground. But is there not an unpleasant flavor in the mouth as we read such an account? Do we not feel that it would require great discretion indeed—possibly more than you or I possess—to preserve our integrity as servants of the God of Truth, in such trying circumstances? No wonder that the narrator calls it "a hard position in which to be placed." Its hardness consists, however, not in the choice whether we will break the law of the land in order to preach Christianity, but whether we will keep the law of Christ in preaching it.

Take the situation in Japan. For traveling in the interior, passports have been necessary—to be secured from the central government.

“A very uncomfortable thing about these passports,” writes the Rev. M. L. Gordon, M. D., in his “An American Missionary in Japan” (p. 88), “is that they are granted only ‘for health or scientific purposes.’ Because of this fact, some missionaries are unwilling to use them for evangelistic touring, and so confine themselves to the vicinity of the open ports.”

All honor, we say, to such missionaries. A keen and high sense of honor is itself an evangelizing endowment. We condemn no one. But if you and I were there, might we not find ourselves in danger of “doing an evil that a good might come?” And may we not be sure that God will smile on those who seek to serve Him, though even to the apparent hurt of the cause they love?

I must bring these desolatory remarks to a close. I have no intention to seek to mention all the dangers to which missionaries are exposed. It may even be truly said that missionaries are no more exposed to the dangers that I have mentioned than to others which are precisely opposite to them. A missionary may be so hard and dry in his mode of proclaiming the truth that so far from being in danger of letting go the distinctive principles of Christ, he is in danger of forgetting to place those principles within the reach of his hearers. He may be so very careful of his own personal integrity that he fails to enter open doors, and prevents the spread of true Christianity by his litigious persistence in pressing petty points of no moral value—“losing his life” by his own attempts to “save” it. But all this only the more emphasizes the multiplicity of the dangers amid which he walks, and shows us in increased clearness how circumspectly a missionary needs to walk if he is to adorn, as well as proclaim, the Gospel of the Grace of God. It also increases our admiration for our missionaries who, amid so many and such subtle dangers, do walk so circumspectly as to adorn the Gospel. We do not think we could do it.

But that they do it, even those least in sympathy with them seem forced to admit. I have lately read, for example, a somewhat flippant book which gives an account of the ordinary mode of life among the British residents in Calcutta, from the point of view of a woman of the world. In it a missionary appears. Here is the description of him :

"The missionary padre receives his slender stipend from the S. P. G., or from some obscure source in America. It is arranged upon a scale to promote self-denial, and it is very successful. He usually lives where the drains are thickest and the smells most unmanageable, and when we of the broad river and the great Maidan happen to hear of his address, we invariably ejaculate, 'What a frightfully long way off.' The ticca-gharry is not an expensive conveyance, but the missionary padre finds himself better commended by his conscience if he walks and pays the cost of his transportation in energy and vitality, which must be heavy in the hot weather and the rains. For the rest, he lives largely upon second-class beef and his ideals, though they don't keep very well either in this climate. . . . Those who are married are usually married to missionary ladies of similar size and complexion, laboring in the same cause. . . . The official padre's wife looks like any other memsahib ; the missionary padre's wife looks like the missionary padre. I believe that chaplains sometimes ask missionary padres to dinner 'quietly,' and always make a point of giving them plenty to eat. And I remember meeting a married pair of them. . . . It was in the hot weather and they spoke appreciatively of the punkah. They had no punkah, it seemed, either day or night ; but the little wife had been very clever and had made muslin bags for their heads and hands to keep off the mosquitoes while they were asleep. We couldn't ascertain that either of them had been really well since they came out, and they said they had simply made up their minds to have sickness in the house during the whole of the rains. . . . They knew little of the Red Road or the Eden Gardens, where the band plays in the evenings ; they talked of strange places—Khengua Pattoo's Lane—Coolestollah. [The wife] told us that her great difficulty in the zenanas lay in getting the ladies to talk. . . . and [the husband] had been down in the Sunderbunds, far down in the Sunderbunds, where the miasmas are thickest, and where he had slept every night for a week on a bench in the same small room with two baboos and the ague. . . . He was more emaciated than clever," etc. (The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib. By Sara Jeannette Duncan. New York. D. Appleton & Co. 1895. pp. 238).

Not an attractive picture, you will say? That depends, however, on your point of view. From the world's point

of view it is a very unattractive picture—though we cannot help fancying that even the authoress intended it partly as a compliment to missionaries. From God's point of view I should think it would be very attractive—for after all what "is required in stewards is that a man be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:27.) A caricature, no doubt it is, but a caricature which would not have been possible were not the average missionary both strenuous and faithful.

And bearing such a description of his ways in mind, perhaps we may say in conclusion, that the greatest danger to which the missionary is exposed is that, in the zeal for souls that burns in his bones like a fire, and in his yearning desire to reap the fruits of his labors, he may forget the weakness of the human frame and wear himself out in toils that are too abundant, or cast himself away through sicknesses that are avoidable. The conditions of life in most mission fields are so different from those to which the missionary is accustomed at home, that a serious strain upon his physical system is unavoidable. It will be well if he does not unduly increase the strain and thus unduly decrease his usefulness by assuming burdens which no flesh can bear. Here, too, the rule is applicable that our zeal for God requires tempering with knowledge. Not that the missionary should not hold himself ready to give his life, if need be, for the cause to which he has devoted it; for here, too, is it true that he who would save his life shall lose it, and he who would lose his life for Christ's sake shall gain it. But that he should never be ready to throw away so valuable a life as his, through impatience with the limitations of human powers. In this matter, too, let us listen to the traditional saying of our Lord, which Dr. Westcott has adopted as his motto in life: "Be ye good money-changers." Let the missionary set high store on his life and strength—barter with them, sell them dearly—see to it that when they go down under the accumulated labors that will fall upon

them, they bring a great price—the greatest price procurable—in souls. They have been given him not to be flung away as things of little value; they are his capital—let him put them out at long interest, that they may earn great gains to present the Householder when He comes and asks for an account of his stewardship.

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