

the work be done, is this; Go, make disciples for Me; Preach the Gospel to every creature, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you!"

Often, indeed, has the Church slumbered at its post. The primitive Eastern Church early fell into decrepitude and decay, because it lost its missionary spirit. The Western Church only survived amidst its growing corruptions, because it never quite lacked its zeal to convey at least a modicum of saving truth to the heathen nations. Looking back to the Reformation, we may feel astonished that at the great awakening this point—the great point—was so imperfectly seen, and so soon, apparently, forgotten. Many admirable things were said and done by the Reformers, and at a later time also by the Puritans. But this thing—to institute missions to the outside world—they did not do; and, overlooking the supreme commandment of the Saviour, is it to be wondered at that they fell into wrangling with each other; that they allowed their fealty to Christ to be mixed up with questions of statecraft and of worldly ambition; and that they settled down into dead formalism on the one hand, or barren doctrinal disputations on the other? Even a century ago the true conception of the obligation of the Church to convert the world had only begun to dawn upon the Christian consciousness, and for long years it had to struggle against the most formidable prejudices, and all but inveterate unbelief. But things are now rapidly changing. Every true Church of Christ has some missionary work on hand. Without it any Church must soon cease to live, as it would certainly deserve to die. The older and more evangelistic churches are putting on new strength; and objects, and means of labor, that had scarcely been thought of before, are now securing the prayerful consideration and the powerful support of all classes of Christian disciples.

It has sometimes been supposed that Home and Foreign Missions stood in something like a relation of antagonism to each other. That old cry about home heathenism demanding all the resources of the Church, on the one hand, and just occasionally the romantic attractions of some distant field of labor absorbing an undue support, on the other, may have given a