

CHAPTER XII.

HEROISM IN MISSIONS.

Patience is the exercise
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude;
Making them each his own deliverer,
And victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.

MILTON

For still we hope
That in a world of larger scope,
What here is faithfully begun
Will be completed, not undone.

A. H. CLOUGH.

But all through life I see a cross
Where sons of God yield up their breath:
There is no gain except by loss,
There is no life except by death,
There is no vision but by faith,
Nor glory but by bearing shame,
Nor justice but by taking blame;
And that Eternal Passion saith,
Be emptied of glory and right and name.

OLRIG GRANGE.

IT is related of the Duke of Wellington that when a certain chaplain asked him whether he thought it worth while to preach the Gospel to the Hindoos, the man of discipline asked, "What are your marching orders?" The chaplain replied, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." "Then follow your orders," said the Duke; "your only duty is to obey."

Though an unwelcome, an unpopular, and a perilous duty, there have been found men in all ages who have followed

the directions of their Saviour. Christ preached to the Jews and the Gentiles. St. Paul was the first missionary apostle. He founded churches in the East, at Corinth, at Ephesus, at Thessalonica, and elsewhere, and left his bones at Rome, where he had gone to preach the Gospel.

The career of a missionary is the most dutiful and heroic of all. He carries his life in his hand. He braves danger and death. He lives among savages, sometimes among cannibals. Money could not buy the devotion with which he encounters peril and misery. He is only upheld by the mission of mercy with which he is charged. What are called "advanced thinkers" have nothing to offer us for the self-imposed work of missionaries, at home and abroad. Mere negation teaches nothing. It may pull down, but it cannot build up. It may shake the pillars of our faith and leave nothing to hold by, nothing to sanctify, to elevate, or to strengthen our natures.

But savage human nature is "vile." "How can they be vile to us," said Bishop Selwyn, "who have been taught by God not to call any man common or unclean? I quarrel not with the current phrases of 'poor heathen,' and 'the perishing savages.' Far poorer and more ready to perish may be those men of Christian countries who have received so much and can account for so little. Poorest of all may we be ourselves, who, as stewards and ministers of the grace of God, are found so unfaithful in our stewardship. To go among the heathen as an equal and a brother is far more profitable than to risk that subtle kind of self-righteousness which creeps into the mission work akin to the thanking God that we are not as other men are."

How much are we indebted to St. Augustine, the first missionary into England, for our liberty, our integrity, our learning, and even our missionary enterprise! At the end of the sixth century Augustine, or Austin, was consecrated by Pope Gregory, and entitled beforehand Bishop of England. He proceeded on his mission, and, after passing through France, he landed at Thanet, accompanied by a number of monks. He was received by Ethelbert, King of Kent, at Canterbury. The king had married a Christian

wife, and, partly through her influence, he became baptized and was afterward admitted to the Church. The missionary labors of Augustine extended throughout the country until, at his death in 605, the greater part of England acknowledged the See of Rome.

But the north of England remained pagan. Edwin, chief of the country north of the Humber, became engaged to a Christian princess, sister of Edbald, King of Kent. The bride proceeded northward, accompanied by a priest of Roman birth, named Paulinus. After some years Edwin became a Christian, though the Elderman and Thanes remained pagan. A meeting of the Wittenagemote was called to consider the new doctrines. Edwin laid before the assembly his motives for the change in his belief, and, addressing each of them in turn, he asked what they thought of the matter. The story is told by Bede in his "History," and is exceedingly touching.

The first who replied was the chief of the priests. He declared that the old gods, Thor, Odin, and Freia* had no power, and he desired to worship them no more. The chief of the warriors then rose and spoke in these terms:

"Thou mayest recollect, O king, a thing which sometimes happens in the days of winter, when thou art seated at table with thy Eldermen and Thanes, when a good fire is blazing, when it is warm in thy hall, but rains, snows, and storms without. Then comes a little bird, and darts across the hall, flying in at one door and out at the other. The instant of this transit is sweet to him, for then he feels neither rain nor hurricane. But that instant is short; the bird is gone in the twinkling of an eye, and from winter he passes forth to the winter again. Such, to me, seems the life of man on this earth; such its momentary course compared with the length of time that precedes and follows it. That eternity is dark and comfortless to us, tormenting us by the impossibility of comprehending it. If, then, this new doctrine can teach us anything certain respecting it, it is fit that we should follow it."

* Hence Thursdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

The old warrior's speech settled the question. It was put to the vote, and the assembly solemnly renounced the worship of their ancient gods. But when Paulinus, the missionary, proposed that they should destroy the images of their gods, there was not one among them who felt sufficiently firm in his convictions to brave the dangers of such a profanation. But the high priest mounted a horse, and girt with a sword, and brandishing a lance, he galloped toward the temple, and, in sight of all the people, he struck the walls and images with his lance, and finally destroyed them. A wooden building was then erected, in which Edwin and a great number of his followers were baptized. Paulinus then travelled throughout the countries of Deiria and Bernicia, baptizing in the waters of the Swale and the Ure all who were willing to obey the decree of the Assembly of the Sages.

In the seventh century the light of Christianity was spread through the benighted regions of Europe by the aid of the missionaries Andomar, Amand, and Columba, in Gaul; Paulinus, Wilfred, and Cuthbert, in England; and Kilcan, Rudpert, and subsequently Boniface, in Germany. When Boniface landed in Britain he came with the Gospel in the one hand and a carpenter's rule in the other. He had the true spirit of work in him. When he afterward went to Germany he carried with him the art of building.

Anschar, with one companion, went in 826 to the confines of the Danish kingdom, where, inspired by his success, he instituted seminaries for future missionaries. Evangelizers went to Hungary and Poland in the tenth century, where they established themselves in the Diocese of Cracow. They labored under the greatest difficulties, though difficulties were the obstacles which they were bound to conquer. Without any fear of death, they devoted themselves to the help of those who were stricken by the plague. Besides Christianizing, they raised money to redeem captives from the Ottoman Empire. Who could resist such loving missionary enterprise?

In the tenth and eleventh centuries there were missions of workmen and architects, all connected with the Church.

These were the men who erected the splendid cathedrals of this and other countries. They put their spirit into their work; they put religion into their work. Their architecture had life and truth and love and joy in it. It was chiselled music. How different from the shoddy work of to-day, when modern buildings crumble into rubbish, while the old cathedrals stand in their magnificence, a delight to all beholders.

It is said that China had Nestorian missionaries as early as the seventh century, and French missionaries as early as the twelfth century. Protestant missionaries were only sent to China in 1807. Asia and Africa are merely skirted with a line of missionary pickets. In Africa, the heroic age of missions has just begun to dawn. But how much land remains to be possessed!

St. Francis Xavier, the Apostle to the Indies, was a lesson to all. He went to Goa in a Portuguese ship in 1542 to preach the Gospel to the benighted. He was a man of noble lineage, and might have lived a life of pleasure and luxury like others. But he forsook everything, and chose to live a life of sacrifice, devotion, and well-doing. Sounding his hand-bell in Goa, he implored the people to send him their children to be instructed. He went from thence to Cape Comorin, to Travancore, to Malacca, to Japan. He tried to get into China, but failed; at last he died of fever in the island of Sanchean, where he received his crown of martyrdom.

Nor can we forget Las Casas, who was, in like manner, the Apostle of the West Indies. "At a period," says Sir Arthur Helps, "when brute force was universally appealed to in all matters, but especially in those that pertained to religion, he contended before Juntas and Royal Councils that missionary enterprise is a thing that should stand independent of all military support; that a missionary should go forth with his life in his hand, relying only on the protection that God will vouchsafe him, and depending neither upon civil nor military assistance. In fact, his works would, even in the present day, form the best manual extant for missionaries."

Las Casas accompanied his father in an expedition under Columbus to the West Indies in 1498. He then saw America for the first time. He returned to Spain, and made a second voyage to Hispaniola. He was there ordained priest. In the performance of his new functions he was found eloquent, acute, truthful, bold, self-sacrificing, pious. He went from place to place with the Spaniards, and endeavored to gain the confidence of the Indians. He prevented many disorders and much cruelty; for the Spaniards were far more savage than the Indians. After being witness to several massacres, Las Casas determined to return to Spain and intercede for the poor people. He obtained an interview with King Ferdinand, and informed him of the wrongs and sufferings of the Indians, and of how they died without a knowledge of the faith. But Ferdinand was now an old and failing man, whose death was near at hand, and nothing came of his representation.

Ferdinand died shortly after, when Las Casas endeavored to interest Cardinal Ximenes, the Regent, in the sufferings and miseries of the Indians. The Cardinal promised that the evils should be abated. He appointed three Jeronimite fathers to accompany Las Casas to the West Indies. On their arrival at San Domingo the fathers took the part of the governor and judges, on which Las Casas again returned to Spain to appeal against them; but on his arrival he found the Cardinal at the point of death. The king (Charles V.) was only sixteen years old, and the affairs of Spain were managed by his Chancellor. When Las Casas had made a good beginning with the Chancellor, this man, like the Cardinal, died also; and thus death seemed always to interfere between the missionary and the fulfilment of his projects. The Bishop of Burgos regained his ascendancy, and Las Casas went "into the abysses," as he expresses it. The Jeronimite fathers were, however, recalled. But the missionary was able to obtain no further help, and he went out to the Indies as before. He endeavored to found a colony at Cumana, where he made friends of the Indians, and endeavored to preserve them from the cruelty of the Spaniards. But he was always thwarted, and his attempt at

colonization was suspended. He had no one to help him, and the work which he contemplated could not be done alone.

Las Casas then embraced a monastic life. He remained for eight years in the Dominican monastery at Hispaniola, during which time he led a life of extreme seclusion. He afterward devoted himself to missionary work. He went on a mission to Peru, accompanied by two of his brethren. They returned to Mexico, and instructed the Indians in the Christian faith. While at Nicaragua Las Casas organized a formidable opposition to the governor, whom he prevented from undertaking one of those expeditions into the interior which were always so injurious to the natives. The most outrageous atrocities took place on those occasions. It has been known that on an occasion when 4000 Indians accompanied an expedition to carry burdens, only six of them returned alive. Las Casas himself describes how, when an Indian was sick with weariness and hunger, and unable to proceed, as a quick way of getting the chain free from the Indian, his head was cut off, and he was thus disengaged from the gang with which he travelled. "Imagine," he says, "what the others must have felt."

Las Casas and his associates now resolved to make their way into Tuzulután for the purpose of Christianizing the natives. That district was a terror to the Spaniards. They called it "The Land of War." They had been thrice beaten back by the inhabitants. But the missionaries were inspired with the courage of faith, and determined to invade the land, though at the peril of their lives. The first thing they did was to translate into verse, in the Quiché language, the great doctrines of the Church. Their next thought was how to introduce their poem to the notice of the Indians. They called to their aid four Indian merchants who were in the habit of going with merchandise several times a year into the district. These four men were taught to repeat the couplets perfectly. The couplets were also set to music, that they might be accompanied by Indian instruments. Las Casas also furnished the merchants with

small wares to please the aborigines, such as scissors, knives, looking-glasses, and bells.

The merchants were well received by the Cacique. In the evening, when the chiefs were assembled, the merchants called for an instrument of music, and began to recite the verses with an accompaniment. The effect produced was great. For several days after the sermons in song were repeated. The Cacique inquired where these verses came from, and wished to know what was the origin and meaning of these things. The merchants replied that they came from the Padres. "And who are the Padres?" Then the merchants explained, and the Cacique proceeded to invite these extraordinary men to his country. This is how Las Casas and his companions obtained access to "The Land of War."

It is unnecessary to pursue the subject further. The Cacique embraced the Christian faith. He pulled down and burned his idols. He preached to his subjects, who followed his example. Las Casas and Pedra de Angulo built a church at Rabinal. There they preached and taught the people, teaching not only spiritual things but manual arts, and instructing their flocks in the elementary processes of washing and dressing. The example spread to Cobán, a neighboring territory; and thus every success gained by these brave monks was a step toward continued exertion.

Las Casas again returned to Spain in 1539. He was detained there because of his knowledge of Indian affairs. He proceeded to write his work, entitled "The Destruction of the Indies," which has been very widely read. He was offered the bishopric of Cusco (in New Toledo), but he refused it. He was again offered the bishopric of Chiapa, in New Mexico, and his superiors pressed it upon him as a matter of conscience. At last he submitted himself to the will of his superiors. He again set sail for the New World, and was installed at Ciudad Real, the capital of the province. The episcopal dignity made no change in his ways and manners. His dress was that of a simple monk, often torn and patched. Everything in his household was of the simplest character. He refused absolution to those who

bought and held slaves contrary to the provisions contained in the new laws. He met with great difficulties in his endeavors to put down slavery. His life was attempted. He was called "the Devil of a bishop;" "that Antichrist for a bishop." He heeded not, but went on his way, rejoicing when he had put down an evil. He finally returned to Spain, in 1547, when he resigned the bishopric.

Las Casas was a man of indomitable courage. He crossed the ocean between Europe and America twelve times. He made his way into Germany four times to see the Emperor. He led a most energetic life; and he must have had a vigorous constitution, for he did not meet death until he was ninety-two years old. He died at Madrid, after a short illness, in July, 1566.

What Las Casas deplored three centuries ago we have to deplore now—that missionaries are either preceded or followed by horse, foot, and artillery, and that the heathen are killed before they can be converted. Love of conquest is at the root of all this mischief. From 1800 to 1850 not less than £14,500,000 was devoted by the British people to Christian missions, certainly a noble monument of the faith, energy, and devotedness of the British churches. But during the same time we had expended on war and the materials of war not less than £1,200,000,000 sterling. This is a still greater monument to our belief in war and the materials of warfare.

Missionaries entered the south of Africa and made their way to the north amid difficulties innumerable. They lived among the natives, and gave their minds and hearts and souls to them, endeavoring to bring them to a belief in the loving doctrines of Christianity. Men of education, accustomed to the comforts and conveniences of civilized life, endured privations of the most severe kind, which were all the harder to bear as they fell upon their wives and children. No motives of gain could support them in such a position. When Dr. Moffat crossed the Orange River, in 1820, as a missionary to the Bechuana tribes, his salary was £18 7s. for himself, and £5 5s. for his wife and family.

When Moffat went among these tribes he did not know

their language, and he had none to teach him. Unmindful of their abominations, and fearless of their ferocity, he lived entirely among the natives. He walked, he slept, he wandered, he hunted, he rested, he ate, he drank with them, till he thoroughly mastered their language, and then he began to preach to them the Gospel. He labored on amid difficulties and afflictions of all kinds, occasionally attended by threats of murder, without any apparent tokens of success. At length they believed in him and in the healing words he taught. The once naked, filthy savages became clothed and cleanly. Idleness gave place to industry. They built houses and cultivated gardens. Provisions for the wants of the mind kept pace with those of the body; they reared schools for the young, and chapels for the old. And thus the work of education and religion rapidly advanced.

Moffat was followed by Livingstone, his son-in-law, who gave his life to the same work. Livingstone opened up the heart of Africa, and trod the lands of savage tribes where the foot of the white man had never trod before. He travelled thousands of miles among savage beasts, and still more savage men, and was often delivered from danger almost by the "skin of his teeth;" but he never doubted in the success of the Gospel, even among the degraded. He did not live to see the outbreak of war in South Africa, and to hear of the thousands of men who were slain in resisting the attempt to annex their territories.

Men, even savage men, judge each other by their deeds, not by their words. Professing Christians, like vendors of bad coinage, often expose genuine religion to suspicion. "In true kindness of heart," said Dr. Guthrie, "sweetness of temper, open-handed generosity, the common charities of life, many mere men of the world lose nothing by comparison with such professors; and how are you to keep the world from saying, 'Ah! your man of religion is no better than others; nay, he is sometimes worse?' With what frightful prominence does this stand out in the never-to-be-forgotten answer of the Indian chief to the missionary who urged him to become a Christian. The plumed and painted savage drew himself up in the consciousness of superior rectitude,

and with indignation quivering on his lip and flashing in his eye, he replied, 'Christian lie! Christian cheat! Christian steal; drink, murder! Christian has robbed me of my lands and slain my tribe!' Adding, as he haughtily turned away, 'The Devil, Christian! I will be no Christian!' May such reflections teach us to be careful how we make a religious profession! And having made the profession, cost what it may, by the grace of God let us live up to it, and act it out."

Let us turn to another quarter of the globe—the islands of Polynesia, where many missionaries have done heroic work. Take, for instance, the case of John Williams, known as "the Martyr of Erromanga." His life is a romance. There was nothing peculiar about his boyhood. He was put apprentice to a London ironmonger, and from the counter he proceeded to the workshop. He had the mechanical instinct, and executed iron-work that required peculiar delicacy and skill. In his youth he became connected with irreligious companions, who threatened to exert a fatal influence upon his character. They were avowed unbelievers and Tom Painers. But better influences prevailed; and at length Williams joined a Mutual Improvement Society, and then became an active Sunday-school teacher.

Missionary operations in heathen lands were then exciting much interest, and, after much deliberation, he offered his services to the London Missionary Society. They were accepted, and in 1810 he left his master before the termination of his apprenticeship. He was only twenty years old. During the short period allowed him for literary and theological studies he contrived to visit manufactories and workshops, in order to improve his knowledge of mechanics, and thus to introduce the arts of peace as well as religious instruction to the people among whom he was to labor.

Captain Cook discovered a large number of islands in the Pacific Ocean, inhabited by savages, some of whom were comparatively innocent, and others dreadfully cruel, but all idolaters. These islands were selected by the London Missionary Society, at the instance of Dr. Haweis, father of the South Sea Missions, and the scene of their earli-

est labors. For many years the missionary pioneers labored with very little success; but in course of time the natives gradually embraced Christianity, and in some islands the rites of idolatry were entirely abandoned.

The missionaries were constantly calling for more helpers. The London Missionary Society, recognizing the necessity, sent John Williams, notwithstanding his comparatively small amount of preliminary study. But he was young, ardent and earnest. Before starting on his voyage Williams married Miss Mary Chauner, who proved an invaluable coadjutor in his future labors. Within six months after quitting his apprenticeship he embarked for Sydney with some other young missionaries. From thence they went to Eimeo, one of the Society Islands. Mr. Williams, besides helping the missionaries, proceeded to perfect himself in the Tahitian language. During this time he made the iron work for a small vessel which the missionaries were building for Pomare, King of Tahiti.

Mr. Williams was shortly after removed to Huahine, and afterward to Raiatea. The latter is the largest and most central island of the Society group. Here his labors were attended with great success. Without neglecting the primary objects of his mission, he endeavored to improve the moral and physical condition of the people. The natives were very debased and inveterately idle. Promiscuous intercourse was common. When Williams had obtained some influence over them he induced them to adopt legal marriage.

He next induced them to build habitations for themselves. He himself proceeded to build a comfortable house in the English style, as a model for the natives to follow. It was divided into several apartments, with wooden floors and framed walls, plastered with coral lime. The rooms were provided with tables, chairs, sofas, bedsteads, carpets, and hangings. Almost everything was done with his own hands.

The natives, being an imitative people, shortly followed his example. With the missionary's assistance they built houses for themselves, and were thus taught the decencies

and comforts of civilized life. He also instructed them in boat-building; and, with a view to the future commerce of the island, he induced them to plant tobacco and sugar-cane, so as to prepare both articles for the market. The rollers required for the sugar mill were turned in a lathe formed by Williams's own hand.

Having thus fairly started the natives in industrial operations, he next desired to find sufficient markets for their produce. He wished to extend his peaceful conquest throughout the other islands of the group. He believed that nothing was more likely to improve the civil and religious condition of the islanders than by establishing commercial relations between them. For this purpose a ship was required, for small boats could not answer the purpose.

Full of his idea, and eager to carry it out, he proceeded to Sydney, in 1822, and bought a schooner of eighty tons, called the *Endeavor*. Sir Thomas Brisbane, governor of New South Wales, presented him with several cows, calves, and sheep, for propagation in the islands. In carrying out this enterprise Williams took the entire responsibility upon himself. It was held that his business was to preach and not to trade; but he believed that when the importance of the undertaking was considered, the society in London would continue to give him their support.

He returned to Raiatea in safety, and, in 1823, he sailed for the Harvey Islands in order to discover the island of Raratonga. This splendid island escaped the untiring researches of Captain Cook. It was only from some traditions and legendary tales among the islanders that Williams knew of its existence. After a long search for the missing island Williams returned to Raiatea. At length, after some interval, he set out again. After sailing about for many days, buffeted by contrary winds, and after his provisions had become nearly exhausted, the captain came to him and said, "We must give up the search, sir, or we shall all be starved." A native was again sent to the topmast to look ahead. It was the fifth time he had ascended. He cried out that Raratonga was in sight!

"When we were within half an hour of relinquishing the

object of our search," says Mr. Williams, "the clouds which enveloped its towering heights having been chased away by the heat of the ascending sun, he relieved us from our anxiety by shouting, 'Here, here is the land we have been seeking!' The transition of feeling was so instantaneous and so great that, although a number of years have intervened, I have not forgotten the sensations which that announcement occasioned. The brightened countenances, the joyous expressions, and the lively congratulations of all on board showed that they shared in the same emotions; nor did we fail to raise our voices in grateful acknowledgment to Him who had graciously 'led us by a right way.'"^{*}

The missionary and his companions (natives of the neighboring islands) were favorably received on landing. The teachers at once stated the object of their mission. It was to instruct them in the knowledge of the true God. The king was willing to be instructed, and his people with him. After remaining in the island for some time, he left one of the native teachers there, and the *Endeavor* returned to Raiatea. He was prepared to bring the whole of the Navigator and other islands under his care. He was ready to set out on another expedition, when intelligence reached him from London that the missionary society disapproved of his proceedings, being jealous lest anything of a worldly character should become mixed up with his mission. At the same time, the merchants of New South Wales obtained an enactment of fiscal regulations from the governor, which had the effect of greatly impeding the development of trade from the South Sea Islands. Williams was thus compelled to part with the *Endeavor*. He filled the vessel with the most marketable produce that he could collect, and sent it to Sydney, with orders for the sale of both ship and cargo.

Williams continued stationed at Raiatea, but visited Raratonga from time to time. In 1827 he accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Pitman, who were about to settle there as missionaries. They found that the old idols had been mostly destroyed,

^{*}"A Narrative of Missionary Enterprise in the South Sea Islands." By the Rev. John Williams. 1841.