

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AT THE ANTIPODES.

SOME fifteen years ago a work was published by Mr. T. W. M. Marshall, entitled "Christian Missions; their agents, their methods and results." The design of the author is to prove, and mainly, too, by the testimony of Protestant authorities, that the Protestant missionaries employed were unfit generally speaking for the work from their worldly spirit, and in many instances from their immoral or dissolute habits, and that they have utterly failed in the work of converting the heathens; while on the other hand the Catholic missionaries were apostolic in their teaching and manners, and actually succeeded to a notable and striking extent in the work of converting the pagan to the faith and love of Christ in all parts of the world. A few facts respecting the missions to the Australian Blacks and the Maoris, taken from this work, may prove interesting to the readers of the TABLET. Dr. Lang, the Presbyterian historian of New South Wales, says, in August, 1852, "There is as yet no well authenticated case of the conversion of one Australian Black." This is not due to the want of money. In the year 1828, when the whole population of the colony—European I presume—was a little over thirty-six thousand, the cost of the Anglican Ecclesiastical establishment was £22,000. Twenty-two thousand pounds! But this did not satisfy the Anglican apostles—two in number. They each presented an account for extras, one for £700 the other for £800, and got it too.

Archdeacon Scott, after failing in business in England and then acting as a clerk or secretary merged at last into an ecclesiastical dignity and was sent out on a salary of £2,000. Two thousand pounds! What was the fruit of the teaching of those well-paid Protestant missionaries as regards the conversion of the aborigines? Literally nothing. Bishop Broughton told the Committee of the House of Commons that he did not believe it possible to instil into the mind of an Australian Black any adequate idea of God or Christianity—an opinion which it is only fair to say was repudiated by Wesleyan witnesses before the same Committee. So far is this from being true that Mr. Gerstaecker, an experienced German traveller, tells that he visited a school in which native children read the bible with a great deal more expression and emphasis than children in English village schools commonly do. Is it likely that Australian Blacks would be incapable of receiving truths intended by God to be addressed to all men? "Efforts prodigal indeed in zeal and money," say Col. Mundy, in his History of the Australian Colonies, "have been made to Christianise and civilise the Australian Blacks, but they have hitherto met with failure." From these barren Protestant missions turn now to the Roman Catholic missions. A Protestant traveller, Mr. W. S. Bradshaw, in his "Voyages in India and China," etc., admits the success of the Roman Catholic missionaries among the Australian Blacks in these words—"The Roman Catholic clergy have a native mission establishment in Victoria Plains where they make the natives useful by taking every means of civilising them. A very good feeling exists between the Roman Catholics and natives."

A new Benedictine monastery was in 1859 solemnly blessed in the district of Perth. From that hour hope dawned on the native of Australia. The example of the industry of the monks has been followed by many natives, who, abandoning their wandering life, have turned their attention to the cultivation of the soil and now live on its produce. Moreover, three young Australian blacks have been sent from this institution to Rome to complete their education. Here is proof that the Australian blacks are not incapable of civilisation or receiving Christian instruction, notwithstanding that Protestant missionaries, and I may say Protestants generally, if not some Catholics too, have so often pronounced their case to be utterly desperate. The idea so commonly put forward by English Protestant writers, that barbarous races like the Australian and New Zealand aborigines must, of necessity or by an order of Providence, disappear before the march of Christian civilisation, is one which, as Lord Goderich wrote to Governor Bourke, cannot be heard without feelings of indignation and shame. But shame or no shame, it is a notion which seems to have taken firm possession of the majority of the English Protestant people. It is, moreover, a fact which Protestant travellers and others who have visited pagan countries attest, that the Protestant missionaries make Christians, or rather nominal Christians, of those whom they undertake to convert, only to make them worse and more unamiable characters, in many respects, than they were when living in paganism, and before the missionary ever visited them. They have made the unfortunate Maori what he was not before they took him in hand—inhabitable, greedy, and selfish. You shall see something more of this in a future communication with which I mean to trouble you. It is a terrible and humbling thought that England, as the high priest of Protestantism, is not only civilising noble savages like the Maori off the face of the earth, but also spoiling and corrupting the morals of such of them as may for a time survive. Those savage races which have long escaped the blighting influence of Protestantism, and have been taught by Catholic missionaries, are not disappearing but increasing in numbers, and along with the faith they adopt the habits of a real Christian. No sooner do the self-willed, worldly, and luxurious English and American Protestant missionaries appear on the field, formerly occupied by the self-denying Catholic missionary alone, than the work of real conversion is suspended, or rather goes back. The vices of the civilised Protestant man then become engrafted on those of the savage. The fate of the latter is sealed. He begins to sink in the moral scale, and his vices lead to the extinction of his race. His fatal Protestant friends then slip into his place, and enjoy his lands and his other possessions in due time. It was a dismal day for the pagan nations of the world when England renounced the Catholic faith, and the Catholic nations themselves became unfaithful to their creed, as so many of them have done. The just Judge of the nations will surely punish, in some way, such conduct as this, but how or when we cannot know. Already they have felt his scourge.

CARDINAL MANNING'S BELIEF.

At St. Peter's Church, Hatton-garden, on Sunday evening, 14th January, Pontifical Vespers were sung by his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. His Eminence was assisted by the Very Rev. Dr. Kirner, and Fathers Crescitelli, Nenci, J. Bannin, and O'Haire. After Vespers his Eminence preached the sermon, taking for his text:—

"And all the kings of the earth shall adore Him; all the nations shall serve Him" (Psalm lxxi. 11).

In the course of his remarks his Eminence said that the time once was when the kings of the earth did adore Him, and the nations served Him—when kings and princes bowed down before the name of Jesus. But what was the state of Christendom at the present day? Time was when Christendom from east to west was one great family of the faith, but now nations and men had gone astray from Jesus Christ. The unity of Christendom was rent asunder; what was formerly Catholic unity is now rent into he knew not how many sections. Looking abroad one might almost think that the prophecy contained in the words of the text would not be fulfilled. The Vicar of Jesus Christ is despoiled of his rightful possessions, and Church, law, and order set at defiance. Heresy and schism were rampant, and men had taken to interpret for themselves the Divine commands and revelations, accepting that which suited their inclinations, and rejecting that which was opposed to their own ends. In the whole history of the Church, however, there never was a time when within the Church herself unity was so strong, so manifest, as at this day. What were the heresies of the present time? he asked. Heresy was a Greek word, signifying "choosing." And to render it into familiar language, it was picking and choosing on the part of the world, who rejected the Divine voice of the Church, which spoke with authority, for observances of their own creation. The world not only rejected the truth, but in their wisdom (as they thought it) they rejected the teachings of their acknowledged leaders and founders. There was not now a man in Switzerland who believed and practised what Calvin taught, not a man in Scotland who believed what Knox taught, nor in England what Cranmer taught. Where is Protestantism? It is an inconsistency. Even among themselves Protestants were at war with each other, and dissension and discord was raging. His Eminence expressed his belief in an ultimate reunion with the Church of God, that reverence to his Blessed Mother would be again universal, and that unity would be again restored. Those in middle age might not live to see the day, but he believed their children would, and they would live to bless the day when the world returned to the Church and faith of their fathers.—*Westminster Gazette*.

EXPERIMENT WITH THE EIGHTY-ONE TON GUN.

THE long-expected and anxiously prepared-for firing against the 47-inch target by the 81-ton gun took place at the school of gunnery on Thursday, February 8. The weather was very thick until just before the arrival of the visitors by special train from London and special carriages from Southend, but by a quarter to eleven o'clock the sun broke out. The gun, on a line of heavy rails, lay facing the target, which stood exactly at the end of the broad road across the marshes and looked strong enough to resist anything. It was 16ft. long by 10ft. high, and was composed of four eight-inch plates of best rolled iron bolted together with three-inch bolts, three intervals of five inches each being filled with seasoned teak. Along the top lay one of the Thunderer plates, and similar plates at the sides helped to solidify the structure. The 47 inches of iron and teak were backed by three tiers of eight whole timber piles at intervals of 10ft. and 8ft., and the massive framework of great balks was strutted against these piles by diagonal and transverse timber, the joints of which were strengthened by angle plates of inch iron, held by inch bolts. Under the directions of Captain Ellis a white mark was placed on the target 3ft. 9in. from the bottom, and 6ft. 5in. from the left side, and on this the gun was laid. In front of it were the wires for measuring the velocity of the projectile, and between these and the gun was placed a screen of calico to test windage. At ten minutes to eleven General Campbell and other distinguished officers came on the ground, and presently a very large number of English and foreign visitors followed. At eleven o'clock the first bugle was sounded to clear the ground, and ten minutes later a second gave more urgent warning for the spectators to betake themselves to the splinter proofs. At twenty minutes past eleven the gun was fired. The report was comparatively slight, and the impact of 370lb. shell made very little noise. A flash of fire was seen as the shot struck, and on examination the projectile was found to have made a penetration of 46½ inches. Three of the 8-inch plates were pierced and the fourth bulged out about four inches. It was also cracked in a star, 8 inches in diameter. One of the great piles of the first series was nipped clean in two, and one 14-inch balk of timber was crushed to 9½ inches, and into matchwood. On the whole, penetration would have been effected in another inch. The base of the shell, which broke up, is about 4 inches from the face of the target. It is thought another shot would go completely through.

In many German parishes where the parish priests have died the coadjutor-priests have been allowed to continue to perform the parochial functions as formerly. But a communication has lately been made to several coadjutors in parishes thus circumstanced in Nassau that their continuing to perform the parochial functions after the death of the parish priest is illegal, and can no longer be permitted. This will leave several parishes quite destitute of ecclesiastical ministrations. Camberg and Hahn, with populations of 4,000 and 3,000 Catholics respectively, will suffer thus.