

nment will inevitably be the "differences of administration" and the "diversities of operation" legitimately attending it. In all this the intelligent friends of missions must rejoice and be glad.

The demand for ecclesiastical uniformity which many are now emphasizing is neither according to the teaching of the Spirit nor according to the analogies of nature. The tree does not remain a trunk, but it ramifies and separates its substance into thousands of limbs and branches. "The scandal of a divided Christendom," so called, has proved the strength of an evangelizing Christendom in this age of missions. There are scores of agencies now in use for propagating the Gospel among the heathen when there would have been but one if the condition of solid ecclesiastical unity had obtained. Not that we would contend that the division of Christians into sects is the ideal condition—God does not, in this present time, do His greatest work through ideal conditions. Certainly the spectacle of sixty-five missionary societies laboring in India, forty-six in China, and thirty-four in Africa, and all operating by diverse methods, but in substantial good-fellowship with each other, ought to be regarded as a kind of providential compensation for that divided condition of the Christian Church to which we are largely indebted for this number and variety of agencies. So the increasing versatility of method in conducting missions which we are now witnessing augurs, we believe, only good for the great work of giving the Gospel to the world.

This versatility is manifesting itself in the following ways :

First, there is a growing tendency for single churches and individual Christians to take up direct missionary work among the heathen. The article on "Decentralization in Missions," which the writer contributed to the June number of the *MISSIONARY REVIEW*, has called out a large number of responses from Christians of various names. From these it is evident that the idea is taking root in the minds of lovers of missions, and that it is destined to be more and more widely developed.

In the last session of the General Assembly we find the Presbyterians giving considerable attention to this question, and urging its favorable consideration upon their churches. A writer in the *Episcopal Recorder* for August 4th calls for earnest reflection upon this subject, and questions whether this direct participation of the Church in foreign missions might not "work a revolution in the defective and comparatively inefficient schemes which have characterized the method of conducting the work of missions among the heathen in the past—methods which have failed to reach the heart of the Church, which have obtained *hundreds* of dollars, where *ten thousands* should have been gladly furnished from Christian people, whose aggregate incomes run into *hundreds of millions*."

The idea of direct church-participation in missions is the central one ; but this carries many other considerations with it—such as the distribution and consequent increase of missionary responsibility, the development of greater dependence on God, both among the home churches and on the