

The Laymen's Missionary movement is interdenominational and international. It exists to promote intelligent missionary interest among laymen. A number of meetings were arranged in London, Bristol, Edinburgh, Liverpool, and Sheffield, at which the delegates expounded the principles and aims of the movement, with the result that an advisory council and Executive Committee was formed to direct the movement in England, Wales and Scotland.

We make the following extracts from the speeches of the delegates.—

I do fear this—that we may lose sight of the greater empire, the great Empire of the Lord Jesus Christ, while we are thinking, rightly enough so long as it is in a subordinate position, about the upbuilding and consolidation of the British Empire. I do not want you to be Little Englanders or Little Imperialists, but I do want you to think, every man of you, whether in the upbuilding of material prosperity and material power you are not forgetting that King who is Lord of lords and King of kings—whether you are not forgetting the crown rights of the lord Jesus Christ.”

At the Holborn restaurant Mr Mading said—We want to get right at the heart of business men, with a view to the extension of our Lord's kingdom; and, being business men ourselves we the more really and truly feel the need of the movement. I confess that in my earlier days I myself, as an average business man somehow missed the full interpretation of Christ's missionary command. But some few years ago a few business men asked me if I would go in with them as a sort of syndicate—which generally means, of course, that you are going to make something.

I put the money in, and said “I am with you,” and after my money went in, naturally my heart went in too. And the more I have put into this thing the more I have been interested. But let me say this—that in all my life I never knew such an opportunity for the investment of money as there is today; and I wish I had done more in this wonderful direction in the years that are gone. I wish I had, well, I want you to have the same joy and privileges that have been given to many of us, of putting your money actually into the business of propagating the Gospel throughout the world. Too long have we left this to the clergy, and the women, and the children, but the call seems to us to be sounding from Christ Himself to us business men to put our money into this thing.”

Dr. Schieffeln described the efforts of his Church to raise a tercentenary thankoffering:—

“I belong to the Episcopal Church, and this year we are celebrating the three hundredth anniversary of the foundation of our Church in America at the settlement of Jamestown, and in honor of that great event we are raising what is called the men's thankoffering; the laymen's thankoffering for missions. It promises to be a large sum, and there is very general interest being taken in it both in our Church and by those who have a sympathetic interest. Nevertheless, it is rather startling that it should be the first great occasion when laymen as such are uniting to raise a fund for Missions, and this fact was somewhat amazingly commented upon by a Christian Japanese who came to study our customs in America.

He said, “This thankoffering is given in honor of the 300th anniversary?” “Yes.” “It is the first time it has been done?” “Yes. Why?” “Do not your Sunday School children every year give an offering to Missions, at Easter time?” “Oh, yes.” “And every triennial convention the women give a thankoffering for Missions?” “Yes, that is the custom.” “Well, then, as far as I can see your plan is to have the children give every year, the women every three years, and the men every three hundred years!”

That did strike home, and I for one hope that the system is ended. We do this thing very systematically. Every parish takes a census of its laymen, and every layman is asked to give something towards the thank-offering. Now when this census of laymen is put in the form of a catalogue and handed to the Board of Missions they have there a tremendous list of men upon whom to call and upon whom to work.

And lastly. Mr McBee dwelt upon a special advantage of the movement being confined to laymen, in that its influence in promoting unity among Christians of various denominations is likely on that account to be enhanced. He said:—

“My presence here is a strong evidence of this ideal upon my own Church. They have been slow to endorse any movement that might look like compromising their position, yet they favor this body of laymen—fortunately laymen, because we can build no ecclesiastical fences, and we can tear none down. We are not dangerous. My Missionary Board, which is our National Church—because our Missionary Society is the whole Church; our Missionary Board is elected by the national legislature of our Church—

our Board has officially endorsed the Laymen's Missionary Movement, in which I can stand with Presbyterians and Methodists and all other kinds of Christians. I should not have dared to have left my duties and come here except on the advice of the chairman of the Board of Missions and the advice of our senior Bishop. They told me it was my duty to come. They told me this Movement meant unity, if not now, at all events in the future. If this Movement can in any way bring laymen together that work together every day and then separate when they go to the house of the Lord, if it can bring them together in this great endeavor to spread the Kingdom, to give their money, to give their lives, to sacrifice anything and everything, it is worth your while, it is worth our while, it is worth the nation's while, it is worth the while of all the Churches in Christendom to promote it.”

MELANESIAN JOTTINGS.

Whilst Bishop John Selwyn was staying in the Solomon Islands there passed down the coast in full view of the place where he was, three canoes of suspicious appearance. He himself was laid up with ague, but Hugo Goravaka (then the head teacher in those parts) had the promptitude to get out his boat and follow them, arriving just as a crowd of armed natives had assembled on the shore to prevent their landing. The firing had actually begun, but Hugo lost no time. He at once pushed his boat in between the canoes and the shore right in the firing line, and by himself taking the strange chief on shore, stopped the battle before any harm was done. They were allowed to land, and were hospitably treated. Nevertheless these very men went on to Soga (the chief of Bugotu) and asked him so urgently to sell them heads at 7s 6d apiece that Soga sent post-haste for the Bishop to back him in his refusal. The Bishop told them very forcibly what he thought of them for demanding other people's lives when they had just had such a very narrow escape of losing their own, and Soga sent them back to New Georgia without any heads except those they wore on their shoulders, and, it is to be hoped, thankful that those were still there.

But we must not forget to mention Marsden Mankalea, who was heroic, too, in his own quiet way. When he went to Ysabel he was as other teachers, except that his eyes were not strong; but in removing a creeper some dust fell into them