

Keswick and Foreign Missions.

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THIS is little more than a paper of memories and notes. The subject announced in the title will be found well treated in (among other places) the twelfth chapter of Dr. Charles Harford's valuable compilation, "The Keswick Convention." When I say that the writer of that chapter, "The Missionary Element," is Dr. Eugene Stock, I say enough to indicate its value as a piece of Christian history.

My own direct recollections of Keswick go back to 1886, when for the first time I attended the Convention and appeared as a speaker. Only two years before, after many misgivings, of which almost all proved to be mere misunderstandings, had I definitely cast my lot in with the Keswick School. This is not the place to enter upon detail; enough to say that, in the autumn of 1884, on an occasion closely connected with the Keswick Movement though not identified with it, it pleased God to give me an experience of spiritual help never to be forgotten, mainly through that honoured leader and teacher, the Rev. Evan Hopkins. Intimate personal intercourse with him, following on the occasion which was so memorable for me, satisfied me fully and lastingly that the Movement, as represented by its best exponents, was entirely true to Apostolic teaching as to our acceptance in the "alone merits" of Christ our Sacrifice, and that it did no more than point with new emphasis, and with the joy of practical discoveries, to the resources laid up for the justified believer in the same Christ, living for us and in us, and humbly "used" by faith.

Naturally, I wished now to visit the Convention. But my life was very full, and the opportunity did not come till 1886. The memories of that year, with little exception, are as beautiful as they are vivid. Here and there, *in side-meetings*, utterances were heard tinged with the perilous dream of sinless perfectness.

But they were the exception, the narrow exception. The broad rule was a witness, as sound and sober as it was glad and uplifting, to the victorious power of the Lord, made by the Holy Spirit a "living, bright reality" in the heart, to subdue iniquities, and to give liberty and the joy of faith. What witnesses they were—Bowker, Webb-Peploe, Hopkins, Figgis, Monod, and many another! And the holy presence and influence of Harford-Battersby, founder of the Convention, then lately deceased, seemed still to breathe and move among us.

But I do not remember any prominence given to the missionary subject in the addresses of that year. It was not absent; certainly not intentionally, as I shall presently show that it could not have been. But the ruling conviction of the leaders was still that the message of Keswick was not so much about types and methods of work as about the equipment of the worker. They were right; only they had to learn in time how to modify the application of the conviction.

Still, the missionary idea was already present in power, just below the surface, so to speak. It could not well be otherwise. The year 1884 had witnessed a remarkable movement, kindred with Keswick, at Cambridge—a movement which had brought many ardent undergraduate Christians to realize intensely that true holiness meant a full and willing self-surrender for service. And soon, in one way or another, the call to the foreign field, particularly to China, had been brought home to many of them. In 1885 went out the still memorable "Cambridge Seven," as missionaries in connection with the China Inland Mission. And they, for some months before sailing (was it not about Easter that they sailed?), had been holding meetings up and down the country—in England, Scotland, and, I think, Ireland—which had created a very deep impression. Such hosts of hearers were attracted by these young heroes of the river and the cricket-field, about to go out to China together as evangelists, that, for almost the first time in history, the secular daily Press noticed missionary meetings, fully and with respect. Indeed, a new attitude in journalism towards missions and missionaries

then began, never to be abandoned since. The message of those meetings was not directly missionary. In a wonderful way it was rather an appeal, direct and supremely simple, for self-surrender to the Lord. But it was uttered by men who were themselves on the verge of penetrating China (a much less familiar China than that of to-day) because of such surrender. How could there fail to be a profound missionary impulse in their witness?

Bishop Hannington's heroic death was announced that same summer. The *Times*, influenced by the new conditions which I have indicated, commemorated him in a leading article which was almost a funeral oration. Foreign missions began to be an object in "the world," no longer of a somewhat contemptuous tolerance at best, but of respect, or at least genuine attention.

So the Keswick of 1886 contained in its gatherings a great many souls, notably souls of young Christian people, much alive to the call to work abroad. I on my part, at Cambridge, had seen many such ardent disciples in the making. From 1884 onwards my student-circle at Ridley Hall was, if I may use the word in a sense most loving, *beset* with the missionary impulse. Man after man, as ordination approached, came to me to say that he felt as if the foreign field were the only possible field in *his* case for fully surrendered service. It was continually my duty to point out to them, one by one, how the doing of the will of God, in His chosen place and way, was our one true ideal, and that it might be His will to assign them the homelier, but sacred and immensely important, work of an English parish. Let them be quite ready for either, and then calmly expect clear guidance, with prayer and open eyes. And many a true man took the caution willingly to heart. Some stayed; some went; and with all the clearer conviction in both cases. It was a wonderful epoch, and it was vitally connected with the truths of which Keswick had become so prominent and typical an exponent.

All this prepares us for developments at Keswick. In 1887, and again in 1888, the late Mr. Reginald Radcliffe, the Liverpool solicitor who was so wonderfully used as an evangelistic

power in many lands till his blessed death long years after, persuaded Mr. Bowker (not without difficulty, so strong was the veteran's feeling that Keswick existed for principles, not methods) to allow a missionary meeting, "outside" the Convention, to be held in the tent. The results were great and far-reaching. I was not present on either occasion. But it is well remembered how, in 1888, gifts—money, jewels, and what not—flowed in with almost Pentecostal freedom, and offers of personal service were so many that the representatives of the C.M.S. and other societies were kept hard at work with the ceaseless interviews.

Out of that time grew the organized work of the "Keswick missionaries," who have from time to time visited missionary and colonial outposts with the message of "holiness by faith." The large funds for the support of missionaries (in connection always with existing societies; no unwise creation of a new society was attempted) took origin then also. From that time onward also, more and more, missionaries on furlough found their way to Keswick for spiritual refreshment. With my wife in 1889, and once again, I had the privilege of presiding over a "missionary house"—an experience very dear to our memories.

I hesitate not to say that thus, through countless channels, the whole great field has felt the influence, let me not say of Keswick, but of Him who has so mercifully used Keswick, now for forty years, for His Divine purposes in the special work of awakening His true servants to their fulness of resource in Himself.

May the holy work continue and be developed to His glory! For my own part, with unshaken and growing conviction, I feel very deeply indeed the vital significance of the message of the Keswick Convention in our present-day Christian life, not least within the Anglican Church. A grave unsettlement of thought is everywhere present. One issue of it, so I seem to see the position, is the sorrowful restraint, as compared with twenty and thirty years ago, of offers for personal service in the heathen and Mohammedan world. Many and various may be the means which our Lord will employ for counteraction and revival. But

I am sure that among them He will, in His grace and mercy, have a great place for the loving and unaltering testimony, of which Keswick has been and is so great a scene, to the holy and happy realities of the life which is lived in the power of a trusted Christ, speaking in His Word, manifested by His Spirit.



Studies in Texts:

SUGGESTIONS FOR SERMONS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

BY THE REV. HARRINGTON C. LEES, M.A.

VII.—GOD'S COURT OF APPEAL.

"They delivered Jesus to Pilate."—Mark xv. 1.

"Jesus committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."—
1 Pet. ii. 23.

[Book of the Month: "THE TRIAL OF JESUS CHRIST"¹ = T. Other references: David Smith's "Days of His Flesh" = DF. Stalker's "Trial of Jesus" = ST. Rosadi's "Trial of Jesus" = RT. Moffatt's "Trial" in *Hast. Dict., Ch. and Gos.* = DCG.]

SAME Greek word in both texts. One of the great key-words of trial: *cf.* Matt. xxvi. 2; xxvii. 2, 3, 4; Mark xv. 1, 15; Luke xxiii. 25; John xix. 11. Peter says Christ suffered wrongfully for doing right (1 Pet. ii. 20, 21).

I. THE UNJUST JUDGES. "In both trials judges were unjust, and trial was unfair" (T., 123). *A. Hebrew Trial.* "A process begun and finished in *one* night; commencing with witnesses against accused (Mark xiv. 56), sought for by judges (xiv. 55, 'scandalous indecorum' T., 36), not sustained even so (v. 59); continued by illegal interrogatories (Mark xiv. 60; 'John xviii. 21 is voice of pure Hebrew justice recalling unjust judge to duty,' T. 26); ending with demand for confession

¹ By A. Taylor Innes, Advocate. Publisher: T. and T. Clark. 2s. 6d. A striking legal view of an illegal transaction.