

CAN THE BLACK, THE BROWN, AND THE RED MAN BE CIVILIZED?

The negro rebellion in Jamaica suggests the propriety of a candid and fearless enquiry into the possibility of civilizing the black, the brown, and the red races of men. A perfect civilization never did exist in the absence of Christianity; and the inference is obvious, that unless the African, Oriental, and the Indian can be converted practically to Christianity, they cannot be civilized.

Up to this moment, Christianity has made small progress among peoples alien to the northern races. The white man only, properly speaking, is a Christian. All others are religious after a way, but they are not followers of Christ. They are addicted to awful superstitions, and they are utterly ignorant of gospel truths. There must be a reason for this. Europeans have made themselves felt all over the world. Their power has been manifested where the black man, the brown man, and the red man constitute nations. Everywhere they have given proof of a high civilization; but, while compelling obedience and admiration, they have ceased to disturb the monotony of real and qualified barbarism. Missionaries have gone forth through the length and breadth of the universe, and flattering statements excited hope of conversion which have not been realized. The zeal of Roman Catholic missionaries effected wonders—on paper; but, where a Xavier failed, Protestant successors have not succeeded. What one missionary asserts another missionary denies; and, although giving them all credit for zeal and tact, the result, it must be admitted, is on the whole comparatively small.

There must be a cause for this. We can only reason from what we know, and the facts known demand to be appreciated. The white man was never a barbarian. He was rude, untutored, ignorant, and at times brutal; but in him was found the material capable of high development. He alone exhibited in all ages an aptitude for the arts and pursuits that produce and sustain civilization. In all others that aptitude was absent, or only elementary. Civilization was a constant quantity among white men. It predominated in Italy before Rome was known, and when Rome fell it advanced beyond the dreams of Rome in other parts of Italy. The people who made Greece the home of an imperfect civilization where white men. The Helots were brown men; and when, through intermarriage, the native skin tainted the white skin, Greece became a thing of the past. Mr. Gladstone's "Homer" proves this; and the personal descriptions of the great Greeks from Pisistratus to Alexander establish the fact that they were of the northern race. There were empires in the East, and there were great works here and there in Egypt, but when they, such as they were, disappeared, not a remnant of civilization remained to attest the fact of a cotemporary civilization. China, from time immemorial, was—China, and nothing else. Asia was as far advanced when we first knew it as it is now. All in the East is stereotyped; what it is, it was. The Mongol was there, and the Parsee is there now, but the Oriental is stationary. The European in the way of counsel and example operates in vain. Bordering the Mediterranean the Christian pushed forward; glad tidings were carried throughout Asia Minor; Africa had a church, but the mild and holy doctrine of the Redeemer was crushed out by the preachers of a beastly creed. The Oriental seems incapable of appreciating the divine truths of Christianity. These make no way out of Europe.

There is another marked difference between the West and the East. The northern people always loved liberty—fought for it, and when worsted fought for it again. The Chinese and the Asiatics never had a notion of nation or civil liberty. They live, and have always lived, under despotism; and are now, we are told, and can well believe it, incapable of apprehending what is understood by the term constitutional government.

The red men are children of the forest and prairie; without being noble savages they tenant the wilderness. The proximity of civilization has had no effect upon them. There must be a reason for this.

The black man bears little, if any, resemblance to the red man. He is robust, tall, muscular, and brave. His form is different, his features repulsive. His head alone is covered with woolly hair. There is a marked difference between the African and all other peoples; the cause of the difference has not yet been explained, and no explanation will change the physical appearance. To ascribe his color to climate will not lessen the difficulty. God made the climate, if the climate made the man.

The black man, the brown man, the red man, and the white men, are all members of the human family. No two men are alike; in every family there are distinctions, and the interest of all requires that peculiarity should be appreciated for the advancement of religion and civilization. China and the East are being rendered subservient to the interest of trade, and that interest will be best promoted by treating the inhabitants kindly, honestly, and generously. With Africa nothing can be done except through time. The natives exceed in barbarism all that has ever been heard of from all other places. The horrid fables of antiquity pale before the monstrous brutalities of sable sovereigns. The wrongs of the country are the wrongs of the people themselves. Improvement there has been none for at least three thousand years. In all other countries we find evidence of industry and of advancement, but in Africa nothing but protracted barbarism. There is one hope left, and only one—the encroachment of white settlers on the confines of the country. The encroachment will continue, but still the negro will either threaten from a distance or become domesticated as laborers. It would be hard to say which would be the greater evil.

The condition of the African is admitted, but excused on the ground that he was denied the chance of improving. Now, he has had the same chance at home as other peoples but he has not improved. The fault is innate; it is idly to deny it. From home, has his nature changed? Slavery is a bitter draught, but the negro was a slave in Africa before he became a slave in the sugar-producing and cotton-growing islands. He was brutally used in both places, but, if anything better by the white planter than the black master. Christianity and civilization were at work around him in the cane-fields. His chains fell from him, and he left a free man, thirty years ago, in British colonies; and in our day four millions have been emancipated in America. The experiment in America has to be made, but it will not be made in the ignorance of facts. In Hayti the negro has been free for fifty years; in the British islands he has been free for thirty years. What has been the effect of liberty to him? That is the question, and on the answer will hang an argument for or against the negro's capacity for

self-government. Through his own brutality and the convulsed state of the world he became free. The island of Hayti was his. It came into his possession through circumstances most favorable to his development. The soil was rich and well cultivated.—Trade was active, and the appurtenances of trade in good condition. He had been in contact with the best humanity of the time, and he spoke the polished language of the world.—What has been the result? All the advantages have been thrown away, the influence of example has been lost; and, were it not for the existence of whites and cross-breeds in the island, Hayti would be a small Africa. Mormonism is the rule, for a man marries any number of wives in order that he may employ them in growing food, and in picking up the coffee berries from the remnant of cotton plantations. The negro has not in fifty years planted a single coffee tree.

It is now thirty-six years since the negroes were emancipated in the British West India Islands. They were secured their freedom by the greatest and most humane government on earth. They participate in the administration of local affairs; they had access to the rich soils of tilled and untilled fields, and there was employment at wages if they chose to labor. Pains had been taken to instruct them in religion, to teach them reading and writing, but they failed to appreciate the happy circumstances which surrounded them. They did not work; they did not produce, and of course they did not consume. The Emancipation Act was a great act, but its advocates have not been entirely satisfied. They are now less satisfied. There is a rebellion in Jamaica. We are not bound to credit in their entirety the horrid details which are sent to us, but no doubt brutalities have been perpetrated. The atrocities acted in India during the late mutiny were frightful enough, but not quite so bad as represented. There have been atrocities, no doubt, in Jamaica sufficiently revolting, but, let us hope, not quite so appalling as those just published. The fact, however, cannot be disguised that the African released from restraint, and the passion of the savage provoked, will realize the scenes formerly witnessed in Hayti.—White men have ere now done deeds sufficiently revolting; but the black man has a cruelty peculiarly his own, and is indulged in running a muck against all he meets. As yet we have no precise knowledge of the cause of the rebellion; but it is not likely that it has reference to a wide spread scheme of massacre throughout all the islands including Cuba. Whatever may be the origin, we may rest assured the revolt will soon be put down; but the uprising of the negroes in Jamaica cannot fail to inspire fears wherever the African people in civilized states are numerous and in districts located. The American Government will pause probably in its scheme of emancipation, yet the negroes in the Southern States acted discreetly during the war. They desired liberty, but did not stain the domestic hearth with the blood of the household. This revolt in Jamaica suggests thoughts that involuntarily arise, but do not subside speedily.