

the bed of the ocean—by the commercial intercourse that is now maintained between Christian lands and many that are still in a heathen state, affording thus the most favourable opportunities for an interchange of spiritual as well as of temporal blessings—and though last not least, by the translation of the Scriptures into almost all the known languages of the world that have been reduced to any system, and the ease and cheapness with which copies in any of these languages can be multiplied. This, surely, is no inadequate substitute for the “gift of tongues,” and while the Missionaries themselves have these tongues to learn in the ordinary way, this with the helps now enjoyed, is comparatively an easy and speedy work. These, and such as these are advantages peculiar to the present age and they place our Missionaries in a more favorable position, in many respects, for carrying on their great work with vigor and efficiency, than that occupied by the first Missionaries with all the peculiar advantages which they enjoyed. Let us make the most of our’s as they did of their’s, and the result will be similar—as satisfactory to ourselves as honoring to God. Let us, like the woman commended by our lord do *what we can*, and pray earnestly and believingly that He, himself, will do *what we cannot*, and the work shall prosper in our hands; sooner or later, it shall be crowned with complete success.

From this slight sketch I think you will admit, my friends, that the past history of the Missionary enterprise is instructive and stimulating, and that its present position is favorable on the whole, and its prospects encouraging. Another very hopeful symptom is to be found in the prominent place which the cause of Missions now occupies in all Evangelical churches. With those in America I am not so well acquainted, but of those in Great Britain I can speak more particularly. What a different place does it occupy among them now, as compared with what it did half a century ago or little more? Look at the “*London Missionary Society*” for example,—then a tiny rill issuing from a hole in the rock, now a mighty river, fed by a thousand tributaries, and fertilizing many a wilderness and solitary place in heathendom; and the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, then “a cloud no bigger than a man’s hand,” now darkening the whole heaven, and distilling its showers of blessing on all places, and in almost every language of the earth. Other general societies followed these, in Scotland as well as in England; on a smaller scale indeed, but based on the same Catholic principle, and supported by different denominations of Christians. The age of these, however, is now gone by. Originating in necessity, they have, to a great extent, ceased and determined with the necessity that gave them birth. It required *then* the contributions of several denominations to equip, send out, and maintain a Mission in the heathen world; but, *now*, each denomination of any account, can do this from its own resources, and all of them accordingly have their own Missionaries, and occupy their own fields of Missionary labor. In this way the general societies have been in a great measure swallowed up by particular churches, as the rods of the Egyptian magicians were by that of Aaron. Thus, several years ago “*The Scottish Missionary Society*” terminated its existence by handing over its Missionary Stations, &c., to our Church in Scotland; and only last year, she adopted in like manner, “*The Scottish Society for the Conversion of Israel*.” The truth is, that now every