

WHAT SCIENCE OWES TO MISSIONARIES.

Far away upon the extreme verge of civilization, or isolated from it entirely, is a corps of humble workers. Bearing the tidings of mercy to the lands that sit in darkness, they gather up scattered pearls of knowledge and send them back to enrich the stores of those, who, laboring in another field, are co-workers with them in the elevation of the race. Scarcely any one of the sciences can claim that it has not been indebted to missionaries for valuable facts. The sciences of philology, ethnology, archeology, geography and zoology, however, have received more aid from them than any others. An exchange makes the following remarks in reference to this subject:

"To Dr. Livingstone, the distinguished explorer, is the world indebted for the most of its knowledge of the interior of Africa, and it now appears that the first discoveries of the source of the Nile were made by missionaries. Some missionaries of the Church Missionary Society in East Africa, in order to acquaint themselves with the native tribes, made exploring tours to the interior, in one of which they discovered a snow mountain, and after a time another. The statements which they sent to England were at first received with incredulity and ridicule. After some time they reported that the natives declared that there was a great inland sea, when the Royal Geographical Society sent out an expedition, which resulted in the famous discoveries by Captains Speke and Grant, and Sir Samuel Baker of the great lakes called by them the Victoria Nyanza and the Albert Nyanza, the sources of the great river of Egypt."

Dr. Kane received valuable aid and counsel from the Moravian missionaries, on the coast of Greenland, in his celebrated Arctic explorations. The Catholic priests who penetrated the wilds of America, intent upon the conversion of the savage, contributed largely to the early knowledge of the geography of the American continent, and the information given by missionaries in China and Japan has been the origin of the negotiations which have resulted in the opening of the ports of those countries to commerce and civilization.

WHO ATE ROGER WILLIAMS.

The truth that matter passes from the animal back to the vegetable, and from the vegetable to the animal kingdom again, received a curious illustration not long since.

For the purpose of erecting a suitable monument in memory of Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, his private burying ground was searched for the graves of himself and wife. It was found that everything had passed into oblivion. The shape of the coffin could only be traced by a black line of carbonaceous matter. The rusted hinges and nails, and a round wooden knot alone remained in one grave; while a single lock of braided hair was found in the other. Near the grave stood an apple tree. This had sent down two main roots into the very presence of the coffin. The larger root pushing its way to the precise spot occupied by the skull of Roger Williams, had made a turn as if passing around it, and following the direction of the backbone to the hips. Here it divided into two branches, sending one along each leg to the heels, when both turned upward to the toes. One of these roots formed a slight crook at the knee, which made the whole bear a striking resemblance to the human form. There stood the thief—the guilty apple tree—caught in the very act of robbery. The spoliation was complete. The organic matter—the flesh bones of Roger Williams—had passed into an apple tree. The elements had been absorbed by the roots, transmuted into woody fibre, which could now be burned as fuel, or carved into ornaments, had bloomed into fragrant blossoms, which delighted the eye of the passer-by and scattered the sweetest perfume of spring; more than that—it had been converted into the luscious fruit which year to year has been gathered and eaten. How pertinent, then, is the question, "Who ate Roger Williams?"—from Steele's Fourteen Weeks in Chemistry.

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