

**THE PROTESTANT MISSIONS  
VINDICATED AGAINST THE  
ASPERSIONS OF REV. N.  
WISEMAN D.D. INVOLVING THE  
PROTESTANT RELIGION**

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The Protestant Missions Vindicated against the Aspersions of Rev. N. Wiseman D.D. Involving the Protestant Religion by James Hough

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**JAMES HOUGH**

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THE  
**PROTESTANT MISSIONS**  
VINDICATED

AGAINST THE  
ASPERSIONS OF THE REV. N. WISEMAN, D.D.

INVOLVING

*The Protestant Religion.*

BY THE

REV. JAMES HOUGH, M.A., F.C.P.S.

PERPETUAL CURATE OF HAM, SURREY;  
LATE CHAPLAIN TO THE HON. EAST-INDIA COMPANY AT MADRAS;  
AUTHOR OF A REPLY TO THE ABBÉ DUBOIS ON THE STATE  
OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA.

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The Jesuit—"has shot his bolts away,  
" 'Till, his exhausted quiver yielding none,  
" He gleams the blunted shafts that have recoiled,  
" And aims them at the shield of Truth again."

COWPER. TASK, B. 6.

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## LETTER,

&c. &c.

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THE publication of Dr. Wiseman, a portion of which is reviewed in the following pages, contains a Course of Lectures on the Doctrines and Practices of the Roman Church, delivered by him, at the Romish Chapel, Moorfields, during the Lent of 1836. He announces himself, to the British public, as *Rector of the English College in Rome, and Professor of Oriental Languages of that city*. We presume, therefore, that he wishes to be considered as sanctioned by the Authorities of his Church to plead her cause in England. His Lectures are of a controversial character; and in two of them, the sixth and seventh, he professes to give a lucid and candid account of Protestant and Catholic Missions. These have been noticed; briefly indeed, but sufficiently to show that the bitter hostility that has long been maintained against Protestant Missions, in some Periodical Publications, in this country, in the interests of the Romish Church, has at length assumed a more systematic and dangerous form\*. On reading the two Lectures in question, it is difficult to find one assertion, touching the general merits of the case, that had not

\* See the *Missionary Register*, Jan. 1837, pp. 2-5.

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been answered again and again in the very publications quoted by the author. He has actually repeated all the leading calumnies and misrepresentations of former writers on his own side, either without noticing the answers of their several respondents, or so distorting their words as to make them appear to tell in favour of his own cause. It would seem to be, therefore, a hopeless task to undertake to convince him that he has not dealt justly with his opponents. Having on a former occasion replied to the Abbé Dubois\*, I was requested, on the first appearance of this publication, again to take up the subject; but, knowing that I had already anticipated all that need be said, and that the Annual Reports and Monthly Periodicals of different Missionary Societies contained facts contradicting every one of Dr. Wiseman's assertions, I did not think it necessary to resume so unpromising a discussion. No candid mind, at all acquainted with the present state of the Missionary vineyard, can be deceived by the misrepresentations with which these Lectures are filled; and the course pursued by their author leaves us little reason to hope that conviction can be produced on his mind, by the repetition of evidence that he has already evaded or distorted. He tells us plainly, that his object is to maintain the cause of Rome, with all her pretensions and dogmas; and he has shown his determination to uphold it by every means he can devise, and at all hazards. In fact, his method of proceeding betrays, throughout, the recklessness of one who is conscious that he has embarked on a desperate adventure. Deeming it, therefore, useless to endeavour to convince him, and those who think and act with him, of their errors and infatuation; and concluding that it would

\* A Reply to the Letters of the Abbé Dubois on the State of Christianity in India. Published by Seeleys, Fleet Street, 1824.—See also the able Reply of the Rev. H. Townley to the Abbé's Letters.

be almost trifling with the *Protestant* community to call their attention to arguments and facts with which they are familiar, to prove theirs to be the better cause; I have hitherto hesitated to notice these extraordinary Lectures. Life is too short, and our duties are too momentous, for any one, conscious of his responsibilities, to be perpetually pouring water upon sand.

But it appears that the Romanists are now exulting in the silence of Protestants, and confidently asserting that we have not attempted to answer Dr. Wiseman, because conscious that his Lectures are unanswerable. This is a very great mistake. He *has been answered*†; and enough has been written to satisfy the upright mind, not merely that the character and assumptions of Rome are diametrically opposed to the reason and liberties of man, and to the truth of Holy Scriptures; but also, that Dr. Wiseman has been convicted, either of ignorance of the cause he was deputed to maintain, or of a secret misgiving, that it cannot be left to stand on its own merits. Otherwise, he would not, in the one case, so frequently have exposed himself to the inconvenience of having his assertions and remarks turned against him; or, in the other, he would have refrained from adopting so disingenuous a mode of defence. No man of common sense, not to say common honesty, would have recourse to misrepresentation, if conscious that he had truth on his side.

In replying to many of the gratuitous assertions contained in his two Lectures on Missions, I shall almost confine myself to those in India; both because they occupy the chief part of his performance, and also because I am personally acquainted with several of the Missions

† By the Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge; and by writers in the *Christian Guardian*, the *Record*, &c. The whole series of the Lectures is also under review in the *Protestant Journal*, commencing with the Number for last November.



which he describes in that country : and if I should contribute in any measure to set the question at rest, I shall be thankful to have been permitted to co-operate in so good a work. Though a twelvemonth has elapsed since Dr. Wiseman's *Lectures* were published, yet we are in the spring-tide of Missionary enterprise, and the public interest in its progress is fresh and advancing : I feel it unnecessary, therefore, to apologize for now entering upon the task, which, I may be permitted to say, has been urged upon me ; though some explanation seemed to be required for not taking it up before.— May the Spirit of Truth direct me in all that I shall write, and render it subservient to the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom upon earth !

The object of the Abbé Dubois, in his " Letters on the State of Christianity in India" already referred to, was, to maintain the impracticability of converting the Hindoos to Christianity. After labouring in the Missionary vineyard, chiefly in Mysore, for thirty years, he stated, as the result of his experience, that he had toiled in vain ; that his Brethren, for some years past, had met with no better success than himself ; and that Protestant Missionaries had altogether failed. Hence, he came to the astounding conclusion, that the time of conversion had passed away ; that Christianity had done its work in the world ; and that the six hundred millions of souls in India, China, and other parts of the earth yet in Pagan darkness, were to be abandoned to the Almighty's irrevocable decree which doomed them to perdition.

Dr. Wiseman assumes a different position. His object is to maintain, that the whole world is to be converted to Christianity ; that all the endeavours of Protestants to bring that event to pass, have, upon their own showing, signally failed ; while the efforts of Roman Catholics have generally proved successful. Hence he con-

cludes, that the Protestant *cause* must be false; and his own *cause*, true.

Here then, in reference to the Romish Missions at least, he is at issue with the Abbé Dubois; which, however, he has not acknowledged. But he has quoted him as worthy of credit, when it suited his purpose to make use of his authority: of course, therefore, he cannot object to the same witness, when produced on the *opposite* side. Having replied, thirteen years ago, to those assertions of M. Dubois to which Dr. Wiseman also is opposed, I now undertake to answer him also, and to show that he has departed no less from the truth, though not in precisely the same direction.

The *conclusion* to which he here promises to conduct his auditors, the falsehood of the *Protestant cause*, shows that his attack on their Missions is to be regarded as only one manœuvre in the general hostilities now carried on by Romanists against the Protestantism of Great Britain. I pledge myself to prove the failure of this assault; and declare, that every other position of the Protestant cause assailed in these Lectures might with equal facility be shown to be invulnerable.

He begins with the Protestant Missions, to which he devotes his 6th Lecture; heading it "THE SUCCESS OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS," and then labouring to prove that they have met with no success at all. I, on the contrary, pledge myself to prove, that the very authorities he cites, on both sides of the question, bear testimony the reverse of that which he has endeavoured to deduce from them.

First, he lays down the following test, whereby to ascertain the character of any alleged conversions in heathen lands:—

"The progress of conversion has gone forward from age to age ever since the time of the Apostles; there is not a century, and particularly among those which are commonly designated as dark and superstitious times—there is not a *half*

century in which some nation or another was not converted to the faith of Christ: and by conversion I do not simply mean their being kept in a Missionary state, under the direction and tutelage of persons sent from another country, but so established in the course of a very few years as to be able to exist independently—though always, of course, in connexion with the Mother Church whence the faith had originally come to them—so as to have their own native hierarchy, to have sufficient congregations that they could be considered churches every way organized and perfectly established, and of such a character, that, wherever the doctrines of Christ had once been preached, the errors which had been rooted up never again appeared, and the whole population, in the course of a very short time, became members of the Christian Church." (p. 110.)

This position he desires his hearers and readers to bear in mind throughout the discussion; promising to show them, "in its proper place," that the Romish Missions will everywhere stand the test; and that the Protestant Missions, weighed in the same balance, will universally be found wanting. Without stopping here to examine the validity of his test, we would just ask, in passing, what he makes of the Seven Apostolic Churches of Asia? whether, for ages past, they have come up to his standard? and if not, whether they were originally true Churches? Did Dr. Wiseman never read of God's removing the candlestick from a Church, when her candle ceased to burn (Revelation, chapters i. ii. iii.)? If this be true, the decline of a Church from her primitive light, purity, and love, can be no proof that she was not, in the beginning, a legitimate daughter of the Universal Church.

After naming various Protestant Missionary Societies in this and other countries, he asserts, that the means which they have had in their hands to carry forward their undertakings have been "such, as never since the time of the Apostles have been brought to bear—I will not say upon the work of conversion, but